

**Rural Tourism: An Examination of the Factors Influencing Revisit Intention to  
Rural Destinations in the Southeastern United States**

by

Amy McCluskey Bardwell

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of  
Auburn University  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Auburn, Alabama  
August 5, 2017

Keywords: Rural Tourism, Tourism Motivation, Tourism Involvement, Destination  
Image, Revisit Intention, Place Attachment

Copyright 2017 by Amy McCluskey Bardwell

Approved by

David Martin, Co-Chair, Associate Professor of Hotel and Restaurant Management  
Yee Ming Lee, Co-Chair, Assistant Professor of Hotel and Restaurant Management  
Alecia Douglas, Associate Professor of Hotel and Restaurant Management  
Joni Lakin, Associate Professor of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology

## **Abstract**

The continued growth in tourism over the last decade creates an opportunity for specialty forms of tourism to increase their market share. One area of expansion is rural tourism. Rural tourism a subset of cultural tourism. Over sixty percent of the land in the United States is classified as rural based on the United States Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Services (USDA ERS, 2013). Tourism can increase the local economies resources and tax dollars which helps maintain an area's infrastructure, create jobs (Ribeiro & Marques, 2002), and support small businesses (Fleischer & Felsenstein, 2000). Revisit intention has been unambiguously linked to tourist loyalty (Park & Yoon, 2009) and for a rural destination this can have a lasting impact. To better understand what factors impact revisit intention, a rural tourism revisit intention model was created and tested. This dissertation created and tested a theoretical rural tourism revisit intention model exploring the relationships among motivation, involvement, destination image, place attachment, place satisfaction, and revisit intention. Place attachment has also been examined as a second-order factor comprised of place identity, place dependence, place affect, and place social bonding.

The sample consisted of 407 respondents from the United States that had visited a rural destination in the Southeastern United States in the past twelve months.

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to test the dimensionality of the place attachment

variable. The revisit intention model was tested using structural equation modeling. The study confirmed place attachment as a second-order construct. Additionally, the structural equation model found significant evidence to support the positive relationships between destination image, place attachment, and place satisfaction, and an inverse relationship between destination image and revisit intention. Evidence was also found indicating an inverse relationship between together motivations and destination image with involvement having a dampening effect on the negative relationship. The results of the study have both managerial and theoretical implications, as some of the relationships are counter to previous research.

## Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I could not have accomplished all that I have done today without my faith in God and His purpose for my life.

“The Lord will fulfill His purpose for me; Your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever.” Psalms 138:8a ESV

I would like to thank all of those that have helped me accomplish something that I never thought I could. First, I would like to thank Dr. David Martin, my chair, for putting up with me for four years, being understanding in all of my setbacks, and continuously encouraging me to take the next step so that I could be here today. I would also like to thank Dr. Yee Ming Lee, my co-chair, for the continued support and listening ear during the last four years. Without your support and encouragement, I would not have been able to reach this point.

Next I would like to thank Drs. Alecia Douglas and Joni Lakin. Dr. Douglas was one of the most difficult professors during my time at Auburn University, yet she believed in my work and helped me become a better writer. Dr. Lakin got me through my first statistics course at Auburn and has been an invaluable resources while working on the data analysis. Thank you both for your help and encouragement.

Next, I would like to thank my family. My parents, Steve and Sandra McCluskey, believed in me when I told them I wanted to get my Masters, then supported me and my

family even more when I expressed my interest in getting my Ph.D. Without them, I would never have been able to get to this point. Jon, my amazingly supportive and understanding husband, has pushed me more than anyone else. He has taken off work when I needed him to, and worked hard to support our family. He has done an amazing job of taking care of our two beautiful children, Lila Grace and Stevie, when I have needed time to write. And he has picked up the slack around the house when I was unable to get to the chores. He is a seriously amazing person to provide continuous support so I can do what I love.

Finally, I must mention the incredible support of my cohort and colleagues. Those that have been through the defense process at Auburn University, and those that have gone through the last few years with me, have been the encouragement that I have needed. I love how much we have all supported one another during this time, and I am thankful that I have had each of you to do Ph.D. life with. I am especially going to miss the weekly update calls that kept me pushing forward.

**Thank you all!**

## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	ii
Acknowledgments .....	iv
List of Tables .....	ix
List of Figures .....	x
List of Abbreviations .....	xi
Chapter One: Introduction .....	1
Introduction .....	1
Statement of the Problem .....	5
Purpose of the Study and Study Objectives .....	6
Research Questions .....	7
Hypotheses .....	7
Definition of Terms .....	8
Significance of the Study .....	10
Limitations and Assumptions .....	11
Outline of the Paper .....	11
Chapter Two: Literature Review .....	13
Introduction .....	13
Tourism .....	13

Cultural Tourism .....	18
Rural Tourism .....	26
Place Attachment .....	35
Involvement .....	38
Motivation .....	41
Destination Image .....	46
Place Attachment .....	52
Satisfaction .....	53
Proposed Theoretical Model .....	55
Chapter Three: Methods .....	57
Introduction .....	57
Research with Human Subjects .....	57
Survey Instrument .....	59
Pilot Testing the Survey .....	62
Survey Panels .....	65
Main Study Design: Collection of Survey Responses .....	69
Assumptions of Multivariate Analysis .....	72
Restatement of the Hypotheses .....	74
Second-Order Factors: Confirmatory Factor Analysis .....	75
Structural Equation Modeling .....	81
Chapter Four: Data Analysis .....	85
Introduction .....	85
Research Questions .....	85

Sample Demographics .....	86
Measurement Instrument Properties .....	89
Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results .....	92
Exploratory Factor Analysis .....	95
Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Overall Measurement Model .....	98
Structural Model Testing .....	99
Summary .....	102
Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusions .....	103
Overview .....	103
Discussion .....	104
Implications .....	112
Limitations and Future Research .....	115
Conclusions .....	117
References .....	118
Appendix A: IRB Information Letter .....	137
Appendix B: CITI Certification .....	138
Appendix C: Rural Tourism Survey .....	139



## List of Tables

Table 2.1 Underlying Principles of Cultural Tourism .....	16
Table 2.2 Definitions of Cultural Tourism .....	19
Table 2.3 Classification of Major Cultural Tourism Forms .....	22
Table 2.4 Definitions of Rural .....	29
Table 3.1 Pilot Test Reliability Coefficients .....	64
Table 3.2 Percentage of Nonmetro Counties in Southeastern States .....	70
Table 3.3 Summary of Hypotheses and Analysis .....	75
Table 4.1 Sociodemographic Profile of Sample .....	86
Table 4.2 Abbreviations of Constructs .....	87
Table 4.3 Survey Statements and Abbreviations .....	88
Table 4.4 Tests of Normality .....	90
Table 4.5 Confirmatory Factor Analysis of 1st Order Place Attachment Model .....	94
Table 4.6 Motivation Rotated Factor Analysis .....	98
Table 4.7 Overall Measurement Model Validity and Reliability Scores .....	99
Table 4.8 Hypothesis Testing .....	102

## List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Classification of Cultural Tourists .....	24
Figure 2.2 Nonmetro Counties in Continental United States .....	32
Figure 2.3 Theoretical Model of Revisit Intention to Rural Destinations .....	55
Figure 3.1 USDA ERS Nonmetro Counties in Southeastern United States .....	71
Figure 3.2 Rural Tourism Revisit Intention Model with Hypotheses.....	74
Figure 3.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Flow Chart .....	77
Figure 4.1 CFA of Place Attachment 1 <sup>st</sup> Order Measurement Model .....	93
Figure 4.2 CFA of Place Attachment 2 <sup>nd</sup> Order Measurement Model .....	95
Figure 4.3 Structural Model of Imputed Factors with Regression Weights .....	100
Figure 4.4 Graph of Significant Interaction Effect .....	101

## **List of Abbreviations**

CITI	Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative
ERS	Economic Research Service
IRB	Institutional Review Board
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
UNWTO	United National World Tourism Organization
USD	United States Dollar
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **Introduction**

Tourism is one of the fastest growing economic industries in the world with continued expansion over the last 60 years (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2016). The United States has continually been among the top tourism destinations for international travel with an estimated 77.5 million international visitors to the United States in 2015, accounting for nearly \$205 billion United States dollar (USD) (UNWTO, 2016). As these international numbers continue to increase annually, so does domestic tourism. Approximately 2.1 billion person-trips were taken by Americans in the United States in 2014. In 2016 this rose to 2.2 billion person-trips with 1.7 billion of those classified as leisure trips (U.S. Travel Association, 2017). Additionally, tourism in the United States—including both leisure and business; domestic and international travelers—accounts for approximately \$2.1 trillion in economic output (U.S. Travel Association, 2017). According to the United States Travel Association’s 2016 report, the top five leisure activities for domestic travelers in the United States include:

1. Visiting relatives
2. Shopping
3. Visiting friends
4. Fine dining
5. Rural sightseeing

Researchers are exploring the various niche tourism products and the influence they have on the sustainability of tourism at a destination (Benur & Bramwell, 2015), some of these niche areas include tourism products such as agritourism, culinary tourism, medical tourism, dark tourism, wellness tourism, and literary tourism (McKercher & Du Cros, 2002). Though there are many kinds of specialty tourism, the main focus for this research is rural tourism, a subset of cultural tourism. Cultural tourism is one of the oldest forms of tourism worldwide and encompasses varied destination activities, such as museum visits, landmarks, local festivals, and other special events; broadly speaking, it includes any activity that creates an opportunity for day or overnight tourists to have an experience separate from their home community (McKercher & Du Cros, 2002).

Travelers are beginning to realize the greater potential of one form of cultural tourism: rural tourism. Rural sightseeing, among the top five leisure travel activities for domestic travelers in the United States, (U.S. Travel Association, 2016) is one of the many activities in which rural tourists partake. The term “rural” is most commonly defined based on the population size and dominant land use. According to Flynn (1982) three traditional lifestyles occur among these less densely populated areas:

1. A small, closet-knit society; not necessarily close with nature
2. An agrarian society, generally defined by family farms and a community that revolves around agricultural seasons
3. Ruralists, described as individuals that live outside of towns, not including those that farm; enjoy open spaces and a more natural landscape

Rural areas tend to be less traveled and provide new, exciting experiences for tourists, especially those more accustomed to urban areas (George, Mair, & Reid, 2009). As outlined in the book, *Rural Tourism Development: Localism and cultural change*, rural America as a tourist destination is growing in popularity due in part to its stark contrast with urbanized American culture (George et al., 2009). Whereas a rural area is more likely to have a close-knit community in which all members embrace their roles in sustaining their way of life, an urban area is the opposite. It is more often associated with loose-knit networks working independently of one another and somewhat divided based on type of work and economics (George et al., 2009). An accurate description of rural America is provided by the National Rural Assembly:

*“Rural America is more than the land. It is a way we are connected in culture, heritage, and national enterprise. While it may be vast it is far from empty. Sixty million of us live in the American countryside, and far more grew up there. Rural Americans reflect the full diversity of the country in who we are, what we do, and what we want to achieve.”*

(National Rural Assembly, 2017, para. 1)

Rural tourist destinations have been described as areas with cultural offerings, agriculture, landscape, character, and a simple lifestyle (Saxena & Ilbery, 2008; Thompson, 2004). Typically they are comprised of small businesses and a relatively small scope of activity (Bramwell & Lane 1994; Page & Getz, 1997; Long & Lane, 2000). Rural destinations are increasing in popularity as people in the United States become more interested in the heritage and culture provided by small towns and small businesses (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008). Such settings promote tourism as a means to grow

economically through developing jobs and creating an opportunity for small businesses in parts of the United States that have been slowly disappearing (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008; Fleischer & Felsenstein, 2000).

The diverse offerings of rural destinations create the ideal commodity for tourists, allowing them to find an area that offers exactly the niche they seek. As interest in heritage, tradition, and authenticity in destinations increases, rural tourism development has the potential to continue its growth into the foreseeable future (Gartner, 2004).

Revisit intention is an economically important product of marketing and visitor experience. Typically explored in conjunction with intention to recommend to others, revisit intention is considered to be part of behavioral intention. It is particularly important as it has the potential to increase revenue for the destination while minimizing marketing costs (Park & Yoon, 2009). For a rural destination, this can be especially important considering the limited resources available.

The relationship among factors contributing to revisit intention is important for both industry leaders and rural researchers. Researchers have explored the relationships between motivation, destination image, satisfaction, and revisit intention (Pratminingsih, Rudatin, & Rimenta, 2014); involvement, destination image, place attachment, satisfaction, and behavioral intention (Prayag & Ryan, 2012); destination image, attitude, motivation, satisfaction, and future behavior (Lee, 2009); destination image, trip quality, perceived value, satisfaction, and behavior intention (Chen & Tsai, 2007); place attachment, place satisfaction, and pro-environmental behavioral intentions (Ramkissoon et al., 2013).

## **Statement of the Problem**

Tourism can diversify the economy and provide growth opportunities in rural regions (Phillips, Wolfe, Hodur, & Leistriz, 2013), but it is not enough to simply want visitors to come to the destination. Rural tourist destinations, just like any other business, need to distinguish themselves from other area locations by marketing their offerings in a manner that attracts tourists and encourages them to return. The 2016 Rural Tourism Conference took place in Columbus, Mississippi during which leaders from Mississippi, Tennessee, and Alabama gathered to expand their understanding of how to better market themselves to be competitive (Tennessee-Alabama-Mississippi Rural Tourism Conference, 2017). During this conference, it was discovered that the majority of the towns and counties across the three states did not have the necessary resources to gather the pertinent information from visitors to determine how tourism impacted their area and if their marketing efforts increased tourism and visitor retention (personal communication, October 25, 2016).

As a whole, these constructs have yet to be examined simultaneously in a cohesive model related to rural tourism destinations. From a practical standpoint, better understanding of how the factors leading to revisit intention influence one another may provide important insight for rural destinations' ability to increase their revenue and create sustainable tourism plans. In terms of theoretical contributions, the model proposed in this paper will add to the body of work on revisit intention and, more specifically, create a more cohesive and parsimonious model for understanding revisit intention in rural America.



## **Purpose of the Study and Study Objectives**

This study assesses rural tourism destinations in the Southeastern United States, consisting of the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. These nine states were targeted because a large portion of the counties in the Southeastern United States are rural. Additionally, based on the feedback from the TN-AL-MS Rural Tourism Conference, many of these rural counties do not possess the means to evaluate their target audience in a meaningful way (personal communication, October 26, 2017).

Rural tourism destinations can benefit from a comprehensive revisit intention model, but there is currently no model that represents the relationships between motivation, involvement, satisfaction, attachment, destination image, and revisit intention. Further exploring the relationships between these variables through a cohesive model would advance the theoretical knowledge of these variables while simultaneously providing a working model for industry leaders.

Therefore, this research project seeks to better understand the influence of motivation and involvement on destination image, place attachment and revisit intention. It does this by testing a model of tourist intention to revisit rural destinations. Thus, the main objectives of this study are as follows:

1. Determine the demographic characteristics of the typical rural tourist who travels to rural destinations in the Southeastern United States: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

2. Develop and test a revisit intention model to rural destinations based on literature that includes the following factors: involvement, motivation, destination image, place attachment, and satisfaction.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the research objectives presented in the previous section, the following research questions are proposed to gain a better understanding of rural tourism and the rural tourist.

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the typical rural tourist to the Southeastern United States?
2. To what extent does involvement act as a moderator in conjunction with motivation, destination image, place attachment, and revisit intention?
3. To what extent is there a relationship between destination image, place attachment, and visitor satisfaction with revisit intention?

### **Hypotheses**

Based on the literature, and using both the research objectives and research questions as a guide, a number of hypotheses were developed. Chapter two provides a more in-depth look into how these hypotheses were established. Below are the ten hypotheses:

**H1:** Place attachment is comprised of four variables as a second-order dimension factor.

**H2-H4:** Involvement positively moderates the relationship between 2) the components of motivation and destination image, 3) the components of motivation and place attachment, 4) the components of motivation and revisit intention.

**H5-H7:** Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with 5) place attachment, 6) place satisfaction, and 7) revisit intention.

**H8-H9:** Place attachment has a statistically significant positive relationship with 8) place satisfaction and 9) revisit intention.

**H10:** Place satisfaction will have a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.

### **Definitions of Terms**

Cultural Tourism – Tourism to a destination with the main focus being on visiting cultural or historical sites.

Destination – The destination is the main place visited based on the central reason for planning the trip (UNWTO, 2013).

Domestic Tourism - the activities of a resident visitor within the country of reference, either as part of a domestic tourism trip or part of an outbound tourism trip (Cherifi et al., 2014)

Metro (metropolitan) – A metro area is a densely populated area including its suburbs.

Metro adjacent – Metro adjacent refers to any counties neighboring a metropolitan county that feeds into a metropolitan labor pool that would otherwise be considered non-metropolitan.

Nonmetro (non-metropolitan) – Any county that does not include a metropolitan city and is not metro adjacent.

Person-Trip – A person-trip is defined as “one person on a trip away from home overnight in paid accommodations or on a day or overnight trip to places 50 miles or more away from home.” (U.S. Travel Association, 2016).

Rural – Rural refers to any area outside of the city where people live and work. Typically comprised of some form of agriculture and small towns.

Rural Tourism – A specialized form of tourism where individuals travel to rural areas for a period of time. Activities can range depending on the tourist’s preference and area traveled, but may include such activities as: agricultural sites, nature getaways, cultural or heritage sites, tours, and other activities that interests the tourist.

Rural Tourist – Anyone who engages in some form of rural tourism. This can be either an overnight visitor or a day visitor to a rural area.

Tourism – “Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes” (UNWTO, 2014 p. 1).

Tourism Receipts – Expenditure on food and beverages, shopping, entertainment, goods, and other services in the visited destination. (UNWTO, 2016).

Tourist – “A traveler taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited” (International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics, 2008).

Travel Behavior – Travel behavior is defined as an individual’s decision to travel to a specific destination (Sirgy & Su, 2000).

Travel Group – A group of individuals traveling together for the same purpose. This can be comprised of a group of friends, a family, or a tour.

Urban – Similar to metropolitan, urban is a densely populated city.

### **Significance of the Study**

The amount of land that is not being utilized to its fullest potential is increasing as individuals continue to migrate to the more urbanized areas of the United States, evidenced by the population increase in and surrounding urban cities versus the decrease in populations outside of these areas (Cromartie, Population and Migration, 2017). People are losing their income stream as businesses close and towns virtually shut down in the process. To combat this problem, rural town revitalization efforts are being conducted (John, 2017), giving small towns a “face-lift” and creating an opportunity for new tourist attractions. It is not simply about attracting visitors; it is also about creating a place that encourages people to return in the future. Travel dollars save tax payers approximately \$1200 annually (ustravel.org, 2017), with the effect of the tourist dollar being seen throughout the local economy.

The information gained from understanding the paths to revisit intention can help rural areas focus their promotion efforts, possibly creating a domino effect. This effect may increase income opportunities for the town and the additional outside tax dollars could contribute to revitalization efforts. As a starting point for future research on rural America, this project explores the revisit intention of visitors and utilizes this model to

support rural communities that lack the means or knowledge to evaluate consumer behavior. The revisit intention model may provide a basis for rural towns in the Southeastern United States to better understand how their area can be positively impacted by tourism.

### **Limitations and Assumptions**

There are a number of limitations associated with this study. First, because the study is focusing on the Southeastern United States, the results are not necessarily generalizable to the entire United States nor to the entire rural tourist population. Another limitation is that a survey panel company was used to gather the data for analysis. Therefore, the study assumes that all respondents who progressed through the screening process answered the survey instrument in a truthful manner, providing accurate, meaningful data to analyze. Finally, whenever a researcher asks a respondent to evaluate a past experience, the recollection may not be as accurate as the response collected during or immediately following a visit.

### **Outline of the Paper**

The following chapters provide a more detailed understanding of rural tourism and more deeply describe the relationships among key variables (motivation, involvement, destination image, place attachment, satisfaction, and revisit intention) by using previous research through a review of the literature. Additionally, the literature review presents ten hypotheses and supports them based on previous research. Chapter three details the methods used to collect and analyze the data for this project. In Chapter

four, a detailed analysis of the collected data and the hypotheses is conducted. Finally, Chapter five provides an overview of the results and discussion and how they are applicable to the current rural tourism industry as well as providing a discussion on the theoretical contributions and implications for future research.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

Good research is produced by building on past research and pushing the understanding of a phenomenon further. A researcher, therefore, should take special consideration of past works when creating and identifying a model. This chapter provides a review of the relevant literature on rural tourism, beginning with an overview of tourism, cultural tourism, and rural tourism. Relevant literature is also provided to demonstrate the development of the ten hypotheses. Finally, the theoretical model is shown, and a review of the hypotheses is given. The literature was taken from various sources, such as books, journal articles, and reputable websites. The journal articles were sourced through an online search of peer-reviewed publications via Google Scholar. The books were sourced through the Auburn University Libraries.

### **Tourism**

*“Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes.”*

(UNWTO, 2014, p. 1)

International tourism generated approximately \$1.5 trillion USD in 2015 and is among the top economically growing sectors in the world (UNWTO, 2017). The impact



of tourism on business and job growth is substantial, demonstrating the tourism's importance and the need for continued research. The UNWTO is tasked with tracking global tourism trends and reporting on those facts annually. The UNWTO's 2016 Tourism Highlights report includes information related to inbound and outbound international tourism and the economic impact tourism had during 2015. According to this report, international tourist arrivals increased by 4.6% in 2015 bringing the total to approximately 1186 million overnight tourists worldwide, an estimated increase of 56 million compared to 2014 (UNWTO, 2016). An indicator of future tourism growth is the consistent increase in global tourism since 2009. Although it occasionally fluctuates, international tourism has had upward growth since 1995. Based on the current growth estimates, 1800 million international tourists are expected in 2030 (UNWTO, 2016).

Of the 1186 million inbound international tourists in 2015, 127.6 million visited North America. Of that number, 77.5 million visited the United States, making it the second most popular international tourism destination (behind France) (UNWTO, 2016). Although the United States was second in tourist arrivals, it had the largest number of international tourism receipts, totaling approximately \$204.5 billion USD (UNWTO, 2016).

Domestic tourism in the United States has an even greater impact on the economy by circulating dollars among local businesses and individuals. The U.S. Travel Association was created in 1941 as a non-profit organization to encourage growth in international visitors to and domestic travel within the United States (U.S. Travel Association, 2017). According to research conducted through the U.S. Travel Association, travel (both from inbound and domestic travelers) generates approximately

\$2.3 trillion in economic output and is among the top ten industries in 49 states and the District of Columbia (U.S. Travel Association, 2017). Seventy-nine percent of domestic travel is for leisure purposes (U.S. Travel Association, 2017) which creates an opportunity for businesses to capitalize on the increasing travel dollars spent.

Tourism is an important economic contributor, and many factors increase the chances for the success or failure of a tourism plan. The five main issues related to cultural tourism, according to McKercher and Du Cros (2002), are the general nature of tourism, attractions that drive tourism, factors influencing the levels of visitation, tourist behavior, and cultural tourism. McKercher and Du Cros provide a discussion of these five issues along with fifteen principles that must be taken into consideration (Table 2.1). Tourism should be thought of as a business, especially as a demand-driven industry centered on entertainment and experiences. As tourism grows in an area, developers must consider cultural heritage sites as part of the tourism experience to ensure a sustainable product (while also recognizing that not all cultural sites make for good attractions). Additionally, time and access play an important role in the development of a successful tourism destination, people are sometimes not willing to travel outside of their comfort zones to access a site or coordinate access. Finally, the tourist is an important component of the tourism experience, and controlling this element helps to regulate tourist interactions to create the optimal tourism setting.

**Table 2.1: Underlying Principles of Cultural Tourism**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Principle</b>
The nature of tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tourism is a commercial activity.</li><li>• Tourism involves the consumption of experiences.</li><li>• Tourism is entertainment.</li><li>• Tourism is a demand-driven activity that is difficult to control.</li></ul>
Attractions drive tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not all tourism attractions are equal.</li><li>• Cultural heritage attractions are part of tourism.</li><li>• Not all cultural assets are cultural tourist attractions.</li></ul>
Factors influencing visitation levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access and proximity dictate the potential number of visitors.</li><li>• Time availability influences the quality and depth of experience sought.</li></ul>
Tourist behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The tourist experience must be controlled to control the actions of the tourist.</li><li>• Tourists want controlled experiences.</li><li>• The more mainstream the market, the greater the need for user-friendly tourism products.</li></ul>
Cultural tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not all cultural tourists are alike.</li><li>• Cultural tourism products may be challenging and confronting but not intimidating or accusatory.</li><li>• Tourists want “authenticity” but not really reality.</li></ul>

(McKercher & Du Cros, 2002, p. 27)

Tourism destinations are ultimately a business and a product, and consumer behaviors are an important factor in the success of a destination. Researchers are further exploring consumer behaviors through the application of marketing principles such as brand loyalty and customer engagement. One such study examined the relationships between customer engagement, service brand evaluation, and brand trust with brand loyalty as the outcome (So, King, Sparks, & Wang, 2016). The study, conducted in Australia through an online consumer panel, found that brand loyalty is directly influenced by customer engagement and service brand evaluation, and it is indirectly influenced by both of these factors through brand trust. The researchers argue that

customer engagement has a greater influence on brand loyalty than purchase-specific actions.

A follow-up study (Harrigan, Evers, Miles & Daly, 2017) examined the relationships tested by So, King, Sparks, & Wang (2016) with the inclusion of involvement as an antecedent to customer engagement, specifically related to the use of social media in the tourist decision-making process. The data was collected via an online survey panel company and utilized the 25-item customer engagement with tourism brands (CETB) scale created by So et al. (2014), a 10-item involvement scale adapted from Zaichkowsky (1994), and the 4-item behavioral intention of loyalty scale (Zeithaml et al., 1996). Building on the 2016 model of So et al., the researchers found a positive relationship between customer involvement and customer engagement with brand loyalty as the outcome. Customers with higher levels of involvement were found to have a higher level of engagement with social media posts and discussions. This led to an increased level of loyalty among the more involved and engaged customers with the destination. The application of consumer behavior theories and constructs to tourism research provides a deeper understanding of the tourism experience.

Behavioral intentions, including revisit intention and the intention to recommend to others, are regarded as indicators of destination loyalty (Loureiro, 2014). In this context, destination loyalty can also be identified as brand loyalty which refers to a customer's consistent intention to repurchase a product or revisit a destination (Oliver, 1999). Revisit intention is defined as the intention to return to a destination that the consumer previously visited. The measurement of revisit intention has been described as an ideal dimension of destination loyalty (Oppermann, 1998). According to Chen and

Gursoy (2001), repeat visitation can be also be examined in conjunction with the level at which the tourist finds the destination recommendable to others. Revisit intention contributes significantly to the understanding of consumer behavior and the ultimate goal of any business. A recent study explored international tourists' experiences at Mynamar beach, focusing on satisfaction as a mediator of need gratification, experience flow, and perceived travel risks with revisit intention (Chen, Htaik, Hiele, & Chen, 2016). The study found that need gratification and flow experience both have a positive effect on satisfaction whereas perceived travel risks have a negative effect. The researchers concluded that minimizing the perceived travel risk, and increasing flow experience creates a higher level of satisfaction, thus positively influencing revisit intention.

## **Cultural Tourism**

### *Definitions and Current Research*

Traveling to cultural and historic destinations has been documented for thousands of years, and, though not a new phenomenon, it is has only recently been considered a common special interest tourism (McKercher & Du Cros, 2002). Researchers and tourism marketers began to recognize traveling to cultural sites as cultural tourism approximately five decades ago (Tighe, 1986), but within the last twenty years research into the activities surrounding cultural tourism sites has generated a greater understanding of the overall concept.

Researchers have defined cultural tourism through many lenses. At the most basic level, it can be defined as the act of traveling to a destination for the purpose of consuming the culture (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2017), including the habits, beliefs,

and traditions of people groups (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2017). Cultural tourism definitions can vary greatly, but generally fall within one of four categories: tourism-derived definitions, motivational definitions, experiential definitions, and operational definitions (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015).

**Table 2.2a: Definitions of Cultural Tourism**

<b>Definition Category</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Citation</b>
Tourism-Derived Definitions	Cultural tourism is considered to be a form of special interest tourism in which cultural offerings act as the motivator for people to visit the destination.	Ap, 1999; McIntosh & Goeldner, 1990; Zeppel, 1992
	Cultural tourism is derived from the relationship between people, places, and heritage.	Zeppel & Hall, 1991
	Cultural tourism has been described from a business perspective in which the culture and heritage are marketed as a product.	Goodrich, 1997
Motivational Definitions	Cultural tourism can be defined as “all movements of people to meet the human need for diversity, aimed at raising the cultural level of the individual, providing new knowledge, experiences and encounters”.	UNWTO, 1995
	Cultural tourism can be defined as “all movements of persons to specific cultural attractions such as heritage sites, artistic and cultural manifestations, arts and drama outside their normal place of residence”.	ATLAS, 2009

**Table 2.2b: Definitions of Cultural Tourism Continued**

<b>Definition Category</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Citation</b>
Experiential Definitions	Cultural tourism is not one thing; it is many things, and one of those is an experiential activity with aspirational elements.	McKercher & Du Cros, 2002
	Cultural tourism can be defined as interactions among travelers and the unique heritage places.	Blackwell, 1997; Schweitzer, 1999; TC 1991
	Cultural tourism has been described as a way to encourage learning about new people groups, history and experience traditions	McKercher & Du Cros, 2002
Operational Definitions	In many research studies, cultural tourism is not defined, but rather described in terms of activities.	McKercher & Du Cros, 2002
	Activities used to describe cultural tourism include: use of cultural heritage assets such as museums, castles, ruins, art, festivals, musical events, folk arts, subcultures, cathedrals, and anything else that may represent the cultural offerings of people.	Goodrich, 1997; Jamieson, 1994; Miller, 1997; Richards, 1996
	Cultural tourism has also been used as an umbrella term for a vast a set of activities, and even narrower specialty tourism.	McKercher & Du Cros, 2002

The definitions provided in Table 2.2 demonstrate the varying levels of understanding cultural tourism. One aspect these definitions have in common is the focus on cultural/heritage offerings. As outlined in Table 2.1, attractions drive tourism, but not all cultural or heritage sites are tourism attractions. Taking this into consideration, McKercher and Du Cros (p. 6, 2002) outline four elements that create a cultural tourism site:

- Tourism

- Use of cultural heritage assets
- Consumption of experiences and products
- The tourist

The authors' emphasis on the necessary components in creating a cultural tourism site provides another perspective in defining cultural tourism. The combination effect of these four components allows a destination to truly be classified as a cultural heritage site, but many tourists are partaking in aspects of cultural tourism outside of these parameters through participation in activities such as visiting a local museum or monument, exploring the historic district of a town or city, or partaking in a local festival or fair. The consumption of the local culture, whether as the primary purpose of the trip, or an incidental factor, creates an opportunity for the tourist to become part of the cultural tourism landscape.

The diversity of offerings the United States provides coupled with the continued growth in tourism creates an atmosphere prime for cultural sites and cultural tourism. Due to the complexity of identifying the cultural tourist, it is difficult to determine the number of intentional cultural tourists but, based on previous research conducted through the UNWTO, it can be estimated that somewhere between 35% and 70% of international travelers take part in cultural tourism (McKercher & Du Cros, 2002). In the United States, there were an estimated 1.7 billion person-trips in 2015 for leisure travel (U.S. Travel Association, 2017). Using the lowest estimate for cultural tourists as 35%, it can be estimated that there are at least 600 million cultural tourist trips in the United States each year.



As stated above, cultural tourism includes a variety of activities and has many subsectors. “The major (directly) connected tourism products for cultural tourism are rural tourism (traditions, lifestyle, local gastronomy), wine tourism (grape and viticulture), conference tourism and eco-tourism (local culture, lifestyle)” (Csapo, 2012, p. 210). Table 2.3 (Csapó, 2012) presents the types of cultural tourism along with the activities and products associated with each.

**Table 2.3a: Classification of Major Cultural Tourism Forms (Csapó, 2012)**

<b>Types of Cultural Tourism</b>	<b>Tourism Products, Activities</b>
Heritage Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural and cultural heritage (very much connected to nature-based or ecotourism);</li> <li>• Material               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Built heritage,</li> <li>○ Architectural sites,</li> <li>○ National and historical memorials</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Non material               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Literature</li> <li>○ Arts,</li> <li>○ Folklore</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cultural heritage sites               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Museums, collections,</li> <li>○ Libraries,</li> <li>○ Theatres,</li> <li>○ Event locations,</li> <li>○ Memories connected to historical person</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Cultural thematic routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide range of themes and types:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Spiritual,</li> <li>○ Industrial,</li> <li>○ Artistic,</li> <li>○ Gastronomic,</li> <li>○ Architectural,</li> <li>○ Linguistic,</li> <li>○ Vernacular,</li> <li>○ Minority</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Table 2.3b: Classification of Major Cultural Tourism Forms (Csapó, 2012) Cont.**

<b>Types of Cultural Tourism</b>	<b>Tourism Products, Activities</b>
Cultural city tourism, cultural tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Classic” city tourism, sightseeing</li> <li>• Cultural capitals of Europe</li> <li>• “Cities as creative spaces for cultural tourism”</li> </ul>
Traditions, ethnic tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local cultures’ traditions</li> <li>• Ethnic diversity</li> </ul>
Event and festival tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural festivals and events                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Music festivals and events</li> <li>○ Fine arts festivals and events</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Religious tourism, pilgrimage routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visiting religious sites and locations with religious motivations</li> <li>• Visiting religious sites and locations without religious motivations</li> <li>• Pilgrimage routes</li> </ul>
Creative culture, creative tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional cultural and artistic activities                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Performing arts</li> <li>○ Visual arts,</li> <li>○ Cultural heritage and literature</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cultural industries                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Printed works,</li> <li>○ Multimedia,</li> <li>○ The press,</li> <li>○ Cinema,</li> <li>○ Audiovisual and phonographic productions,</li> <li>○ Design and cultural tourism</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Cultural tourists can be divided into a number of categories based on their intentions when visiting a cultural site. Table 2.3 reveals that cultural tourism includes multiple potential activities. Many tourists that do not identify as being a cultural tourist nevertheless do partake in cultural tourism. McKercher (2002) created a cultural tourist typology based on the importance cultural tourism plays in tourists’ decision-making process and the depth of experience sought. He divides tourists into five categories: serendipitous cultural tourist, purposeful cultural tourist, incidental cultural tourist, casual

cultural tourist, and sightseeing cultural tourist. According to McKercher, true cultural tourists are purposeful, seeking more information during the decision-making process and desiring a deeper experience. The sightseeing cultural tourist tends to be less concerned with deeper experiences, but seeks out cultural sites during the decision-making process. Serendipitous cultural tourists and casual cultural tourist are more likely to visit destinations that have some type of history, but it is not their primary reason for visiting.

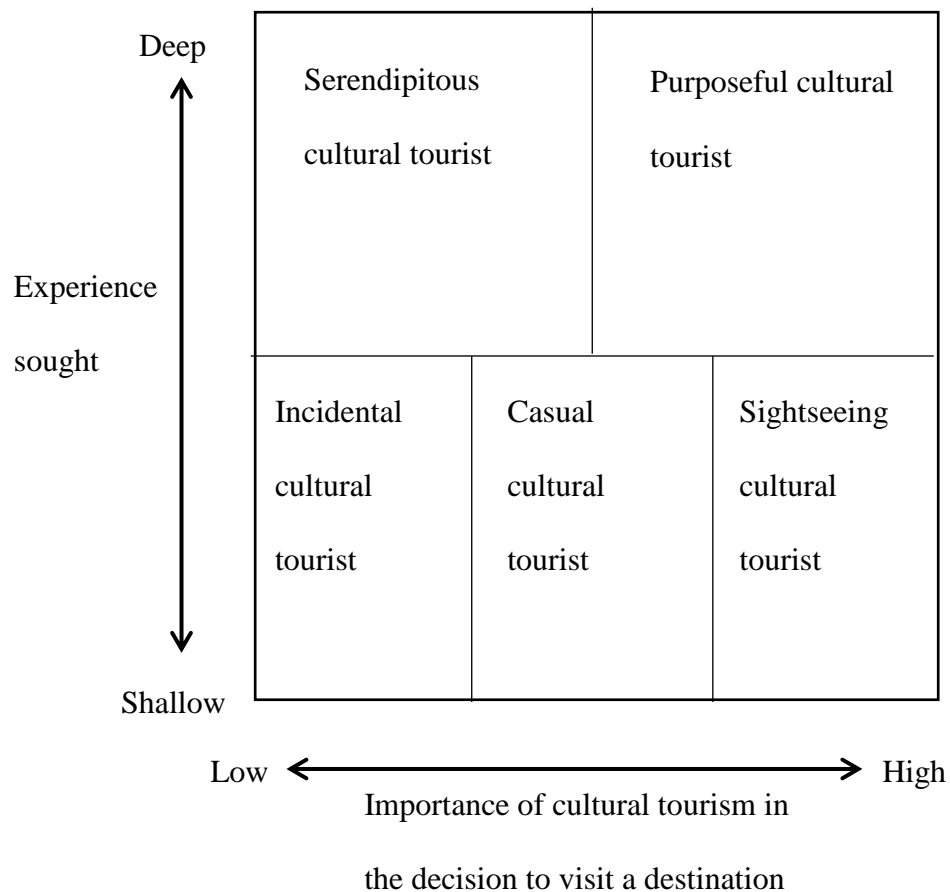


Figure 2.1: Classification of Cultural Tourists (McKercher, 2002)

*Cultural Tourism Research Trends*

Current research on consumer behavior in cultural tourism has followed the same trend as tourism research. Researchers seek to better understand the relationships between

consumer behavior concepts in the cultural tourism context. In a 2013 study, researchers surveyed Americans traveling internationally for leisure trips to determine if there were generational differences in travel information usage, previous destination experiences, future choices, destination evaluation, and travel activity preferences (Li, Li, & Hudson, 2013). The study showed that such differences do exist in all five categories. However, an especially interesting finding was a difference in how important members of different generations perceived professional advice, word-of-mouth advice, and online sources: baby boomers and generation x found online sites more important than generation y when searching for travel information.

Researchers have also explored the positive relationship of tourist involvement and place attachment with nature-based tourism. Specifically, researchers focused on the mediating effect of tourist involvement on place attachment and interpretation satisfaction during tour groups at major national parks in Taiwan (Hwang, Lee, & Chen, 2005). The researchers concluded that individuals with a greater attachment to nature are more likely to have a higher level of involvement and, therefore, a greater level of interpretation satisfaction during nature tours.

A 2015 study assessed the relationship between tourists' environmental knowledge of Taiwanese islands, environmental sensitivity, place attachment, and environmentally responsible behavior (Cheng & Wu, 2014). A survey of 477 tourists to the Penghu Islands found that the more a tourist knew of the islands, the greater their level of environmental sensitivity. Such sensitivity was found to have a positive relationship with place attachment, which had a positive relationship with environmentally responsible behavior. Additionally, environmental sensitivity and place

attachment were found to have a significant interaction effect on environmental knowledge and environmentally responsible behavior.

The theoretical framework from Ramkissoon (2015) examined the relationships between authenticity in African islands, place satisfaction, place attachment, and cultural behavioral intentions. The model proposed that tourists' perceived authenticity positively influences place satisfaction. It also proposed that place satisfaction, in turn, positively influences place attachment (consisting of four dimensions: place identity, place dependence, place affect, and place social bonding). The more attached to the destination, the stronger the cultural behavioral intentions would be (Ramkissoon, 2015). Though the 2015 article did not test the proposed model, the researcher did test a similar model in a 2013 article which linked place attachment, place satisfaction, and pro-environmental behavioral intentions (Ramkissoon et al., 2013).

While cultural tourism covers a breadth of potential tourism activities and destinations, the focus of this project is on one aspect: rural tourism. The U.S. Travel Association reported that rural sightseeing was among the top five leisure travel activities for domestic travelers in 2016. Based on Csapó's table of cultural tourism types, sightseeing is an activity related to cultural tourism.

## **Rural Tourism**

### *Definitions of rural*

In today's connected world, tourists are beginning to "unplug" as they enjoy their surroundings and create memorable tourism experiences (Dickinson, Hibbert, & Filimonau, 2016). Rural destinations tend to be picturesque settings that make such

unplugged experiences possible. As part of cultural tourism, rural tourism is a difficult concept to define. There is no standard definition of rural within research. The definition is created by the individual and the circumstances surrounding its use (George et al., 2009). Rural areas have traditionally been associated with agriculture (Garrod, Wornell, & Youell, 2006) and agritourism (Lupi, Giaccio, Mastronardi, Giannelli, & Scardera, 2017), but rural areas have also begun to create tourism products by diversifying their offerings and capitalizing on cultural aspects and rural landscapes (Garrod et al., 2006). For instance, the Mississippi Delta has created the Delta Blues Museum dedicated to the musical history of the blues and the influence on the region (Visit Mississippi, 2017).

Definitions of the term “rural” range from descriptive approaches, spatial determinisms, locality, primary production domination, social representation, and other various methods (George et al., 2009). The most common method for defining “rural” centers on three main factors:

1. Population density and size of settlements,
  2. Land use and its dominance by agriculture and forestry,
  3. Traditional social structures and issues of community identity and heritage
- (OECD, 1994).

More recently, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) gave the following definitions:

- *Rural regions are diverse and highly influenced by their specific natural environments.*
- *Their development path is substantially different from standard urban models.*

- *The success or weakness of rural regions is more affected by changes in economic conditions than urban areas.*
- *Rural regions employ different development models adapted to reflect specific features of having a low density of population and economic activity.*

(OECD, 2017)

The OECD later stated that the definition should be redefined into three categories based on rural economies:

- rural areas inside functional urban areas
- rural areas adjacent to functional urban areas
- rural areas that are far from functional urban areas

(OECD, 2017).

Each “rural” category possess different weaknesses related to rural hardships, with those areas located farther from urbanized areas tending to be the most vulnerable to economic impacts (OECD, n.d.). Rural areas far from the functional urban areas have the greatest need for economic growth and development.

In addition to the definitions from OECD, the term “rural” is defined differently by organizations, government agencies, and researchers. Organizations define “rural” in a measurable manner. These definitions follow both the descriptive and spatial approach. For government agencies, having a clear set of parameters when defining a concept is key in providing consistent information about an area. Researchers on the other hand, do not always provide measurable parameters when conducting rural tourism research; some simply state that rural tourism is the focus of the research without clearly defining the term (Daugstad, 2008; Loureiro, 2014). The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines rural as

“of or relating to the country, country people or life, or agriculture.” The United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Economic Research Service (ERS) published an article defining what rural means for the United States, stating, “The use of multiple definitions reflects the reality that rural and urban are multidimensional concepts, making clear-cut distinctions between the two difficult.” (Cromartie & Bucholtz, Defining the "Rural" in Rural America, 2008).. Table 2.4 provides an overview of the definitions used to outline the parameters surrounding rural.

**Table 2.4a: Definitions of Rural**

<b>Definition</b>	<b>Citation</b>
Rural-urban continuum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural is described as everything urban is not.</li> <li>Community v. Association</li> <li>• Locals v. Cosmopolitans</li> <li>• Different social roles played by same person v. Different social roles played by different people, and so on.</li> </ul>	OECD, 1994
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urbanized areas are areas with 50,000 or more people, an urban cluster is that of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000.</li> <li>• “Rural encompasses all population, housing and territory not included within an urban area.”</li> <li>• Rural is also characterized as “less dense, sparse population, not built up, at a distance”</li> </ul>	U.S. Census Bureau, 2017; Ratcliffe, Burd, Holder, & Fields, 2016
Metropolitan Statistical Areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population</li> <li>• adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties</li> </ul> Micropolitan Statistical Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at least one urban cluster of at least 10,000 but less than 50,000 population</li> <li>• adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties</li> </ul>	Office Management and Budget (Rural Information Center, 2016)



**Table 2.4b: Definitions of Rural continued**

<b>Definition</b>	<b>Citation</b>
County classification based on nonmetropolitan areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nonmetro counties include some combination of:</li><li>• open countryside</li><li>• rural town (places with fewer than 2,500 people)</li><li>• urban areas with populations ranging from 2,500 to 49,999</li></ul>	(Cromartie & Parker, What is Rural?, 2017)

With the number of definitions possible, researchers must be precise when defining what rural means within their research. The OECD defines rural areas within the OECD countries as being remote, not as densely populated, smaller towns/cities, land is dominantly used for agricultural purposes, and there tends to be a more tight-knit community and link to heritage. Although rural destinations may be described using many of these terms, it is necessary to have a measurable definition to set parameters for data collection when conducting research.

#### *Rural United States*

Rural tourism is growing in the United States. Traveling through rural parts of United States has become more popular in recent years as people are spending more time outdoors and seeking unique activities to do either with a group or individually (Royo-Vela, 2009). With the continuing urbanization of the United States, rural areas provide an opportunity for urban dwellers to escape from their normal atmosphere (Dickinson et al., 2016). The visitors may also be more motivated due to the nostalgic potential these destinations provide (George, Mair, & Reid, 2009).

Despite those opportunities, rural tourism does face some challenges. Though it is easy for many to navigate across the country due to strong highway infrastructure and the

accessibility of GPS and maps, the infrastructure connecting much of the rural United States consists of small roads, often times unmaintained. These road systems and open, undeveloped spaces (Gartner, 2004) may create uneasiness in travelers unfamiliar with such conditions. These undeveloped areas are both the draw for rural travel (i.e. scenery and natural beauty) and potential impediment due to the possible lack of gas stations, dining, lodging, and cellular service. In general, those in the United States expect quick traveling conditions (hence the interstate system) and like to avoid slower speed limits, red lights, and the occasional livestock in the road. The average speed through more rural states such as Mississippi, Alabama, Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Idaho, and Missouri is 67 miles per hour (TomTom, 2010), faster than most states, indicating drivers' use of interstates and highways rather than driving through towns. Rural tourism is one avenue to increase traffic to these towns.

### *Rural Economy*

In 2013, rural or nonmetro counties accounted for approximately 61.6% of the counties in the United States (USDA ERS, 2013). The continental United States consists of 3,109 counties. Of those counties, 1,948 were classified as nonmetro in 2013 based on the United States census (Figure 2.2). The orange highlighted counties in Figure 2.2 represent the vast amount of land covered by nonmetro counties in the continental United States. As of July, 2015, 14% of United States residents were living in rural (nonmetro) counties consisting of 72% of the total land mass (Kusmin, 2016). As a large portion of the United States is made up of rural counties, it is common for people to travel to these areas to explore different parts of the country. Rural communities are also beginning to take advantage of the tourists' desire to travel by developing and promoting tourist

attractions that can then grow their tourist base in a more sustainable manner (George, Mair, & Reid, 2009).

The 2016 report on rural America found that, though the population has not changed significantly since 2014 and unemployment rates have decreased slightly since 2013, median earnings in rural areas continue to be lower than in urban areas (Kusmin, 2016). Rural America needs jobs and economic growth to ensure continued increases in employment rates and to minimize the pay gap between urban and rural areas.

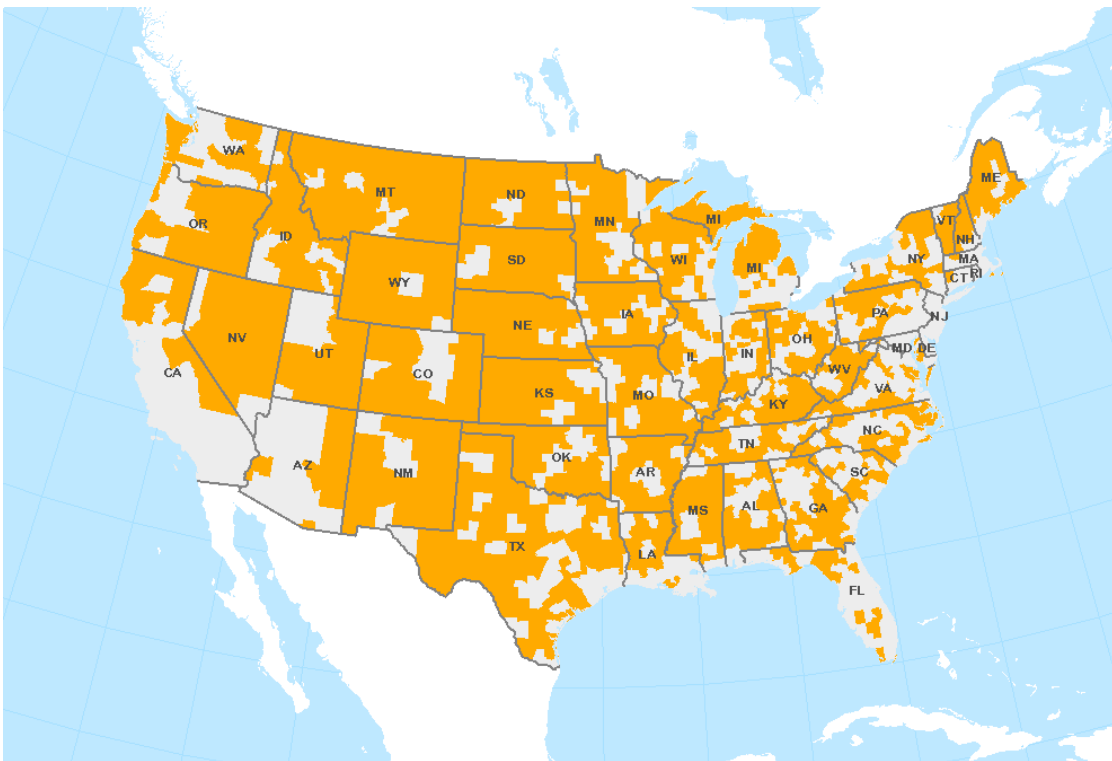


Figure 2.2: Nonmetro Counties in Continental United States (USDA ERS, n.d.)

Though population rates in rural counties have remained somewhat stagnant since 2014, counties with recreation as a primary industry have seen a significant increase since 2000. Tourism development in these areas may be a contributor to the increase, as well as attracting retirees (Kusmin, 2016).

### *Rural Tourism Research*

Rural tourism as the focus of research is a growing trend which explores the potential of open landscapes and small communities and works toward providing practical and economical solutions for development in rural areas (Wilson, Fesenmaier, Fesenmaier, & Van Es, 2001). Rural tourism provides an opportunity for small businesses to thrive, local farms to expand, and communities to create a unique atmosphere. However, there are also some potential downfalls to tourism in small communities, such as competition among rural communities (Skuras, Petrou, & Clark, 2006), increased traffic and strain on the infrastructure (Wilson et al., 2001), and the communities not supporting the tourism development efforts (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004). Despite those potential deterrents, many believe that tourism can be a positive influence in rural areas. Therefore, they propose several factors that would create a successful tourism product. Wilson et al. (2001) found that ten factors, based on focus group testing, were essential to rural tourism development: “1) a complete tourism package, 2) good community leadership, 3) support and participation of local government, 4) sufficient funds for tourism development, 5) strategic planning, 6) coordination and cooperation between businesspersons and local leadership, 7) coordination and cooperation between rural tourism entrepreneurs, 8) information and technical assistance for tourism development and promotion, 9) good convention and visitors bureaus, and 10) widespread community support for tourism” (p. 134).

Once a potentially successful tourism destination is created, tourist behavior should then be assessed. Visitors to the destination are consuming a product; participating in activities, and seeking an “authentic” experience (McKercher, 2002). Researchers are

now moving forward into narrower areas of research similar to the current focuses in tourism and cultural tourism: consumer behavior. Consumer (tourist) behavior is an important component in understanding the tourism experience. In recent rural tourism research, studies have examined the relationships between rural tourism experience, pleasant arousal, memory, place attachment, and behavioral intentions (Loureiro, 2014). Loureiro found that rural experience economy had a significant positive influence on both pleasant arousal and memory, it was also found that pleasant arousal had a significant positive influence on both place attachment and behavioral intentions. Additionally, place attachment was found to have a significant positive influence on behavioral intention. The more rural tourists can identify with a place and create positive emotions and memories, the more likely they are to recommend it to others and to return in the future.

Other recent research studies within rural tourism have examined tourists' memories, sensory impressions, and the impact of those feelings on loyalty (Agapito, Pinto, & Mendes, 2017); perception of risk in destination choice and travel behavior for religious groups traveling in the Israeli community (Mansfeld, Jonas, & Cahaner, 2016); and segmentation of rural tourists to the Portugal countryside into four clusters (active visitors, passive nature observers, inactive visitors, and summer family vacationers), based on a list of tourism activities (Eusebio, Carneiro, Kastenholz, Figueiredo, & Soares da Silva, 2017).

Loyalty to a destination is the ultimate goal for any business or tourist site and is generally measured based on behavioral intentions (Li, Cai, Lehto, & Huang, 2010). Repeat visitation and intention to return are especially important factors for tourism managers because individuals that continue to return to a destination are more likely to

stay longer than first time visitors (Lau & Mckercher, 2004; Wang, 2004). In addition, serving returning tourists generally costs less than attracting new visitors (Lau & Mckercher, 2004; Shoemaker & Lewis, 1999). Additionally, when tourists' intention to return combined with positive word of mouth, creates a loyal consumer (Oh, Uysal, & Weaver, 1995).

Researchers have given much of their time to revisit intention studying its antecedents for decades. It has been linked as a positive outcome of attribute satisfaction (Phillips et al., 2013) and overall satisfaction (Chen et al., 2016; del Bosque & Martín, 2008; Pratminingsih et al., 2014; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Zabkar, Brencic, & Dmitroviic, 2010). Additionally, it has been found to be positively associated with place attachment (Loureiro, 2014; Prayag & Ryan, 2012), destination image (del Bosque & Martín, 2008; Phillips et al., 2013; Pratminingsih et al., 2014; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Zhang, Fu, Cai, & Lu, 2014), motivation (Li et al., 2010; Park & Yoon, 2009; Pratminingsih et al., 2014), and involvement (Prayag & Ryan, 2012).

### **Place Attachment**

Place attachment is defined as “the bonding that occurs between individuals and their meaningful environments” (Scannell & Gifford, 2010, p. 1). It has been studied in a variety of settings, including the emotional attachment individuals have with their immediate environment (e.g. neighborhood, town, city, state, country) (Brown, Perkins, & Brown, 2003), pro-environmental behaviors when traveling (Ramkissoon et al., 2013),

tourist loyalty in an island atmosphere (Prayag & Ryan, 2012), and disaster psychology in which individuals are forced to relocate or rebuild due to some form of disaster and the psychological consequences of the disaster due to the individual's attachment to the place (Brown & Perkins, 1992).

Place attachment originated from attachment theory, which originally described the emotional bond between a mother and her child (Bowlby, 1969). Place attachment is described as the emotional bond a person has with something else, this could be a person, item, or place. Tourism research focuses on place attachment to gauge the emotional tie between a person and a place (Raymond, Brown, & Robinson, 2011). The place could be a general location, such as the ocean or the mountains, or it could be more distinct, such as a specific town or park—or even a specific bench within a park, in a specific town. Place attachment is formed as the individual adds significance to a location.

As researchers have delved deeper into the place attachment variable, there has been debate as to what variables are used to measure place attachment. In some tourism and leisure literature, researchers believe that place attachment is an overarching construct composed of place dependence and place identity (Gross & Brown, 2008; Kyle, Graefe, Manning, & Bacon, 2003; Loureiro, 2014; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Williams & Vaske, 2003), while other researchers have included concepts such as place social bonding (Kyle, Mowen & Tarrant, 2004) and place affect (Scannell & Gifford, 2010; Tsai & McCabe, 2012).

### *Place Dependence*

Place dependence is the functional attachment a person has with a place (Williams & Vaske, 2003). In other words, the functional attachment refers to the attachment an individual has with a place's tangible aspects including things such as the amenities available, the condition of the resources being used, the type of destination (e.g. mountains, beach, lake, view), or the activities available (e.g. hiking, canoeing, surfing, relaxation, night life).

### *Place Identity*

Place identity refers to the emotional attachment a person has with a place. The more an individual identifies with a place, the stronger the emotional bond, creating a sense of belonging within the location (Tuan, 1980). Additionally, research has shown that a tourist's self-identity and their relationship with a place create a strong sense of attachment for the individual (Hou, Lin, & Morais, 2005).

### *Place Social Bonding*

Place social bonding refers to the attachment an individual feels because the place enables social interactions with others leading to attachment (Ramkissoon et al., 2013). The facilitated interaction creates a bonding effect with the place and with people, fostering a sense of group belonging (Hammit, Kyle, & Oh, 2009).

### *Place Affect*

Place affect is the most recently added sub-dimension of place attachment (Halpenny, 2010). Described as the affective bond an individual has with a place (Ramkissoon et al., 2013), it is formed through the development of a person's feelings surrounding the place (Tuan, 1977).



Tourism research has directly linked place attachment to satisfaction (Ramkissoon et al., 2013), involvement (Prayag & Ryan, 2012), destination image (Prayag & Ryan, 2012), and motivation (Kyle, Mowen, & Tarrant, 2004). However, not all research utilized the four subcomponent factors of place attachment. Ramkissoon et al. (2013) and Kyle et al. (2004) were among the few articles that utilized all four components of place attachment. Ramkissoon et al (2013), tested place attachment as a second-order factor, stating that the four components—place identity, place dependence, place affect, and place social bonding—create the higher order factor of place attachment. The model was tested against a 2-factor model of place identity and place dependence, and a 3-factor model of place identity, place dependence, and place social bonding. Through confirmatory factor analysis, each model was tested against one another for significant differences, the result was that the 4-factor model proved to have the best model fit.

**Hypothesis 1: Place attachment is a second-order factor comprised of four variables: place identity, place dependence, place affect, and place social bonding.**

### **Involvement**

Involvement was originally defined as “the number of ‘connections,’ conscious bridging experiences or personal references per minute, that the subject makes between the content of the persuasive stimulus and the content of his own life” (Krugman, 1966). The “persuasive stimulus” refers to an advertisement (whether print or motion) and the “content of his own life” simply means that the individual can relate the product to some aspect of their life. One of the major conclusions of Krugman’s research on consumer

involvement with television advertising was that the more interest in the product being advertised, the more interest the person showed toward that advertisement (Krugman, 1966).

The theoretical foundation for involvement initially appeared in 1978 with a framework by Houston and Rothschild. This framework had three factors, each with various levels of involvement: enduring, situation, and response. Enduring factors are long lasting, causing individuals to pay closer attention to the product and to relate to it through their personal characteristics. Situation factors consist of items that an individual is involved with due to specific situations or instances in time. These can change over time and are not consistent. The third type of factor, response, is related to a state of mind, referring to a consumer's decision-making process.

The involvement construct then became a measure of advertisement effectiveness when evaluating the advertisement in conjunction with the intended market (Zaichkowsky, 1986). A more modern approach to involvement began to take shape in the mid-1980s. According to Zaichkowsky (1986), there are three specific branches of involvement: involvement with advertising, involvement between a person and product, and involvement with purchase decisions. However, despite the variety of applications proposed as a result of involvement research, no clear, concise definition yet existed. Zaichkowsky, however, examined each branch of research and found a common thread tying the three together: personal relevance. When examining people's involvement within any domain (a product, advertisement, or purchasing decision), the most important factor is that they connect that domain to their personal life. Zaichkowsky concluded that

involved individuals will perceive importance, take notice, and behave differently than those not involved.

Tourist involvement can be attributed to either purchase decision involvement or product involvement, depending on where the tourist is in the decision-making process. Involvement with a place can create emotional bonds (Pretty, Chipuer, and Bramston, 2003); more involved people have a stronger bond than those that are less involved. Personal involvement can also be considered a connection between a person and an activity, product, or experience (Gross & Brown, 2008; Zaichkowsky, 1985). Another definition explores personal involvement as an unobservable motivation or interest toward a product, place, or experience (Gursoy & Gavcar, 2003) that can change over time (Zaichkowsky, 1985).

Zaichkowsky (1986) has a similar model to that of Houston and Rothschild which considers personal, physical, and situational factors as antecedents to involvement with a product, advertisement, or purchase decision. The proposed model views personal factors, such as needs, important items, interest items, and valued items as being antecedent to involvement with advertisements and products. Object and stimulus factors, such as communication methods and quality, and differentiation among alternatives are antecedents to advertisement and involvement in purchase decisions. Finally, situational factors such as purchase/use and occasion may be antecedents to advertisement and purchase decision involvement. Situational factors, such as those discussed by Houston and Rothschild (1978), change depending on a person's circumstances. One thing that Zaichkowsky notes based on her model is that the level of involvement can be influenced by one or more of the factors at any time and can change. Although the theory began as a

way to view consumers' relationships with advertising, it has since branched out into the social sciences, psychology, marketing, and behavioral research (Varki & Wong, 2003).

## **Motivation**

“To be motivated means to be moved to do something” (Ryan & Deci, 2000 p. 54). In psychology research, motivation is generally categorized according to a person's underlying motives, as either intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to when people do something because they find it fun or enjoyable. Extrinsic motivation pertains to activities that produce some type of distinguishable outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Another commonly accepted definition of motivation is “a motive is an internal factor that arouses, directs, and integrates a person's behavior” (Murray, 1964, p. 7). Fodness (1994) states that motivation is a process of internal psychological factors that results in tension within the individual and thus, action. As individuals consider the possible positive outcomes of partaking in an activity (Iso-Ahola, 1982), they wish to release the tension due to the increasing pressure of internal factors (Fodness, 1994), with the result being motivation.

Based on those general definitions of motivation, travel motivation has been defined as “a dynamic process of internal psychological factors (needs and wants) that generate a state of tension or disequilibrium within individuals” (Crompton & McKay, 1997 p. 427). Motivation to travel is based on the internal and external forces working together to inspire an individual to partake in a tourism activity (Park & Yoon, 2009). By understanding these travel motivations, industry professionals are able to gain a higher level of awareness of customer needs and the ability to make experiences more

memorable (Huang & Hsu, 2009). Because travel motivation is such an important topic in tourism research, it has been examined from various perspectives, but the most common focus of the research is on the underlying motivations that drive individuals to specific destinations.

As stated earlier, motivation is comprised of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. In tourism literature, intrinsic motivation is typically examined in light of factors that internally compel an individual to travel, while extrinsic motivation consists of external factors that attract a person to a specific destination. This is referred to as the push-pull theory, the primary theoretical foundation for travel motivation research. Push factors are socio-psychological motives whereas pull factors are motives that created by the destination and not by individuals. They have also been referred to as cultural motives (Crompton, 1979). Another way of stating it is that push factors motivate people to travel while pull factors motivate them where to go.

In much of the literature, push and pull motives are thought of as being independent of one another. However, some researchers note that they should not be viewed as separate constructs but as codependent (Klenosky, 2002). As the push motives are formed, so is the desire for travel (the “why”). As the pull motives become more focused, the “where” of travel is discovered (Crompton, 1979). When focusing on one source of motivation over another, it is difficult to fully comprehend the motives behind tourists’ destination and travel choices. However, through the combination of the two forms of motivation, a more comprehensive and holistic view of the foundations for travel can be explored.

Crompton (1979) was one of the major pioneers in tourism motivation research, and his study “Motivations for Pleasure Vacation” has had major influence. By empirically testing the push-pull motives associated with travel, Crompton identified various motives related to both socio-psychological motivations (push motives) and cultural motivations (pull motives). The seven motivations associated with push motives include: “escape from a perceived mundane environment,” “exploration and evaluation of self,” “relaxation,” “prestige,” “regression,” “enhancement of kinship relationships,” and “facilitation of social interaction.” The pull motives include: “novelty” and “education.” Based on these nine motives, there is considerable variability as to why people travel to specific destinations. The reason researchers examine travel motivation is to understand the “why,” but within rural tourism research, it is still somewhat murky. Goeldner and Ritchie (2003), identify four main areas related to travel motivation: physical, cultural, interpersonal, and prestige. By categorizing the motivations into four categories, the researchers were able to better segment tourists into groups, providing more detailed information about each group.

Dann (1977), another pioneer in travel motivation research, proposed that travel motives can be separated into two categories, similar to those of Crompton. However, Dann based his early research on the theoretical constructs “anomie” and “ego-enhancement” (Dann, 1977). Anomie is a sociological theory related to depression, suicide, lack of confidence in political leadership, lack of fulfilled aspirations, unstable economy, and so forth. Based on this theory, Dann argues that anomie is comparable to travel push motivations such as those that motivate individuals to travel based on the need to get away from their normal routine, the pressures of society, and the struggles of

everyday life. Ego-enhancement is a similar sociological construct, related to the need for social interaction, prestige, advancement of social status, and the focus on self-recognition. Both anomie and ego-enhancement constructs can be linked to motivations for travel.

Iso-Ahola (1982), expanded on Crompton's idea of cultural and socio-psychological motivations and Dann's anomie and ego-enhancement classification of tourist travel motives. Iso-Ahola suggests that the motivations for tourism can be classified into seeking and escaping motives as both play a role in tourist travel decisions. Additionally, he proposes a model for tourism motivation with four potential concentrations. They are presented through a 2x2 grid examining both seeking intrinsic rewards and escaping everyday environments. The cells are based on seeking personal and interpersonal rewards and on escaping personal and interpersonal environments. At any given time, a tourist's motivation can be classified into one of the four cells. The individuals in cell one are motivated to travel primarily to escape from their personal environment while seeking personal rewards. Tourists that are identified within cell two seek out interpersonal rewards while trying to escape from their personal environment.

The third cell describes individuals that are seeking personal rewards to benefit themselves, while at the same time trying to escape their interpersonal environment. Finally, the fourth cell represents the individuals that are seeking interpersonal rewards while trying to escape their interpersonal environment (Iso-Ahola, 1982). The more common way of referring to the dimensions is the following labels: "personal escape," "interpersonal escape," "personal seeking," and "interpersonal seeking" (Snepenger, King, Marshall, & Uysal, 2006). Therefore, according to Iso-Ahola's research into travel

motivation, tourists are simultaneously motivated based on both seeking and escaping dimensions (Dunn Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1991).

In rural tourism research, motivation has been assessed primarily through a combination of push-pull factors and Iso-Ahola's travel motivation theory. For example, Kyle et al. (2004) focused on a combination of push and pull items relevant to the destination in question. Another research study utilized only items classified as "pull" motives (Pratminingsih et al., 2014). Yet another study categorized individuals into one of four clusters in a rural tourism setting based on a list of motivation items (Devesa, Laguna, & Palacios, 2010).

Researchers have linked involvement and push-pull motivation factors, determining that as individuals' motivation grows, their involvement level also increases (Josiam, Smeaton, & Clements, 1999). Additionally, many of the push-pull motivation factors were found to have a significant positive relationship with place dependence, place identity, place affect, and place social bonding (Kyle et al., 2004).

Motivation has also been found to have a significant positive influence on satisfaction, and revisit intention (Pratminingsih et al., 2014) and involvement has been found to have a significant positive influence on destination image and place attachment (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Both factors have been linked to destination image (Pratminingsih et al., 2014; Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Due to the links between motivation and involvement, involvement is hypothesized as having a moderating interaction effect between the components of motivation and destination image, place attachment, and revisit intention.



**Hypothesis 2: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between components of motivation and destination image.**

**Hypothesis 3: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between components of motivation and place attachment.**

**Hypothesis 4: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between components of motivation and revisit intention.**

### **Destination Image**

Destination image is based on the attitudes of tourists toward a destination (Crompton, 1979). The image a tourist holds of a destination affects behavior and choice of that destination (Gallarza, Saura, & Garcia, 2002). There are two main methods to destination image formation: personal factors and stimulus factors. Personal factors refer to both psychological and social attributes, including age, motivation, personality, and gender. The stimulus factors are those that lie outside the control of the individual. These may include informational sources, experiences, and other external stimuli (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999).

Due to the fact that individuals are likely to develop both cognitive and affective attachments to a destination, Baloglu and McCleary proposed a new model that incorporates both of these factors. The model consists of the type and amount of information sources, age, education, and socio-psychological travel motivations. Each of these factors is related to either a cognitive or affective evaluation of the destination, which then directly affects overall image.

Based on the model, eight hypotheses were proposed concluding that the cognitive evaluations of a destination significantly influence the affective evaluations of a destination. The implication is that knowledge can increase the motivations for visiting a destination. Additionally, as the levels of cognitive and affective evaluation increase, the overall image of the destination is perceived as more favorable by the individual. The amount, variety, and type of information sources used to research a destination significantly influences the cognitive evaluation of a destination. Additionally tourists' age and education levels significantly influence their cognitive and affective evaluation of a destination, while their socio-psychological motivations only influence their affective evaluations of a destination.

Beerli and Martin (2004), compiled a list of every potential attribute that could influence the overall image of a destination. These items were then put into nine categories: natural resources, general infrastructure, tourist infrastructure, tourist leisure and recreation, culture, history and art, political and economic factors, natural environment, social environment, and atmosphere of the place. These individual attributes are largely determined by the destination location, however some of the attributes are able to be cultivated. The same factors that Baloglu and McCleary found to develop the tourist destination image can also be considered influencers in the destination image formation process. Motivations, experiences, demographic characteristics, and information sources can all play a role in determining the overall image of a destination. These attributes can also either negatively or positively impact the destination image formation process. It is therefore necessary for destinations to actively manage their image.

Travel behavior refers to an individual's decision to travel. A person has many options and decisions to make when choosing a travel destination. Self-congruity theory is a theoretical model based on the idea that individuals compare their image of themselves (both actual and ideal self) in a variety of contexts with the destination's image (Sirgy & Su, 2000). Because tourists look for destinations that fit with either themselves or their ideal self, further research into this process was conducted. Researchers proposed an antecedent to destination image: destination environment which refers to both the destination atmosphere and the destination services. These cues appeal to different types of people and therefore influence their image of the destination in either a positive or negative manner.

Another antecedent to destination image is personal involvement (Prayag & Ryan, 2012), defined as the level of interest or importance of an object, place, or activity to an individual (Zaichkowsky, 1986). The researchers determined that the more individuals are involved with a destination or with certain attributes of the destination, the more likely they are to have a positive image of that destination (Prayag & Ryan, 2012).

Other antecedents to destination image formation include financial risk and socio-psychological risk. Chew and Jahari (2014) examined the relationships between financial risk, socio-psychological risk, and cognitive and affective image (which combine to form destination image). It is interesting to note here that while some researchers identify destination image as a single construct, Chew and Jahari intentionally separated the two based on previous theoretical designs. They sought to understand the perceived risks associated with Japan and the effect of cognitive and affective image. Perceived risks have a negative impact on destination image because the more dangerous or financially

risky a location, the less likely an individual will be able to afford to visit. If they do manage to make a visit once, it is unlikely they will be able to revisit. Chew and Jahari determined that financial risk and socio-psychological risk both have negative relationships with cognitive and affective image. However, an interesting find was the fact that physical risk was not associated with either cognitive or affective destination image (Chew & Jahari, 2014).

Recently, a study conducted in Indonesia examined motivation as an antecedent to destination image (Pratminingsih et al., 2014). The researchers hypothesized that motivation would influence destination image because motivation is “the driving force behind all behavior” (Pratminingsih et al., 2014 p. 20). Tourist motivation plays an important role in the decision-making process with regard to travel, and, therefore, it logically also influences the destination image. If the motivation for travel is relaxation, then the destination image formed would be based on this motivation and the degree to which the destination has met the level the individual was expecting.

Most research has ultimately examined the consequences of destination image. A positive or negative destination image can impact an entire trip and have a lasting influence on many variables. Because destination image can be formed prior to visiting a destination, during the visit, or after the visit, it is important for researchers to understand what this image formation may impact. The main goal in tourism is to attract visitors by presenting a positive image of a destination—whether that be a city, state, country, or rural destination—in the most positive light. This leads to the first consequence of destination image: future behavior, revisit intention, and recommendation (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Lee, 2009; Phillips et al., 2013; Pratminingsih et al., 2014; Prayag & Ryan,

2012; Qu, Kim, & Im, 2011). These three factors should be discussed simultaneously because they are all related. Future behavior is a combination of revisit intention, recommendation, and positive word of mouth (Lee, 2009), while revisit intention and intention to recommend to others are both signs of a positive experience and can be positive for destination managers. Revisit intention has also been linked to the positive experiences associated with a destination (Pratminingsih et al., 2014). The more positive the association is with a destination, the more significance is placed on that location, causing individuals to be more likely to revisit and recommend the destination to others (Phillips et al., 2013).

Another recent study separated revisit intention into two distinct variables: short-term revisit intention and long-term revisit intention (Assaker & Hallak, 2013). The researchers were interested in examining the relationships between destination image, satisfaction, and temporal revisit intention with novelty seeking as a moderator. By separating the temporal revisit intentions, Assaker and Hallak were able to add a new element to the destination image model.

The most common variable associated with destination image is satisfaction. In nearly every model presented, satisfaction has been directly linked to destination image. This is because it has been consistently and empirically proven that the more positive the image of a destination, the higher the level of satisfaction will be with that destination. Multiple studies have examined satisfaction as an outcome of destination image (Assaker & Hallak, 2013; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Chi & Qu, 2008; Bosque & Martín, 2008; Lee, 2009; Phillips et al., 2013; Pratminingsih et al., 2014; Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Many of them consider a variety of satisfaction outcomes, such as overall satisfaction (Chi & Qu,

2008; Phillips et al., 2013; Prayag & Ryan, 2012) and attribute satisfaction (Chi & Qu, 2008; Phillips et al., 2013). Attribute satisfaction can be destination specific and relate to lodging, attractions, shopping, dining, activities, accessibility, and the environment (Chi & Qu, 2008). Overall satisfaction can be calculated based on the mean of the various attribute satisfaction scores, or, as is most common, one item is used to measure the individual's overall satisfaction, typically on a scale from very dissatisfied to very satisfied (Chi & Qu, 2008).

Other direct and indirect results of a positive destination image include tourist loyalty (Chi & Qu, 2008; Bosque & Martín, 2008; Zhang, Fu, Cai, & Lu, 2014), congruity factors such as self-congruity and functional congruity (Sirgy & Su, 2000), perceived value (Phillips et al., 2013), and place attachment (Prayag & Ryan, 2012).

Destination image has been linked directly to self-congruity. Tourist loyalty is frequently related to satisfaction, and therefore it is reasonable that satisfaction has been found to both indirectly and directly relate to destination loyalty. Sirgy and Su utilized the self-congruity theory in conjunction with tourism destinations and destination image to form a model of travel behavior. Destination image is an antecedent to self-congruity, because without destination image, individuals cannot compare themselves to a destination (Sirgy & Su, 2000).

In rural tourism research, destination image has been used to evaluate the perceptions visitors have of rural areas. "Rural tourism is based on an image or a set of images that are shaped by the history, geography, and culture of the territory" (Cánoves, Villarino, Priestley, & Blanco, 2004, p. 756). Cánoves et al. (2004) state that these images are formed through a combination of the individual's perceptions and the image

destinations portray. A positive overall image are what turns an ordinary place into a positive tourist destination. The rediscovery of the rural landscape can be contributed to a number of factors, such as accessibility, increased discretionary income, and increasingly positive image toward rural areas. (Cánoves et al., 2004).

A study conducted in Europe emphasized the importance of tourism leaders evaluating people's image of their destination and then altering this image (if desired) to enhance their tourism traffic (Royo-Vela, 2009). Interestingly, the study found that while gender differences were not significantly different among visitors to rural-cultural sites, the majority (nearly 80%) of visitors to rural destinations are only day excursionists rather than overnight tourists (Royo-Vela, 2009). This may be due to the lack of lodging facilities offered in rural areas.

**Hypothesis 5: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with place attachment.**

**Hypothesis 6: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with place satisfaction.**

**Hypothesis 7: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.**

### **Place Attachment**

Place attachment is comprised of a four-factor hierarchical model consisting of place identity, place dependence, place affect, and place social bonding (Ramkissoon et al., 2013). Researchers have found that place attachment has a significant positive

influence on satisfaction (Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Ramkissoon et al., 2013) and revisit intention (Prayag & Ryan, 2012).

**Hypothesis 8: Place attachment has a statistically significant positive relationship with satisfaction.**

**Hypothesis 9: Place attachment has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.**

### **Satisfaction**

Satisfaction is the level to which a product, event, or service meets or exceeds an individual's expectations (Oliver, 1997). Satisfaction has been directly related to repurchase intentions, word-of-mouth advertising, and loyalty (Kim, Suh, & Eves, 2010). Customer satisfaction is most commonly measured by evaluating a consumer's pre- and post-expectations (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982). According to Churchill and Surprenant, customer satisfaction is made up of three possibilities: 1) The original expectation is confirmed when the service or product performs as expected. 2) The original expectation is higher than what was actually received therefore being negatively disconfirmed. 3) What was actually received was higher than what was expected, therefore being positively disconfirmed. A negative disconfirmation results in a low level of satisfaction for the individual, whereas a positive disconfirmation results in a high level of satisfaction. This method makes it possible to evaluate satisfaction as one part of an experience or as an overall experience.



The overall level of satisfaction provides destinations and researchers with a general idea of how a place actually compares to the image the destination portrays. This can be measured by using one simple statement, such as “Overall, I was satisfied with my visit to this destination.” This statement can then be rated on a 1-5 Likert scale on which 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. By using one single statement to measure overall satisfaction, a general idea of satisfaction is given based on the total experience, rather than evaluating the satisfaction level of each attribute of the visit. However, if a researcher (or business/destination) were interested in a more detailed assessment of the satisfaction of its patrons, then questions based on dining facilities, lodging facilities, pricing, attractiveness, cleanliness, and other attribute specific items could be asked and an aggregate score could be used to determine the overall level of satisfaction.

Satisfaction is the leading predictor of revisit intention and loyalty (Chen & Tsai, 2007) and has been confirmed in many models as having a significant positive influence on revisit intention (Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Um, Chon, & Ro, 2006).

**H10: Place satisfaction has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.**

## Proposed Theoretical Model

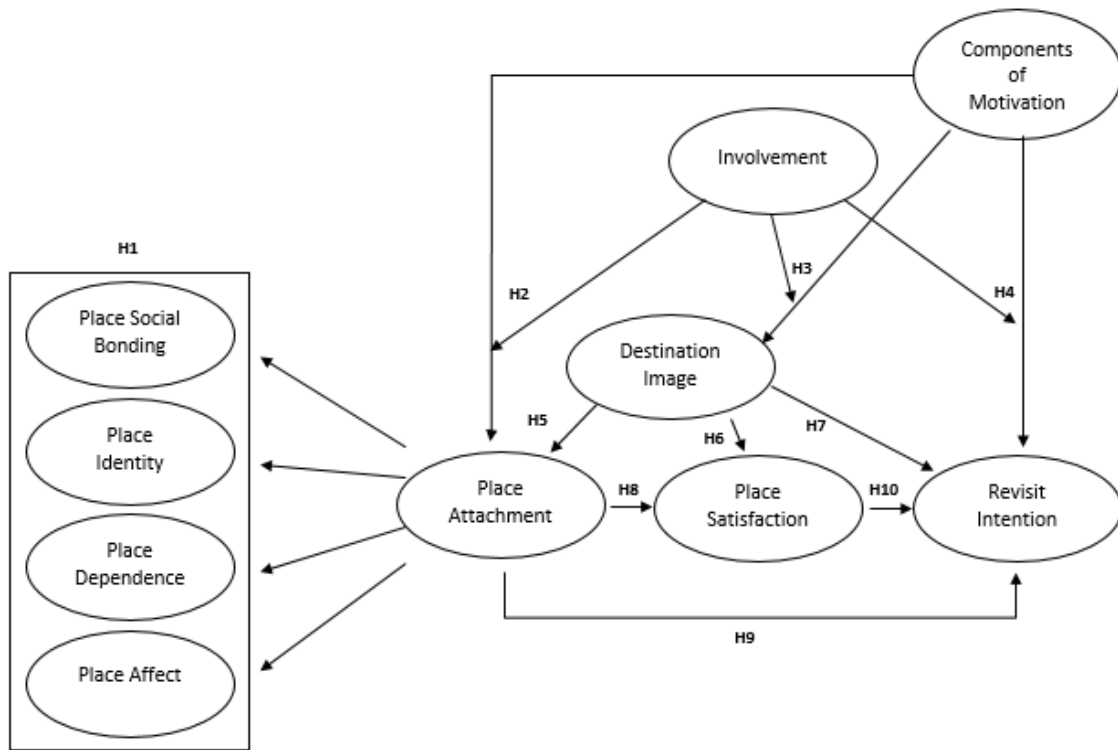


Figure 2.3: Theoretical Model of Revisit Intention to Rural Destinations

### *Restatement of the Hypotheses*

H1: Place attachment is comprised of four variables as a second-order dimension factor.

H2: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between the components of motivation and destination image.

H3: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between the components of motivation and place attachment.

H4: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between the components of motivation and revisit intention.

H5: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with place attachment.

H6: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with place satisfaction.

H7: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.

H8: Place attachment has a statistically significant positive relationship with place satisfaction.

H9: Place attachment has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.

H10: Place satisfaction has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.

## **Chapter Three: Methods**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodological analyses used to assess each of the research questions and to test the research hypotheses. The chapter will outline the procedures used to pilot test the survey instrument and the methods used to assess the hypotheses laid out in Chapter 2. The quantitative methodologies described in this chapter include confirmatory factor analysis, moderating interaction effects, and structural equation modeling.

### **Research with Human Subjects**

#### *Institutional Review Board*

Researchers working with human subjects have a responsibility to the individuals being studied to protect their privacy and ensure that the research will not cause any undue harm. For this purpose, the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (IRB) was created. Researchers conducting studies involving human subjects must register with the university's IRB prior to starting the study. Auburn University's Human Research Protection Program is "responsible for the ethical and regulatory requirements related to the protection of human participants in research" (Auburn University, 2017). "The Program" is the umbrella name for the

combined programs including the IRB, Vice President for Research, and the Office of Research Compliance.

### *IRB Applications*

The IRB seeks to ensure all research projects, regardless of funding, that involve human subjects, comply with a number of “federal, state, local, and institutional regulations, guidelines, and ethical research principles” (Auburn University, 2017). Due to the nature of this research project, a “Request for Exempt Category Research” application was submitted to Auburn University’s IRB with the approval of my Major Professor and the Department Head for the Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Management Program in December 2016. The application was approved in January 2017 by the IRB for use from January 6, 2017 until January 5, 2020 under protocol #16-486 EX1701. A copy of the approved information letter can be found in the Appendix.

In April 2017, after conducting a pilot study, a few modifications to the data collection process and survey were necessary, and therefore, an updated IRB approval was sought. A “Request for Modification” form was submitted to Auburn University’s IRB. The request for modification was approved in May 2017 for use from May 9, 2017 until January 5, 2020 under protocol # 16-486 EX1701.

### *Collaborative Institution Training Initiative*

As part of responsibly conducting research with human subjects, all researchers must know and understand the principles of collecting information from participants in a noninvasive manner. The Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) is a resource used by many universities to educate students, faculty, and investigators on responsible research methods. Auburn University’s IRB requires that all researchers

complete the training courses set forth by CITI and provide a certificate of completion with the submission of the research application. The certification of completion for the primary researcher of this project is located in the Appendix.

### **Survey Instrument**

The survey instrument was developed using the online survey platform Qualtrics. A quantitative survey instrument was created using previously validated and reliable scales. The following paragraphs describe the individual scales.

#### *Involvement Scale*

There are two methods of measuring levels of involvement. The first method is based on Zaichkowsky's (1985) semantic differential product involvement scale which asks the respondents to rate a statement on a variety of measures including: important-unimportant; needed-not needed; uninterested-interested and so on. The other method of measuring involvement is based on the Consumer Involvement Profile (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985). The Consumer Involvement Profile measures involvement on a multidimensional level with items assessing importance, pleasure, sign, risk probability and risk consequence (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). The Consumer Involvement Profile was chosen to measure involvement and was adapted from Prayag and Ryan (2012). The scale consists of six items such as "I attach great importance to being on vacation in this rural area", and "I have a lot of interest in rural attractions as a vacation destination". The items asked respondents to rate their level of agreement on a 1-5 Likert scale with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree".

### *Motivation*

The motivation scale was adapted from Park and Yoon (2009)'s study which sought to segment rural tourist in Korea based on motivation factors. The scale consists of 24 motivation items divided into six factors: relaxation ( $\alpha=0.85$ ), socialization ( $\alpha=0.76$ ), learning ( $\alpha=0.75$ ), family togetherness ( $\alpha=0.66$ ), novelty ( $\alpha=0.62$ ), and excitement (0.73) with an overall Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of 0.88. Individuals are asked to rate their level of importance on a 1-5 Likert-type scale with where 1 is equal to "not at all important" and 5 is equal to "very important". Items such as "get refreshed", "not have to rush", "meet people with similar interests", "explore new places" and "do exciting things" were included.

### *Destination Image*

Destination image items were adapted from Prayag and Ryan (2012) and consisted of seven items. The destination image scale was created to measure destination image of an island, but found to be appropriate for a rural tourist destination as well. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on a 1-5 Likert scale with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree". The scale includes items such as "this area offers cultural and historical attractions", "this area has a great level of service", and "this area has a great reputation".

### *Place Attachment*

The place attachment scale was adapted from Ramkissoon, Smith, & Weiler (2013). The place attachment scale, as discussed in the literature, is a second-order factor consisting of four sub-dimensions: place identity ( $\alpha=0.86$ ), place dependence ( $\alpha=0.76$ ), place affect ( $\alpha=0.90$ ), and place social bonding ( $\alpha=0.78$ ), with an overall Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of

0.86. Each of the sub-factors consists of three items, totaling twelve items for the place attachment construct. Items such as “I enjoy visiting this area and its environment more than any other destination”, “I feel that this area is part of me”, “I am very attached to this destination”, and “Many of my friends/family prefer this destination over many other destinations” are included. Respondents were asked to rank items on a 1-5 Likert type scale where 1 is equal to “strongly disagree” and 5 is equal to “strongly agree”.

#### *Place Satisfaction*

Place satisfaction ( $\alpha=0.86$ ) was adapted from Ramkissoon et al. (2013) and consists of three items. Respondents were asked to rate items on a 1-5 Likert scale where 1 is equal to “strongly disagree” and 5 is equal to “strongly agree”. The satisfaction scale assessed the overall satisfaction with items such as “Overall, I am satisfied with my decision to visit this destination”.

#### *Revisit Intention*

The initial survey also consisted of three revisit intention items. The first asks respondents to respond to an item on how likely they are to return to the destination again in the future for leisure travel on a 1-7 Likert type scale where 1 is equal to extremely unlikely and 7 is equal to extremely likely. The other two revisit intention items asks respondents to rank their intention to revisit and intention to recommend to others on a 1-5 Likert type scale where 1 is equal to strongly disagree and 5 is equal to strongly agree. After the pilot test, these items were revised due to a low alpha coefficient. This may be due to the different scales used to assess the items. It was also determined that the items did not all measure revisit intention, so a new scale was necessary.



### *Travel Variables and Demographics*

In addition to the factor questions listed above, a number of other items were developed to assess the tourists and their experiences. Respondents were asked to choose a State and town combination they had visited in the last year as a basis for their response. All counties/towns listed were based on the ERS's interactive map for the continental rural United States. Additionally, fill in the blank questions were asked such as: "On average, how many days do you spend in this area when visiting?", "On average, how many people (adults and children) are in your travel group when visiting this destination?" and four questions were asked to assess the respondent's average monetary expenditure while traveling in the aforementioned area. Questions related to travel distance and frequency of visits were also asked. Finally, respondents were asked to fill out a series of items related to demographic variables (age, gender, income, education, and employment status). A copy of the final survey can be found in the Appendix.

### **Pilot Testing the Survey**

A pilot study is a smaller version of the main study. The purpose of conducting a pilot study is to test the proposed survey instrument and testing procedures with a mini-sample of the intended population (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, *Pretesting Questionnaires*, 2009). This process allows researchers the opportunity to amend the survey, if necessary, before launching it into the full survey population. While pilot studies are not mandatory, skipping a pilot test, especially in a web-based survey, can prove to be costly (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, *Pretesting Questionnaires*, 2009).

After completion of the survey instrument, a pilot test was undertaken as recommended by Dillman et al. (2009). The pilot study took place in late February of 2017. After contacting two visitor bureaus in Mississippi, one agreed to email a link to the web-based survey through the town's listserv. This emailed link resulted in only two responses, therefore, the survey link was shared via social media outlets throughout the area. The initial questions ask respondents to choose a state (Mississippi, Alabama, or Tennessee) and a town they visited in the past year. Only counties classified as nonmetro based on the USDA's ERS interactive map were included in the survey options.

After a period of two weeks, the responses slowed and the pilot test was therefore closed. Of the 128 responses recorded in the Qualtrics survey management system, fifty-nine were eliminated due to respondent opening, but not continuing past the first question. Four additional responses were eliminated as respondents did not complete the motivation scale within the survey. Lastly, one response was eliminated due to the respondent indicating they reside in the chosen state/town rather than visiting the town for either a day or overnight trip. After cleaning the responses, a total of 64 usable responses were available for analysis.

#### *Internal Consistency: Reliability Estimates*

An important part of the pilot study is to evaluate the reliability estimates and ensure internal consistency. Internal consistency is an estimate of reliability that is used to gauge responses at a single point in time. Reliability estimates are based on both the strength and the significance of all of the items within a scale (Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991). The pilot test was used to gather responses so the reliability statistic could be evaluated. According to Green & Salkind (2008), internal consistency should be

assessed on each individual scale score. This includes scores that are individually measured and the sum of scores if multiple items are used in one scale. This study has a total of six scales being assessed: motivation, involvement, destination image, place attachment, place satisfaction, and revisit intention. Additionally, the individual scales for each of the four dimensions of place attachment were assessed.

The most common method of assessing internal reliability for scales is Cronbach's Alpha. Cronbach's coefficient alpha is a psychometric coefficient that measures internal consistency reliability among a group of items that, when combined, creates a single scale. This alpha coefficient can range from 0 to 1; the larger the coefficient, the stronger the reliability estimate. An alpha coefficient above .70 is considered to have high internal reliability (Salkind, 2011). The estimates of reliability were computed for each of the sum of scores for the underlying constructs previously stated. Reliability statistics ranged from .57 (revisit intention) to .93 (place attachment), with all except revisit intention meeting or exceeding the .7 cutoff for Cronbach's Alpha (Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1: Pilot Test Reliability Coefficients**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
Involvement	0.794	6
Motivation	0.895	24
Destination Image	0.864	7
Place Attachment	0.93	12
Satisfaction	0.811	3
Revisit Intention	0.567	3

### *Addition of items: revisit intention*

Due to the low reliability coefficient for revisit intention, a revision to the survey was necessary. After further examining previous research, a four-item revisit intention scale was identified (Huang & Hsu, 2009) and adapted for use in this study. The four items assess the revisit of intention of visitors based on their future plans, intention, desire, and probability to return in the future on a 1-5 Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. With the addition of items, a Modification Request was submitted to the IRB to ensure proper procedures were met.

### *IRB Modification Request*

The IRB Modification Request also included a revision to the data collection method. Previously, data collection was intended to be gathered via local and state entities and visitors to these destinations. Due to the nature of rural tourism, there was a limited number of individuals willing to distribute the survey to their tourism population, and even fewer local entities with the necessary tools to do so. Therefore, it was determined that the best plan of action would be to utilize a survey panel company. The IRB accepted the Modification Request on May 9, 2017.

### **Survey Panels**

Gathering the necessary number of responses to adequately assess the results can prove to be a difficult task. In years past, survey responses have been solicited via face-to-face contact, telephone surveys, and even letter mail through the United States Postal Service (or a similar service). With the increase in digital access, web-based surveys and

survey panel companies have become an increasingly popular method of recruiting (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, Internet Panels, 2009).

*What is a survey panel company?*

A survey panel company collects email information of individuals willing to participate in completing surveys. These volunteers are emailed a survey link which the potential respondent can then accept or decline completing. Utilizing a survey panel allows researchers access to a wide range of individuals that may not have been accessible otherwise. Additionally, survey panels may ultimately be a cost-effective solution as most have developed sampling algorithms, vetted survey respondents, and provide a quick turnaround (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, Internet Panels, 2009).

The use of a survey panel can have many benefits, but it can also have some negative aspects that must also be considered. Due to the breadth of potential respondents the survey company has access to, there is a wide range of variables that can be chosen to narrow (or widen) the respondent pool. This may include demographic variables, geographic variables, self-proclaimed likes/dislikes of the respondents, travel variables, and a number of other details that the survey panel may have respondents complete prior to being included among their panelists. However, there is little the survey panel can do to ensure that the individuals complete these assessment surveys truthfully (Stern, Bilgen, & Dillman, 2014). On the other side of the vast number of potential survey respondents, it is also possible to miss a large segment of the population. Not all individuals are on a survey panel and not all individuals have internet access. The sample being evaluated may not represent the target population, therefore the results are less generalizable.

Another potential issue with survey panels many researchers have is the process by which respondents are compensated for their time. Some survey panel companies pay pennies per survey, while others pay larger amounts. The inconsistency among panel companies' compensations creates an atmosphere where not all survey panels are reliable emphasizing the necessity for researching the panel company prior to utilizing their services (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, Internet Panels, 2009).

*Survey Panel Company: Cint*

For the purposes of this study, a survey panel was deemed the most time efficient option with the greatest chance of producing quality responses from a large area of the United States. After speaking to a number of representatives from various survey panel companies, Cint was chosen. Cint is a survey panel company founded in Stockholm, Sweden in 1998 and now hosts more than 40 million registered consumers with 9 million users in the United States (Cint, 2017). The survey panel company allows researchers to limit the respondents to a certain geographical region based on needs, therefore, the it was possible to limit the responses to individuals in the United States who were 19 years of age or older. No additional constraints were made.

Cint “maintains an online insights exchange platform that connects community owners to researchers, agencies and brands, for the sharing and accessing of consumer data” (Cint, 2017). The company provides researchers access to a database able to target the intended audience by specifying specific attributes being sought based on a number of demographic data points. Once this information is input into the system, the researcher can view, in real time, the feasibility of the study, including the response rate, estimated response time, and cost, based on number of desired responses. Additionally, Cint has an

integration software that allows researchers to use their preferred survey software (such as Qualtrics) and the researcher owns the rights to all of the responses; the survey panel cannot access the responses, further ensuring the respondents privacy and the anonymity of the responses.

#### *Survey Panel Response Quality*

Considering the potential negatives of using a survey panel, researchers must take into consideration precautions designed to check responses; eliminating those that are not responding truthfully, or focused on their responses. Therefore, when designing the survey, four items were scattered throughout the matrix questions. These four items asked respondents to give a specific response. The following four items were included as a way to ensure respondent credibility. The first two items were included within the matrix for individuals to choose from strongly disagree to strongly agree, the last two were included in the motivation matrix, where they were asked to choose from not at all important to extremely important.

1. If reading this, then choose disagree.
2. If you are reading this survey, then please select strongly agree.
3. Choose not at all important.
4. If you are paying attention, select moderately important.

#### *Screening Questions*

A screening question was also used to evaluate the potential respondent's qualification for taking the survey instrument. The initial question asked individuals to choose a state. Only states listed in the Southeastern United States were listed as options with the additional choice of "Not Listed". If the respondent chose the "Not Listed"

option, it proceeded to redirect the individual to an “end of survey” screen. Once the potential respondent got through the first item, a drop-down menu of towns is provided. The towns are listed alphabetically, and only includes options that are listed as rural based on the ERS data accessed through the USDA’s ERS interactive map. The option of choosing “Not Listed” was also available. If the option, “Not Listed” was chosen, the potential respondent was unable to move forward with the survey, being redirected to an “end of survey” screen. Finally, the county associated with the selected town was listed in a drop-down menu. Potential respondents were able to choose from a total of 9 states including: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Among these nine states, there were a total of 422 towns to choose from.

### **Main-Study: Collection of Survey Responses**

#### *The Rural Southeastern United States*

As previously discussed, in the United States, a rural area can be defined in a variety of ways based on which government agency or organization is conducting the research. It is therefore especially important to define the parameters surrounding the use of the term rural. In the literature review many of these definitions were identified, but a specific, measurable definition for the purpose of this study was used:

The USDA ERS defines rural as a county with some combination of:

- a town with less than 2,500 people,
- an open countryside, and an urban area with a population ranging from 2,500 to 49,999 people, and



- cannot be a part of a larger market pool for a metropolitan area.

(USDA ERS, 2013)

The ERS provides an interactive map that is capable of producing county specific information related to population density, primary goods produced, demographics, income levels, socioeconomic status, and much more. The statistics are based on the latest census (in this case the 2013 census). Within this study, the metro-nonmetro dichotomy is utilized to identify counties that meet the definition for rural. The counties highlighted as metro counties include those counties that are metro adjacent, meaning that they are a suburb of a metropolitan area, where many of the people that live in these areas tend to work in the neighboring metropolitan city. The orange counties highlighted in Figure 3.1 represents the nonmetro counties in the Southeastern United States. A distribution of the nonmetro vs. metro counties can be seen in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: Percentage of Nonmetro Counties in Southeastern States**

<b>State</b>	<b>Number of Nonmetro Counties</b>	<b>Total Counties</b>	<b>% of Nonmetro Counties</b>
Alabama	38	67	57%
Arkansas	55	75	73%
Florida	23	67	34%
Georgia	85	159	53%
Louisiana	29	64	45%
Mississippi	65	82	79%
North Carolina	54	100	54%
South Carolina	20	46	43%
Tennessee	53	95	56%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>56%</b>

The focus of this study is on the Southeastern United States due to a combination of factors including the researcher’s previous familiarity with the region and conversations with many local tourism coordinators without sufficient means to collect data about their tourists. The states examined include: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. These nine states make up the Southeastern United States and are the focus of this study. Among these nine states there are a total of 422 nonmetro counties accounting for fifty-six percent of the total counties among all nine states. The rural county percentage is highest in Mississippi (79%) and Arkansas (73%) and it is the lowest in Florida (34%).

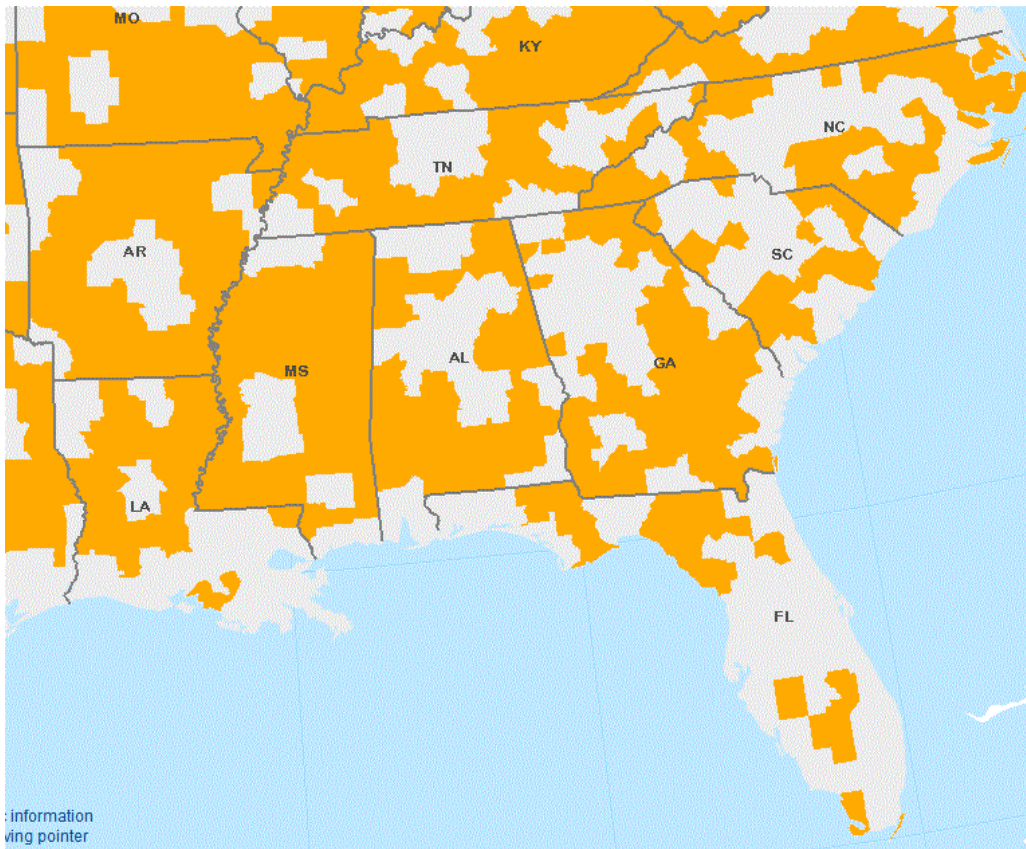


Figure 3.1: USDA ERS Nonmetro Counties in Southeastern United States (USDA ERS, 2013)

### *Collection of Responses*

Once the survey panel company was identified and the survey items were loaded into the survey platform, Qualtrics, the survey was launched. Survey responses were either accepted or rejected based on how the individuals answered the initial screening question. The respondents that passed the initial qualifying question continued with the survey and their Cint ID was recorded.

### *Sample size*

Response collection was halted after a seven day period. This period of time resulted in a total of 3,841 unique clicks on the survey link; 1,924 individuals clicked the link, but did not go any further with the survey, 747 individuals chose “Not Listed” as the state option and an additional 305 chose “Not Listed” as the town. This eliminated a total of 2,976 responses, leaving 865. Next, 139 responses were eliminated due to the drop out. Of the remaining 726 responses, 318 were eliminated for answering at least two of the four quality screening items incorrectly. Those that answered only one incorrectly were individually examined to evaluate response patterns.

### **Assumptions of Multivariate Analysis**

Multivariate assumptions are tested on difference scores. Multivariate test indicate “the number of variables with difference scores is equal to the number of levels of the within-subjects factor minus 1” (Green & Salkind, 2008, p. 234). The assumptions associated with multivariate analysis include (1) “the difference scores are multivariately normally distributed in the population” and (2) “the individual cases represent a random

sample from the population, and the difference scores for any one subject are independent from the scores for the other subject” (Green & Salkind, 2008).

#### *Test of Normality*

Parametric techniques assumes that the sample is normally distributed across the population (Pallant, 2013). Tests of normality assumption include testing for kurtosis and skewness. Kurtosis is the instance when the multivariate distribution of the observed variables significantly differs from that of a normal curve (Byrne, 2010). The distribution of a positive kurtosis have a high peak with wide tails, whereas the distribution of a negative kurtosis will have low flat distribution (Byrne, 2010). In a multivariate statistical analysis, evidence of either positive or negative kurtosis can create a problematic model, with an acceptable cutoff score of 10 (Kline, 2015). Additionally, the skewness of the data should be examined in conjunction with the level of kurtosis. Skewness indicates a nonnormal distribution with the curve “leaning” towards the left (indicating a positive skew) or right (indicating a negative skew). Skewness values should range between -3 and 3, anything outside of this range indicates either a positive or negative skewness (Kline, 2015).

#### *Test of Multicollinearity*

Multicollinearity of data indicates the variance explained by the independent variables are also explained by the dependent variables, creating a model that does not have unique variance among the independent a dependent variables. To test for multicollinearity, Pearson’s  $r$  statistic was examined. Pearson’s  $r$  statistic is used to examine the level of correlation between variables (Mertler & Reinhart, 2016). Scores

greater than .850 indicate multicollinearity issues indicating the items are measuring the same thing (Kline, 2015).

### Restatement of the Hypotheses

Further examination through the literature review of the relationships among the variables: motivation, involvement, destination image, place attachment, place satisfaction and revisit intention, a theoretical model (Figure 3.2) was constructed and ten hypotheses were made. Table 3.3 provides a review of the ten hypotheses and a summary of the statistical analysis method used to test each hypothesis.

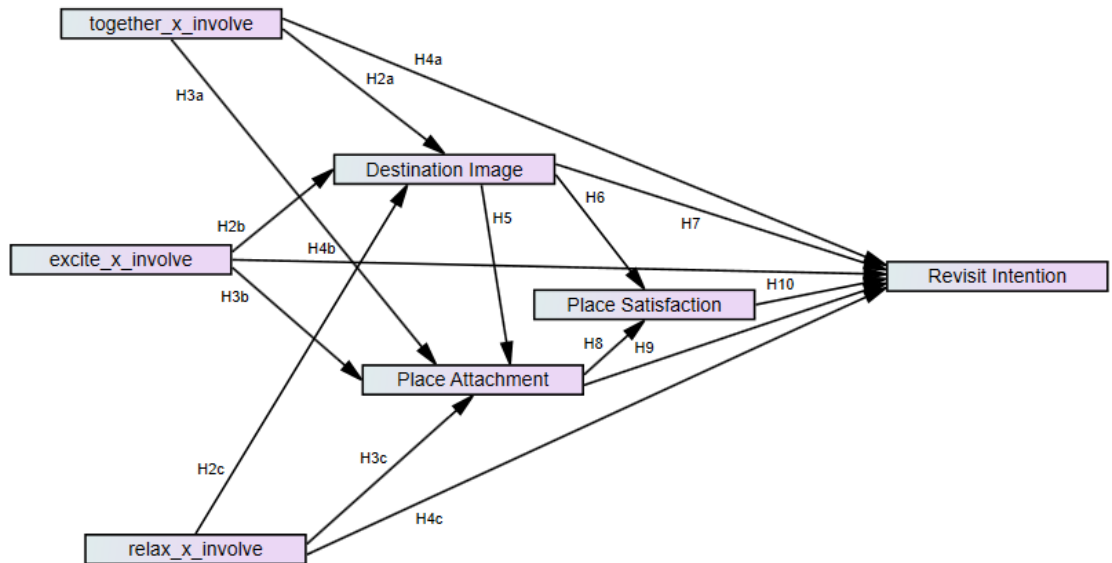


Figure 3.2: Rural Tourism Revisit Intention Model with Hypotheses

**Table 3.3: Summary of Hypotheses and Analysis**

Hypothesis	Statistical Analysis
H1: Place attachment is comprised of four variables as a second-order dimension factor.	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
H2: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between the components of motivation and destination image.	Structural Equation Modeling testing for interaction effects
H3: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between the components of motivation and place attachment.	
H4: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between the components of motivation and revisit intention.	
H5: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with place attachment.	Structural Equation Modeling
H6: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with place satisfaction.	
H7: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.	
H8: Place attachment has a statistically significant positive relationship with place satisfaction.	
H9: Place attachment has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.	
H10: Place satisfaction has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.	

**Second-Order Factors: Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

To test the dimensionality of a variable as a second order factor, confirmatory factor analysis must be conducted. Factor analysis is a valuable tool used to investigate the relationships among observed and latent variables. There are two types of factor analysis most commonly used: Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The purpose of EFA is to gain insight into the latent variables that may not have a known or observed relationship, or that the researcher may not have established evidence to support. In contrast, CFA's primary use is to confirm a

preexisting understanding of the relationships among both latent and observed factors (Byrne, 2010).

CFA can be used to evaluate the measurement model's dimensionality and to assess the proposed structure of the model against other potential structures to evaluate the best model fit (Furr & Bacharach, 2014). The CFA produces a number of parameters, covariances, and fit indices to evaluate the fit of the data to the proposed model. The flowchart in Figure 3.3 provides a visual overview of the processes used to carryout Confirmatory Factor Analysis. The shaded boxes represent functions run by a statistical software, such as SPSS AMOS.

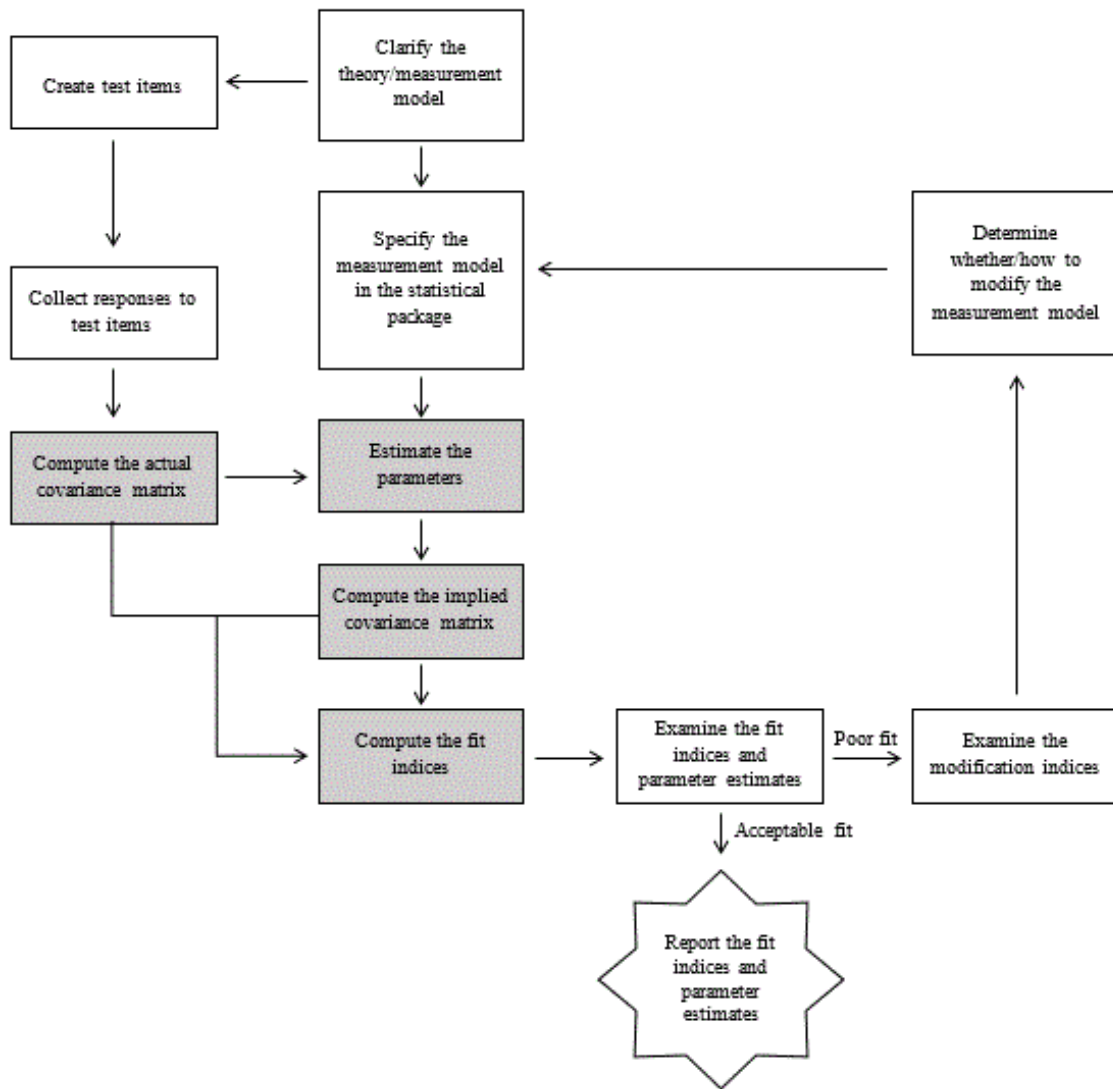


Figure 3.3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Flow Chart (Furr & Bacharach, 2014, p. 335)

### *Steps to Run CFA*

There are three key preliminary steps to take when conducting CFA. The first step is to specify the latent variables in the preferred statistical software. This includes indicating the number of factors to be analyzed, drawing the relationships between these factors, and the association between items and factors. The second step is to have the statistical software run the covariance within the model to provide the output necessary to



evaluate the model fit. The final step is to interpret and report the output provided. The output provides a number of parameter estimates and fit indices. Reviewing this data, the researcher make a decision to either reevaluate the model, or to accept the model has a good fit and report the statistics (Furr & Bacharach, 2014).

### *Fit indices*

The fit indices address the overall adequacy of the hypothesized model. If the model has good fit, based on the fit indices, then the hypothesized model adequately fits with the responses collected. If the model has poor fit, however, then the model does not fit the data and needs to be reevaluated. There are a number of fit indices that are provided in the output. For CFA, examining the chi-square statistic is most common. A significant chi-square value indicates that the model has a poor-fit. Likewise, if the chi-square statistic is found to be nonsignificant, then the model fit is considered good and supports the hypothesized model (Furr & Bacharach, 2014). It is also important to note that large sample sizes produce large chi-square values that are significant, and therefore, should reviewed in conjunction with other fit indices (Furr & Bacharach, 2014). The most common fit indices to be reported include the goodness of fit index (GFI), root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA), and comparative fit index (CFI). Each of these have their own cutoff points for good fit, but there is a range of acceptable fit as well.

- GFI – values greater than 0.95 (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008)
- RMSEA – values less than 0.07 (Steiger, 2007)
- CFI – values greater than 0.95 (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008)
- SRMR – values less than 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999)

- CMIN/DF – less than 3 (Hu and Bentler, 1999)
- PCLOSE – insignificant at the .05 level (Hu and Bentler, 1999)

#### *Parameter estimates and significance tests*

The next step, once the fit indices are examined, is to evaluate the parameter estimates. Values for the factor loadings are evaluated to assess the overall dimensionality (Furr & Bacharach, 2014). Factor loadings are “the degree to which differences among peoples’ responses to an item are determined by differences among their levels of the underlying psychological construct that is assessed by that item” (Furr & Bacharach, 2014, p. 344). Factor loading values range from -1 to 1, and the higher the value (in either direction), the greater the item loads onto that factor. If an item has a low factor loading score, then the necessity of that item should be considered and the item may need to be removed.

After the factor loadings have been evaluated, and all items have been assessed, the model should be rerun. A comparison of the model fit indices can then be conducted to determine if it is necessary to eliminate the low loading items. This process can be repeated a number of times and comparisons between the models should be made.

#### *Validity and Reliability*

Finally, it is necessary to establish convergent and discriminant validity when running a CFA. Additionally, reliability of the model should also be assessed. To evaluate the validity, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), maximum shared variance (MSV), and average shared variance (ASV) values can be used.

- CR – assesses reliability; values should be greater than .7

- AVE – assess convergent validity; values should be greater than .05
- MSV – assesses discriminant validity – MSV should be less than AVE
- ASV – assesses discriminant validity – square root should be greater than inter-construct correlations

(Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010)

*Place attachment as a second order construct*

Place attachment has been previously evaluated as a second-order construct to assess the dimensionality of the construct. As discussed in the literature, it has been examined as a second-order factor with a combination of place affect, place social bonding, place dependence, and place identity. A second-order factor is used as a way to identify similar, yet distinct, constructs and can be described by an underlying higher order structure (Chen, Sousa, & West, 2005). Researcher suggests that applying a second-order factor into a model is best suited to variables that are highly correlated and there is a higher-order factor that can account for that correlation. In this example, place dependence, place affect, place dependence, and place identity each measure independent aspects of place attachment (Ramkissoon et al., 2013).

Therefore, to test the dimensionality of place attachment, CFA must be conducted. To assess the fit of the hypothesized four-factor model, the following steps were taken as indicated by Furr and Bacharach (2014):

1. Specify the model in SPSS AMOS
2. Using SPSS AMOS, run the model to produce the necessary computations
3. Interpret and report the output
4. Modify and reanalyze the model (if necessary)

5. Compare the models (if necessary).

A model comparison of the first order factor model and the second-order factor model was necessary. This requires both a chi-square difference test and a comparison of additional fit indices. First a chi-square difference test is performed. A significant chi-square difference indicates the need for further evaluating model fit indices. Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) is used to compare models using the same data set. When comparing models, the model with the lowest AIC value indicates the best fit with the data (Burnham & Anderson, 2002).

### **Structural Equation Modeling**

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a statistical methodology used as a confirmatory method for testing hypotheses related to a structural model (Byrne, 2010) and typically evaluates causal relationships of both observed and latent variables (Bentler, 1990). SEM allows the researcher to assess the data inferentially rather than descriptively, providing more depth to the analysis and contributing to the understanding of the underlying relationships among variables in complicated models. According to Byrne (2010), there are two important aspects to structural equation modeling:

1. SEM allows for causal processes to be studied through a series of structural equations (such as by regression).
2. The structural relations are pictorially modeled to provide a clearer understanding of the theoretical relationships.

SEM has two important components: the measurement model—evaluated through CFA, and the structural model (Byrne, 2010). The structural model provides evidence of causal

relationships based on a series of regressions using both observed and unobserved variables (Byrne, 2010).

#### *Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Steps 1-5)*

The first steps involved in SEM is to conduct a CFA on the model: (1) defining the latent variables and hypothesized relationships, (2) run the hypothesized model through the statistical software to calculate fit indices and parameter estimates, (3) interpret the results of the fit indices and examine the factor loading values, and (4) modify the model if necessary based on factor loading values. (5) If necessary modifications are made, compare the models with one another to determine which has the best fit with the data.

#### *Full Latent Variable Model (Steps 6 and beyond)*

After running the CFA and the model fit indices indicate a good fit with the data and there are no convergent or discriminant validity issues, the next steps in SEM occur. The full latent variable model allows the researcher to “draw” the hypothesized causal relationships among the latent factors previously indicated in the CFA model. This is the point where the structural model will be tested.

6. Remove covariance lines from among latent factors.
7. “Draw” causal directional paths from exogenous variables to the endogenous variables, illustrating the hypothesized model.
8. Once all hypothesized relationships are accounted for, run the model estimates to determine the structural fit.

### *Moderating interaction effects in structural models*

Structural equation modeling is type of factorial design with a causal model. To better understand the causal relationships being tested, there can be both mediated and moderated effects. A moderated effect can be between groups or represented as an interaction effect (Edwards, 2009). Interaction effects are the combination of two exogenous variables in addition to the main effects (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). If there is an interaction present, then the main exogenous variable will either have a greater or lesser influence on the endogenous variable when combined with the interacting variable. To evaluate if an interaction effect is significant, there are some parameters to consider. First, an interaction effect is evaluated based on the regression slope and SPSS AMOS provides the necessary output to determine if the regression slope is significant at the  $p < .05$  level. Multicollinearity and normal distribution must also be taken into account when evaluating the interaction effect (Edwards, 2009). If non-normal distribution or multicollinearity occurs, steps can be taken to eliminate the issue.

Once the model has been run with the interaction effects, examine the output for significant relationships. Significant interaction effects should be plotted to determine the type of interaction occurring. The interaction effect can either increase or decrease the relationship from the independent variable to the dependent variable.

### *Structural Model Fit*

Reexamine the fit indices as described during the CFA process. This is an important step to take after each change in the model. Additional comparisons should be made between models using the fit indices. If modifications are necessary, then use valid arguments for either removing items, including covariances, or adding additional

regression lines. Once good-fit is determined based on the theoretically supported model, report the model fit indices and examine the paths for significance.

## **Chapter Four: Data Analysis Results**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results and findings from the survey instrument. The chapter is laid out in the order in which the hypotheses are stated. The first section profiles the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents and provides a summary of travel behaviors. The next section reviews the survey instrument's properties. The third section assesses the first hypothesis using confirmatory factor analysis to test the dimensionality of place attachment as a second-order construct. The fourth section presents the findings of the structural model of the theoretical revisit intention model. Finally, a summary of the chapter is provided.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the typical rural tourist to the Southeastern United States?
2. To what extent does involvement act as a moderator in conjunction with motivation, destination image, place attachment, and revisit intention?
3. To what extent is there a relationship between destination image, place attachment, and visitor satisfaction with revisit intention?



## Sample Demographics

There were a total of 407 responses with the sociodemographic profile of the sample revealing a predominantly female sample distribution (65.3%), while the remaining 34.7% were men. Education levels varied, with the majority of respondents completing some form of continuing education after high school. Table 4.1 reports the frequencies and percentages associated with income levels, marital status, and employment status. Interestingly, the majority of respondents (54.1%) were between the ages of 19 and 40. Sharpley and Sharpley (1997) also found that rural tourists were young to middle age with an average income and an advanced level of education.

**Table 4.1a: Sociodemographic Profile of Sample (n=407)**

Variable	Percentage (%)	N	Variable	Percentage (%)	N
Sex			Education		
Male	34.7	141	Some High School	1.2	5
Female	65.3	265	High School Vocational/Trade School	28.5	116
Missing	0.2	1	Bachelor's Degree	22.9	93
Income			Master's Degree	30.0	122
Under \$15,000	7.9	32	Doctorate Degree	13.5	55
\$15,000 - \$24,999	7.6	31	Missing	3.4	14
\$25,000 - \$34,999	14.0	57	Age	0.05	2
\$35,000 - \$44,999	10.6	43	19-30	28.0	113
\$45,000 - \$54,999	10.6	43	31-40	26.1	105
\$55,000 - \$64,999	7.6	31	41-50	17.1	69
\$65,000 - \$74,999	8.6	35	51-60	16.1	65
\$75,000 - \$84,999	6.9	28	61-70	9.7	39
\$85,000 - \$94,999	6.6	27	Greater than 71	3.0	12
\$95,000 and above	19.4	79	Missing	1.0	4
Missing	0.2	1			

**Table 4.1b: Sociodemographic Profile of Sample (n=407)**

Marital Status			Employment		
Married	56.6	228	Student	4.7	19
Widowed	3.5	14	Not employed	16.0	65
Divorced	9.4	38	Self-employed	8.1	33
Separated	1.7	7	Employed	54.3	221
Never Married	28.8	116	Retired	16.2	66
Missing	1.0	4	Missing	0.7	3

The majority of respondents spent between 1 and 7 days visiting the rural destination and had an average of 2.5 people in the travel group with miles traveled greater than 500 from their home to arrive at the destination (32.4%). Individuals that traveled 50 miles or less was 7.4%. Additionally, 40.3% of visitors indicated that they have only traveled to the rural destination once, 47.7% indicated that they had visited 2-3 times in the last year.

**Table 4.2 Abbreviations of Constructs**

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Construct Name</b>
Inv	Involvement
DI	Destination Image
PD	Place Dependence
PI	Place Identity
PA	Place Affect
PSB	Place Social Bonding
SAT	Place Satisfaction
RI	Revisit Intention
MOT_R	Motivation Relaxation
MOT_S	Motivation Socialization
MOT_L	Motivation Learning
MOT_F	Motivation Family Togetherness
MOT_N	Motivation Novelty
MOT_E	Motivation Excitement

**Table 4.3a: Survey Statements and Abbreviations**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Survey Statement</b>
Inv_1	I get pleasure from being on vacation in this rural area.
Inv_2	I attach great importance to being on vacation in this rural area.
Inv_3	I have a lot of interest in rural attractions as a vacation destination.
Inv_4	Being on vacation here is a bit like giving a gift to one's self.
Inv_5	It gives me pleasure getting involved in the various things to do here.
Inv_6	You can tell a lot about a person/family by whether or not they go on vacations here.
DI_1	This area offers cultural and historical attractions.
DI_2	This area is culturally diverse.
DI_3	This area has a variety of quality accommodations.
DI_4	This area has a great level of service.
DI_5	This destination is accessible.
DI_6	This destination has a good reputation.
DI_7	This destination offers a variety of accommodations.
PD1	For what I like to do, I could not imagine anything better than the settings and facilities provided by this destination.
PD2	For the activities I enjoy the most, the settings and facilities provided by this destination are the best.
PD3	I enjoy visiting this area and its environment more than any other destinations.
PI1	I identify strongly with this area.
PI2	I feel that this area is part of me.
PI3	Visiting this area says a lot about who I am.
PA1	I am very attached to this destination.
PA2	I feel a strong sense of belonging to this destination and its settings.
PA3	This destination means a lot to me.
PSB1	Many of my friends/family prefer this destination over many other destinations.
PSB2	If I were to stop visiting this destination, I would lose contact with a number of friends.
PSB3	My friends/family would be disappointed if I were to start visiting other settings and facilities.
SAT1	I believe I did the right thing when I chose to visit this area.
SAT2	Overall, I am satisfied with my decision to visit this destination.
SAT3	I am happy about my decision to visit this destination.
RI1	I intend to revisit this destination in the next 2 years.
RI2	I plan to revisit this destination in the next 2 years.
RI3	I desire to visit this destination in the next 2 years.
RI4	I probably will visit this destination in the next 2 years.

**Table 4.3b: Survey Statements and Abbreviations Continued.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Survey Statement</b>
MOT_R1	Get refreshed
MOT_R2	Escape from a busy job
MOT_R3	Relax away from the ordinary
MOT_R4	Relax daily tension
MOT_R5	Be physically active
MOT_R6	Feel at home away from home
MOT_R7	Not have to rush
MOT_S1	Share a familiar place with others
MOT_S2	Inspire community consciousness
MOT_S3	Meet people with similar interests
MOT_S4	Go to places friends haven't been
MOT_S5	Personal safety, even when traveling alone
MOT_L1	Explore new places
MOT_L2	Experience new and different lifestyles
MOT_L3	Learn new things, increase knowledge
MOT_L4	Travel to historical heritage sites
MOT_F1	Experience traditional culture for children
MOT_F2	Be together as a family
MOT_F3	Visit places family came from
MOT_N1	Experience solitude
MOT_N2	Indulge in luxury
MOT_E1	Do exciting things
MOT_E2	Find thrills and excitement
MOT_E3	Have fun, be entertained

## **Measurement Instrument Properties**

### *Normality Tests*

Normality tests indicated a normal distribution based on skewness and kurtosis statistics. Data is skewed if the absolute value of the skewness statistic is greater than 2 or the absolute value of the kurtosis statistic is greater than 3 (Sposito, Hand & Skarpness, 1982). No items statistics were outside the parameters for normal distribution. Table 4.2

provides details of the descriptive statistics for each item in addition to the skewness and kurtosis statistics.

**Table 4.4a: Tests of Normality**

**Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Inv_1	407	3.99	.977	-1.147	.121	1.255	.241
Inv_2	407	3.54	1.035	-.470	.121	-.253	.241
Inv_3	407	3.92	.959	-.970	.121	.952	.241
Inv_4	407	3.72	1.051	-.676	.121	-.051	.241
Inv_5	407	3.79	.916	-.860	.121	.906	.241
Inv_6	407	3.29	1.051	-.101	.121	-.585	.241
DI_1	407	3.82	.987	-.753	.121	.283	.241
DI_2	407	3.41	1.058	-.396	.121	-.278	.241
DI_3	407	3.66	1.036	-.596	.121	-.149	.241
DI_4	407	3.63	.953	-.499	.121	-.048	.241
DI_5	407	4.09	.753	-.885	.121	1.470	.241
DI_6	407	3.87	.923	-.663	.121	.376	.241
DI_7	407	3.65	.993	-.560	.121	-.221	.241
PD1	407	3.41	1.106	-.348	.121	-.628	.241
PD2	407	3.59	1.039	-.532	.121	-.276	.241
PD3	407	3.42	1.150	-.388	.121	-.673	.241
PI1	407	3.54	1.075	-.471	.121	-.376	.241
PI2	407	3.54	1.107	-.430	.121	-.520	.241
PI3	407	3.44	1.092	-.352	.121	-.464	.241
PA1	407	3.57	1.084	-.491	.121	-.423	.241
PA2	407	3.57	1.081	-.504	.121	-.324	.241
PA3	407	3.76	1.034	-.632	.121	-.120	.241
PSB1	407	3.23	1.108	-.155	.121	-.690	.241
PSB2	407	2.87	1.308	.103	.121	-1.138	.241
PSB3	407	2.84	1.268	.201	.121	-.936	.241

**Table 4.4b Tests of Normality Continued**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
SAT1	407	4.10	.825	-.953	.121	1.264	.241
SAT2	407	4.14	.812	-1.154	.121	2.091	.241
SAT3	407	4.09	.848	-1.223	.121	2.297	.241
RI1	407	3.88	1.051	-.889	.121	.184	.241
RI2	407	3.92	1.029	-.934	.121	.353	.241
RI3	407	3.89	1.056	-.873	.121	.092	.241
RI4	407	3.92	1.062	-.948	.121	.283	.241
MOT_R1	407	4.14	.840	-.841	.121	.598	.241
MOT_R2	407	3.77	1.233	-.888	.121	-.097	.241
MOT_R3	407	4.10	.867	-.767	.121	.168	.241
MOT_R4	407	4.14	.863	-.931	.121	.675	.241
MOT_R5	407	3.52	1.089	-.420	.121	-.541	.241
MOT_R6	407	3.77	1.014	-.661	.121	.039	.241
MOT_R7	407	4.05	.915	-.761	.121	.145	.241
MOT_S1	407	3.47	1.165	-.486	.121	-.470	.241
MOT_S2	407	3.05	1.239	-.109	.121	-.874	.241
MOT_S3	407	3.22	1.199	-.321	.121	-.740	.241
MOT_S4	407	3.17	1.325	-.324	.121	-1.005	.241
MOT_S5	407	4.20	.903	-1.109	.121	.915	.241
MOT_L1	407	4.08	.910	-.988	.121	.968	.241
MOT_L2	407	3.70	1.071	-.626	.121	-.269	.241
MOT_L3	407	3.84	1.019	-.634	.121	-.230	.241
MOT_L4	407	3.57	1.116	-.475	.121	-.481	.241
MOT_F1	407	3.09	1.363	-.181	.121	-1.166	.241
MOT_F2	407	4.05	1.060	-1.089	.121	.676	.241
MOT_F3	407	3.29	1.326	-.317	.121	-1.000	.241
MOT_N1	407	3.40	1.180	-.327	.121	-.779	.241
MOT_N2	407	2.87	1.206	.037	.121	-.816	.241
MOT_E1	407	3.84	.977	-.595	.121	-.057	.241
MOT_E2	407	3.47	1.148	-.449	.121	-.582	.241
MOT_E3	407	4.09	.888	-.925	.121	.674	.241
Valid N (listwise)	407						

### *Multicollinearity*

Multicollinearity was assessed by examining Pearson's  $r$  coefficient. Items correlated above a 0.85 indicate multicollinearity. No item-to-item correlations were found to be above a .85. Items with correlations above a .7 were found to belong to the same construct.

## **Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Place Attachment**

### *Testing Place Attachment as a Second-Order Construct*

Ramkissoon et al. (2013) theorized and tested a model of place attachment as a second-order hierarchical construct being comprised of place dependence, place identity, place affect, and place social bonding. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test the four-factor, second-order model.

Step 1: Identify latent variables in AMOS Graphics v. 22 (Figure 4.1).

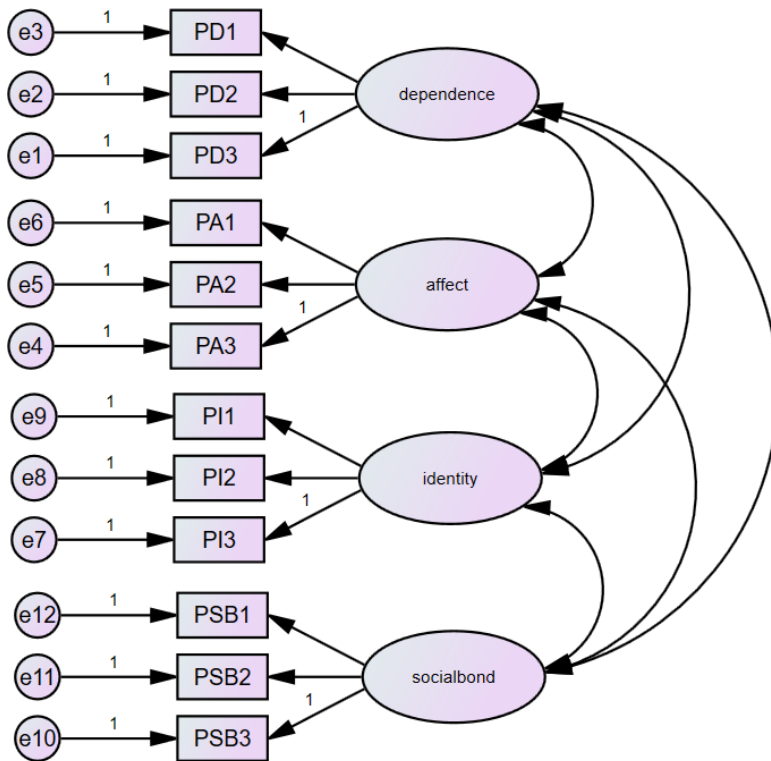


Figure 4.1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Place Attachment 1<sup>st</sup> Order Measurement Model

Step 2: Examine model fit and covariance tables.

To evaluate model fit, fit indices were examined based on recommendations from Hair et al. (2010). When reviewing the fit indices, the following levels are desirable to indicate a good fit:  $\chi^2$  is found to be insignificant at the .05 level (sample size can skew this fit statistic and should not be consider independently);  $CMIN/DF < 3.000$ ;  $RMSEA < .07$ ;  $GFI > 0.95$ ;  $CFI > 0.95$ ;  $SRMR < 0.08$ ;  $PCLOSE$  non-significant at the .05 level. The model for place attachment construct had moderate fit indices:  $\chi^2_{(48)} = 132.635$  ( $p < .001$ );  $CMIN/DF = 2.763$ ;  $RMSEA = 0.066$  (90% CI = .053-.079);  $GFI = 0.945$ ;  $CFI = 0.975$ ;  $SRMR = 0.04$ ; and  $PCLOSE = 0.025$ ;  $AIC = 192.635$ . Further evaluation of the



covariance matrix indicated that the inclusion of a covariance path between error terms e11 and e10 would result in a better fit. Both error terms e10 and e11 are correlated and measure place social bonding related to family and friends, and therefore it was reasonable to covary the error terms. Covariance of error terms e10 and e11 provided a good fit for the model:  $\chi^2_{(47)} = 97.301$  ( $p < .001$ ); CMIN/DF = 2.070; RMSEA = 0.051 (90% CI= .037-.066); GFI = 0.960; CFI = 0.985; SRMR = 0.0291; PCLOSE = 0.491; AIC = 159.301. Table 4.3 provides a comparison of the two models. A chi-square difference test was conducted to for significant differences between the two first-order CFA models. The test was found to be significant at  $p < .001$ . This indicated that the modified first-order CFA model provided a significantly better fit with the data and was then used to assess the second-order factor model.

**Table 4.5: Confirmatory Factor Analysis of 1<sup>st</sup> Order Place Attachment Model**

Model	Chi-Square	CMIN/DF	RMSEA	GFI	CFI	SRMR	PCLOSE
Original Model	132.635 <sub>(48)</sub> ( $p < .001$ )	2.763	0.066	0.945	0.975	0.040	0.025
Modified Model	97.301 <sub>(47)</sub> ( $p < .001$ )	2.070	0.051	0.960	0.985	0.0291	0.419

Next, the second-order place attachment measurement model was assessed (Figure 4.2). Fit indices showed good fit with the measurement model:  $\chi^2_{(49)} = 103.544$  ( $p < .001$ ); CMIN/DF = 2.113; RMSEA = 0.052 (90% CI= .038-.066); GFI = 0.957; CFI = 0.984; SRMR = 0.0287; PCLOSE = 0.372; AIC = 161.705 indicating a good fit with the data (Hair et al., 2010). A comparison of the first and second order dimension models was conducted using the chi-square difference test. The comparison of chi-squares and degrees of freedom indicated a significant difference between the two models ( $p = .044$ ). This indicates that the second-order model is significantly different from the first-order

model. Due to the good fit of the second-order model, place attachment is confirmed as a second order construct with four sub-dimensions: place identity, place dependence, place affect, and place social bonding, as outlined in Ramkissoon et al. (2013), providing support for hypothesis 1.

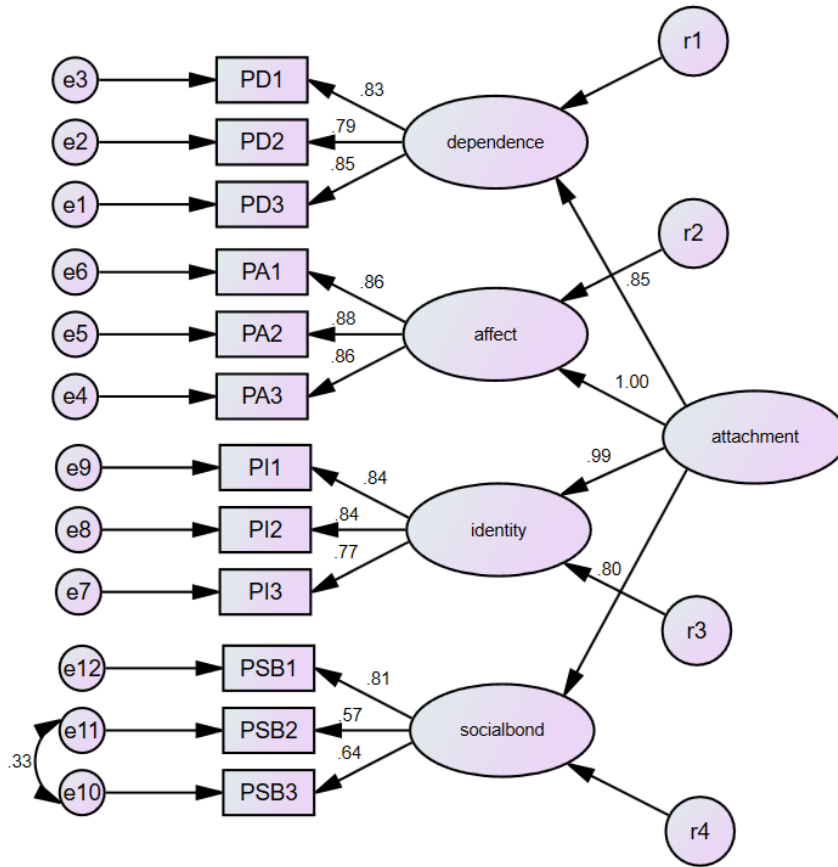


Figure 4.2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis 2<sup>nd</sup> Order Place Attachment Model

### Exploratory Factor Analysis

Prior to testing the model fit of the overall measurement and structural models, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted for the motivation scale. The initial scale consisted of 24 items related to relaxation motivations, socialization motivations,

learning motivations, family togetherness motivations, novelty motivations, and excitement motivations. Park and Yoon (2009), found the 24-item scale measured motivation of Korean rural tourists' in these six areas.

The dimensionality of the 24 items from the motivation scale was analyzed using maximum likelihood factor analysis with Varimax rotation. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy statistic greater than .8 is necessary to ensure factorability. KMO was .939 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was found to be significant at the  $p < .001$  ( $\chi^2_{(276)} = 4583.003$ ), indicating appropriateness of factor analysis. The rotated factor solution yielded five factors accounting for 53.01% of the total variance explained based on an Eigenvalue of 1. Loading values over .4 are considered necessary for retention of items (Hair et al., 2010). Additionally, items loading on multiple factors above the .4 threshold and with less than a .2 difference between them, are cross-loading and the model may benefit from their removal (Hair et al., 2010).

Further evaluation of the 5-factor solution resulted in the removal of items to better identify the underlying structure. High cross loadings of items "travel to historical heritage sites" (MOT\_L4), "personal safety, even when traveling alone" (MOT\_S5), "indulge in luxury" (MOT\_N2), and "feel at home away from home" (MOT\_R6) resulted in the removal of these 4 items. Factor analysis was rerun resulting in a four-factor solution explaining 52.03% of the variance. Further examination of the four factor solution determined "be together as a family" (MOT\_F2) should be removed as it did not load on any of the four factors above a .4 and "explore new places" (MOT\_L1) for cross-loading on two factors above .4 with a less than .2 difference. Factor analysis was once again run, resulting in a 3 factor solution. The item MOT\_E3 was found to cross-load on

factors 2 and 3, however, this item was retained as the loading differences were greater than .2. The final EFA resulted in a three-factor solution accounting for 51.18% of the variance. Of the seventeen items retained, nine items loaded onto factor 1, five items loaded onto factor 2, and 3 items loaded onto factor 3 (Table 4.4). Reliability statistics for the new motivation scale found Cronbach's Alpha = .911, the alpha coefficient ranges from 0-1. The larger the number, the greater the strength of the scale indicating a strong inter-item correlation (Green & Salkind, 2008).

Factor names were created based on a combination of the previously identified dimension in Park and Yoon (2009) and how the items loaded on to each factor. The items loading on factor 1 are related to being together with others, meeting people, and experiencing and learning new things. This factor was labeled "Togetherness". The items loading on factor 2 are all related to being refreshed, escaping from the ordinary, and relaxing. These same items loaded onto their own factor in the Park and Yoon study, which were labeled "Relaxation. Therefore, factor 2 in this study is also labeled Relaxation. Finally, the items loading on factor 3 were found to be the same three items which loaded together in the Park and Yoon study as "Excitement". These items all have to do with being entertained and doing exciting things. Factor 3 in this study is therefore labeled as "Excitement" as well.

**Table 4.6: Motivation Rotated Factor Analysis**

**Rotated Factor Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

	Factor		
	1 Togetherness	2 Relaxation	3 Excitement
MOT_S2	.768		
MOT_S1	.726		
MOT_F3	.723		
MOT_F1	.688		
MOT_S3	.661		
MOT_S4	.613		
MOT_L3	.516		
MOT_N1	.488		
MOT_L2	.487		
MOT_R1		.799	
MOT_R4		.798	
MOT_R3		.749	
MOT_R7		.710	
MOT_R2		.537	
MOT_E1			.796
MOT_E2			.768
MOT_E3			.760

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

### **Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Overall Measurement Model**

To assess the theoretical revisit intention measurement model, confirmatory factor analysis was undertaken. The model consisted of the seven latent variables: destination image, revisit intention, satisfaction, place attachment, and the three components of motivation: togetherness, excitement, and relaxation. The initial test of covariance resulted in the removal of all but three togetherness items due to low factor loadings and the removal of one destination image item. The measurement model had acceptable fit

indices:  $\chi^2_{(568)} = 1209.935$  ( $p < .001$ ); CMIN/DF = 2.130; GFI = 0.854; CFI = 0.94; SRMR = 0.0571; RMSEA = .053 (90% CI=.049-.057); PCLOSE = 0.133.

The next step in CFA is to evaluate the convergent and discriminant validity, as well as the reliability. Composite reliability scores are used to assess reliability, values should be greater than .7. Average variance extracted (AVE) assesses convergent validity; values should be above .05. Discriminant validity is assessed using maximum shared variance (MSV) and average shared variance. MSV should be less than AVE, and the square root of AVE should be greater than the inter-construct correlations (Hair et al., 2010). Overall measurement model reliability indices were found to exceed the .7 threshold indicating composite reliability. Convergent and discriminant validity were achieved (Table 4.7).

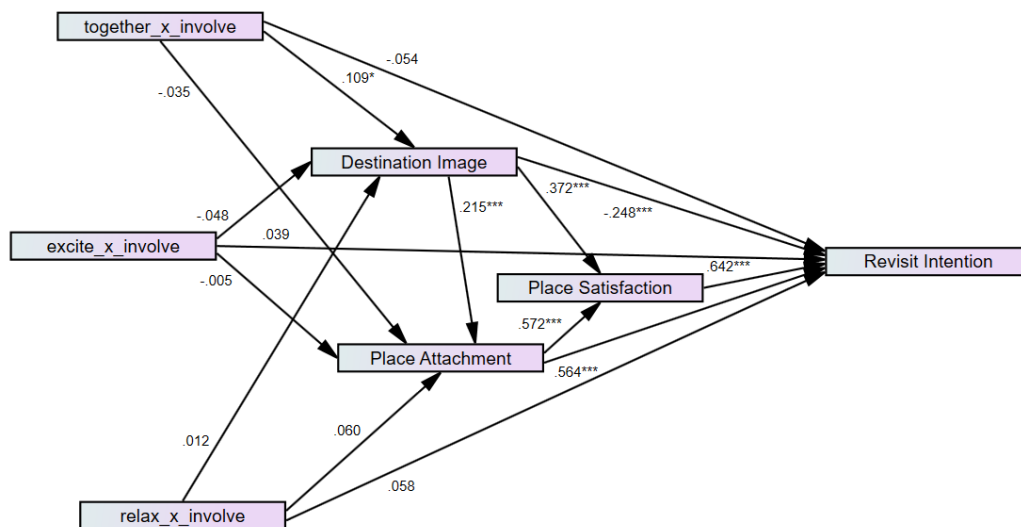
**Table 4.7: Overall Measurement Model Validity and Reliability Scores**

	CR	AVE	MSV	MOT_T	PA	DI	RI	SAT	MOT_E	MOT_R
<b>MOT_T</b>	0.789	0.555	0.394	<b>0.745</b>						
<b>PA</b>	0.952	0.834	0.643	0.593	<b>0.913</b>					
<b>DI</b>	0.895	0.589	0.560	0.502	0.700	<b>0.768</b>				
<b>RI</b>	0.953	0.836	0.593	0.401	0.770	0.530	<b>0.914</b>			
<b>SAT</b>	0.903	0.756	0.643	0.374	0.802	0.748	0.757	<b>0.869</b>		
<b>MOT_E</b>	0.840	0.637	0.394	0.628	0.297	0.443	0.186	0.239	<b>0.798</b>	
<b>MOT_R</b>	0.835	0.508	0.347	0.506	0.394	0.425	0.348	0.422	0.589	<b>0.713</b>

### Structural Model Testing

The structural revisit intention model with interaction effects was tested using the imputed variables to simplify the pictorial model and interpretation of the results. The model showed acceptable fit:  $\chi^2_{(7)} = 149.707$  ( $p < .001$ ); SRMR = 0.029; CFI = 0.963; GFI = 0.947. The correlation coefficients for the endogenous variables indicated correlation

among the variables: destination image  $r^2 = .68$ ; attachment  $r^2 = .80$ ; satisfaction  $r^2 = .78$ ; and revisit intention  $r^2 = .74$ . Regression weights were examined to determine significant paths among variables (Figure 4.3). The interaction effect of involvement on the path between the components of motivation (Excitement, Togetherness, and Relaxation) was first examined. There was no interaction effect found between the motivation component Excitement and involvement on any of the endogenous variables, nor was an interaction effect observed between the motivation component Relaxation and involvement with any of the endogenous variables. However, involvement did produce a significant interaction effect between the motivation component Togetherness and destination image ( $p < .05$ ). The significant interaction effect on destination image indicates that the negative relationship between togetherness and destination image when moderated by involvement, dampens the effect (Figure 4.4).



\* $p < .05$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$

Figure 4.3: Structural Model of Imputed Factors with Regression Weights

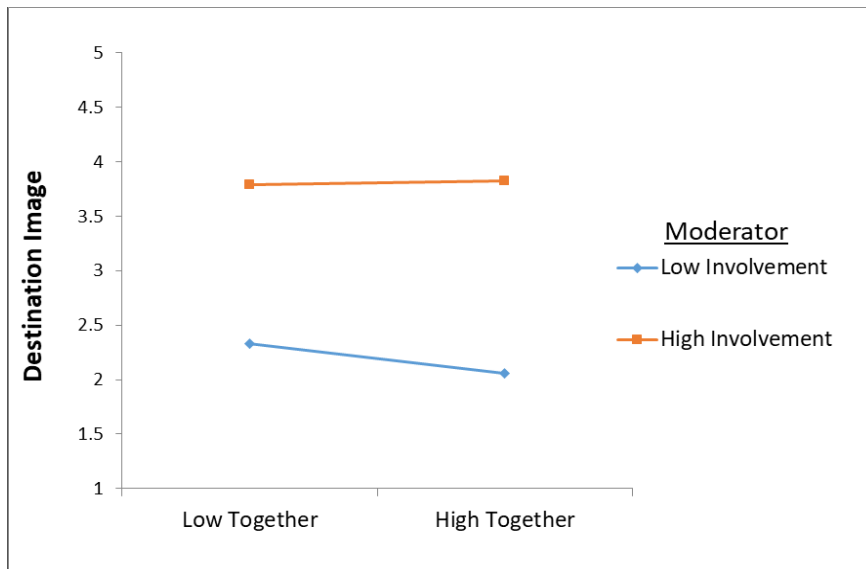


Figure 4.4: Graph of Significant Interaction Effect

The relationship between destination image and place attachment ( $\beta= 0.216$ ), place satisfaction ( $\beta= 0.322$ ), and revisit intention ( $\beta= -0.297$ ) were found to be supported at the  $p<.000$  level. Additionally, statistically significant relationships were supported between place attachment and place satisfaction ( $\beta= 0.491$ ) and revisit intention ( $\beta= 0.673$ ). Place satisfaction was also found to have a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention ( $\beta= 0.892$ ) (Table 4.8).



**Table 4.8: Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Path	$\beta$	C.R.	Sig.	Results
Hypothesis 2a	togetherness*involvement ---> destination image	0.08	2.576	0.01*	Supported
Hypothesis 2b	excitement*involvement ---> destination image	-0.038	-1.003	0.316	Not Supported
Hypothesis 2c	relaxation*involvement ---> destination image	0.008	0.258	0.797	Not Supported
Hypothesis 3a	togetherness*involvement ---> place attachment	-0.026	-1.04	0.298	Not Supported
Hypothesis 3b	excitement*involvement ---> place attachment	-0.004	-0.136	0.892	Not Supported
Hypothesis 3c	relaxation*involvement ---> place attachment	0.043	1.658	0.097	Not Supported
Hypothesis 4a	togetherness*involvement ---> revisit intention	-0.048	-1.412	0.158	Not Supported
Hypothesis 4b	excitement*involvement ---> revisit intention	0.038	0.908	0.364	Not Supported
Hypothesis 4c	relaxation*involvement ---> revisit intention	0.05	1.414	0.157	Not Supported
Hypothesis 5	destination image ---> place attachment	0.216	5.429	***	Supported
Hypothesis 6	destination image ---> place satisfaction	0.322	10.737	***	Supported
Hypothesis 7	destination image ---> revisit intention	-0.297	-4.92	***	Not Supported
Hypothesis 8	place attachment ---> place satisfaction	0.491	16.494	***	Supported
Hypothesis 9	place attachment ---> revisit intention	0.673	8.827	***	Supported
Hypothesis 10	place satisfaction ---> revisit intention	0.892	11.871	***	Supported

\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.000

## Summary

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to assess the first hypothesis examining place attachment as a second-order hierarchical construct. Additionally, structural equation modeling was used to test a revisit intention model of the rural tourist examining the interaction effect between motivation and involvement on destination image, place attachment and revisit intention. The next chapter will provide a discussion of the results.

## **Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusions**

### **Overview**

The purpose of this dissertation was to assess a theoretical model of antecedents to revisit intention focusing on rural destinations in the Southeastern United States. To further explore these relationships, a survey instrument consisting of items related to destination image, motivation, involvement, place attachment, place satisfaction, and revisit intention was created using previously validated scales adapted from the literature. Structural equation modeling was then deemed the appropriate method in evaluating the structural model. Prior to testing the structural model, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to confirm place attachment as a second-order construct comprised of place identity, place dependence, place social bonding and place affect as outlined in Ramkissoon (2013). Once completed, structural equation modeling was executed, beginning with a CFA to examine the measurement model fit. Finally, the structural model was tested to determine the causal relationships among destination image, place attachment, place satisfaction, and revisit intention with tourist involvement acting as a moderator between motivation and destination image, place attachment, and revisit intention.

The remainder of this chapter will explore the findings from both the CFA and SEM models. First, a discussion of the results as they related to each of the ten

hypotheses; followed by practical and theoretical implications. Finally, a discussion of the limitations and suggestions for future research will be provided.

## **Discussion**

### ***Research Question 1: What are the demographic characteristics of the rural tourist?***

Assessing the characteristics of the rural tourist is an interesting theoretical idea. The rural tourist has previously been identified as someone native to the country and travel by car when visiting a destination (Sharpley and Sharpley, 1997). Additionally, Sharpley and Sharpley (1997) identified rural tourists as being young adult to middle age, average income, having a higher level of degree. Interestingly, the sample for this study was made up of primarily female respondents (n=265). The majority of respondents were married (56.6%), educated beyond high school (69.8%) and currently employed (62.4%). Additionally, 59.7% of the sample indicated an annual household income at or above \$45,000. This is consistent with Sharpley and Sharpley's description of the rural tourist. The reason for a younger, more educated rural tourist demographic may be due to this age group having the health and desire to travel, while also having the means to do so. Further exploration of these characteristics and how they specifically influence the revisit intention model should be examined in the future.

### ***Research Question 2: To what extent does involvement positively moderate the relationship between motivation and destination image, place attachment, and revisit intention?***

*Hypothesis 1: Place attachment is comprised of four variables as a second-order dimension factor.*

Place attachment as a second-order factor consisting of place dependence, place identity, place affect, and place social bonding was confirmed. The goodness of fit indices reported in Chapter 4 indicate a good fit to the model, confirming the appropriateness of a four dimension solution in evaluating place attachment. Examination of the standardized regression weights indicate place affect as having the highest predictive power, followed by place identity, place dependence, and finally place social bonding. These findings are similar to those of Ramkissoon et al. (2013), however, Ramkissoon et al. found place identity to have the highest predictive power of place attachment. The differences between this study's results and Ramkissoon et al. (2013) may be due to the differences in the targeted sample.

Ramkissoon et al.'s research explored place attachment as a second-order factor, the researchers were simultaneously testing a pro-environmental behavioral intent model in which the sample was collected in Australia across four national parks. Place affect indicates an individual's emotional link to the place whereas place identity indicates that an individual uses the place as a way of identifying themselves. While these are naturally similar constructs, there is a distinction between the two. It is also important to note, that though place affect was found to have a higher predictive power, there was a less than a .005 difference between the two in the revisit intention model; whereas in the pro-environmental behavior research, there was a .06 difference.

## **Hypotheses 2-4**

Using the moderating variable involvement, the relationship between motivation and destination image, place attachment, and revisit intention was assessed. Prior to examination of the structural model, exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the motivation items. This resulted in a three factor solution with simple structure. The factors were named Togetherness, Excitement, and Relaxation. Togetherness was named due to the items assessing similar motives involving being with and around others. Excitement and relaxation were both labeled as such due to their similarities among items. The research from which the items were adapted (Park & Yoon, 2009) found similar items loading on Relaxation and Excitement, however, the research had an additional 4 factors, which were reduced to 1 within this research project. This may be explained due to differences in the rural tourist population between South Korea (where the motivation scale was developed) and the United States.

*Hypothesis 2: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between the components of motivation and destination image.*

The relationship between motivation and destination image was examined using the moderating variable involvement. Testing the interaction effect of involvement and motivation on destination image required three separate tests: togetherness on destination image, excitement on destination image, and relaxation on destination image.

Involvement was found to have a significant moderating effect on destination image. The correlation between the two factors indicates an inverse relationship, meaning that as togetherness motivation increases, destination image decreases, however, involvement has a dampening effect on this negative relationship. The more involved the individual is

the less the negative effect of togetherness has on destination image. This implies that if togetherness is the primary motivation, then the rural tourist's image of the destination is not as strong, but when coupled with higher levels of involvement, the effect will be lessened.

Involvement was not found to have a significant moderating interaction effect on excitement or relaxation with destination image. The lack of significant interaction effect is somewhat surprising. Motivation and involvement have both been shown to have direct relationships with destination image. Though not stated in the hypotheses, a closer examination of the results show that, while there is not a significant interaction effect, involvement is significantly positively related to destination image which is consistent with previous research (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Additionally, the motivation variable, excitement, was found to have a positive significant relationship with destination image. Interestingly this positive relationship indicates that as excitement motivation levels increase, so does their destination image. What is most interesting about this is the fact that rural destinations are not always considered a place to seek excitement, instead they are typically characterized as a place to slow down.

*Hypothesis 3: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between the components of motivation and place attachment.*

Again, the moderating interaction effect of involvement was examined with each of the three motivation variables with place attachment. No significant relationships were identified, indicating that involvement did not significantly change the relationship between a tourist's level of motivation and place attachment. Again, involvement was found to have a significant positive relationship with place attachment, indicating that as

a tourist's level of involvement increases, so does their attachment to the destination. A closer examination of the motivation variables indicates that excitement and togetherness also have significant direct effects on place attachment. Surprisingly though, excitement has an inverse relationship while togetherness has a positive relationship.

If the tourist has a higher level of excitement motivation, then their destination image is lower. It is reasonable to assume that this relationship is inverse due to a disconfirmation effect. Individuals that rate excitement motivation items higher (do exciting things, find thrills and excitement, and have fun, be entertained), ultimately have a lower level of attachment to a rural destination as these areas are sparsely populated and tend to offer limited activities. On the other hand, this is the ideal setting for those that are interested in spending time together and socializing; increasing the level of attachment to place.

*Hypothesis 4: Involvement positively moderates the relationship between the components of motivation and revisit intention.*

The moderating interaction effect of involvement on motivation with revisit intention was examined. Again, there were no significant interaction effects identified between any of the motivation variables and revisit intention. This indicates that involvement does not moderate the relationship between excitement, togetherness, or relaxation motivation and revisit intention. Though not hypothesized, the direct effect of each of the motivation variables and the involvement variables was further explored. The results indicate that motivation does not have a direct effect on revisit intention which is in contrast with previous research (Pratminingsih et al., 2014). Though surprising, this may be due to the rural tourism setting and should be further explored in the rural setting.

Another surprising significant relationship is that of involvement and revisit intention. Results show a significant negative relationship, meaning that as the rural tourist's level of involvement increases, their intention to revisit in the future decreases. The reason for this contradictory result is unclear, but it may be due to the tourist exhausting all of the available tourism attributes during their initial visit.

**Research Question 3: To what extent is there a relationship among destination image, place attachment, and visitor satisfaction with revisit intention?**

*Hypotheses 5-7*

The next three hypotheses assess the relationship between destination image and place attachment, place satisfaction, and revisit intention. Destination image has been previously found to be positively associated with place attachment (Prayag & Ryan, 2012), place satisfaction (Assaker & Hallak, 2013), and revisit intention (Assaker & Hallak, 2013; Pratminingsih et al., 2014).

*Hypothesis 5: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with place attachment.*

As anticipated, destination image was found to have a positive significant relationship with place attachment. Tourists to rural areas that have a strong image of the destination will have a higher likelihood of an increased attachment to the place. The reverse of this is also true making it especially important for rural areas to foster a positive image, particularly in the Southeastern United States where the associated stereotypes are not always favorable.



*Hypothesis 6: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with place satisfaction.*

Destination image was found to have a positive significant relationship with place satisfaction. Similar to the relationship destination image has with place attachment, the more favorable the image of the destination is to the tourist, the higher the individuals' level of satisfaction. Satisfaction is an important component of consumer behavior research, and the positive relationship demonstrates the need for tourist destinations to have a positive image, especially those in a rural area with fewer opportunities to attract visitors.

*Hypothesis 7: Destination image has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.*

Destination image is expected to have a positive relationship with revisit intention, however, while there is a significant relationship, it is a significant negative relationship. As the image of a destination becomes more positive, the likelihood of them revisiting again the future decreases, contradicting the previously identified research.

Rural areas can be difficult to access, and rely on a finite amount of resources to improve the infrastructure. Tourism is an avenue to help increase these resources, however, if destination image has a negative effect on revisit intention, tourism planners may be able to apply their limited resources to other important areas that increase revisit intention. The confounding negative relationship between destination image and revisit intention could be similar to that of involvement and revisit intention. The visitor may have a fond appreciation of the destination and view it as a special place to them, but because of the limited activities, do not intend to return again in the foreseeable future.

*Hypothesis 8: Place attachment has a statistically significant positive relationship with place satisfaction.*

*Hypothesis 9: Place attachment has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.*

Hypothesis one confirmed place attachment as a second-order construct consisting of place dependence, place identity, place affect, and place social bonding. The next two hypotheses examine the relationship between the overall second-order factor, place attachment, with place satisfaction and revisit intention. Previous research has indicated a positive significant relationship between place attachment and place satisfaction (Ramkissoon, 2015), and revisit intention (Prayag & Ryan, 2012).

Place attachment was found to have a positive significant relationship with place satisfaction. As a visitor's attachment to a destination increases, so does their satisfaction with the destination. As hypothesized, place attachment was also found to have a positive significant relationship with revisit intention. Visitors with higher levels of attachment to the rural destination were more likely to revisit the destination again in the future. Creating a tourism destination that fosters a sense of attachment one way of increasing both satisfaction and revisit intention.

*Hypothesis 10: Place satisfaction has a statistically significant positive relationship with revisit intention.*

The ultimate goal of any destination, rural or otherwise, is to increase repeat patronage. Repeat visitation is a direct measurement of loyalty (Oliver, 1997; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Russell-Bennett, McColl-Kennedy, & Coote, 2007; Yoon & Uysal, 2005) and decreases the cost for tourism professionals. Satisfaction has been a long standing

antecedent and direct determinant of repeat visitation. Substantiating previous research, the results indicated that satisfaction had a significant positive effect on revisit intention.

## **Implications**

### *Practical Implications*

The last decade has demonstrated individuals renewed interest in visiting rural destinations in the United States (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008). Tourism has the potential to provide numerous benefits to rural areas (Frederick, 1992) including job growth, enhancing infrastructure development (Ribeiro & Marques, 2002), and small-scale business growth (Fleischer & Felsenstein, 2000). The benefits of a sustainable tourism plan has the potential to create a successful destination and enhance the local environment for residents (Jurowski, 1996). Rural areas that are able to create a destination individuals want to return to in the future may have a competitive advantage, as this increases customer loyalty (Oppermann, 2000).

This research found that tourists that are highly motivated by socialization and the desire to be around others indicated an increased level of attachment for the rural destination, but a decreased image of the destination. The negative relationship between togetherness and destination image is lessened by a higher level of involvement. In contrast, individuals highly motivated by excitement showed an increase in destination image, but a decrease in place attachment. Relaxation had no significant effect on any of the hypothesized variables. Rural areas have thought to be a retreat for city-dwellers and a place to unwind, however, relaxation does not play a significant role in destination image, attachment, or revisit intention. Therefore tourism practitioners should consider

creating a tourism product that attracts tourists seeking excitement and togetherness. If destination were to choose one of these over the other, a destination that fosters togetherness would be the more logical choice, since togetherness increases attachment which has a strong positive effect on revisit intention. Some great ways to foster socialization is through group activities and providing spaces for groups to gather.

Higher levels of involvement were found to increase both destination image and place attachment, but it was also found to decrease likelihood of revisit intention. Highly involved tourists to rural destinations receive greater levels of enjoyment from being on vacation in that creating a special image of that destination in their mind, which fosters an attachment. The attachment, however, isn't indicative of the individual revisiting again in the future. This is likely due to the tourist having experienced all the rural area has to offer. To combat this, rural destinations can create a sense of newness for future visits, including special events such as festivals. This will also help an area differentiate itself from others in the same region.

The relationship between destination image and place attachment, as well as destination image and satisfaction, demonstrates how rural tourists' positive image formation creates a positive effect on their attachment to and satisfaction with the rural destination. The increased attachment and satisfaction to the destination can be a benefit to rural destinations as both of these are indicators of repeat visitation. However, a positive image of the destination also indicated that the tourist was less likely to return in the foreseeable future. This surprising result reveals that although someone may have a positive view of the destination, it does not mean that they are wanting to return. This may be due to the limited offerings. Another explanation may be that a positive

destination image alone does not create a repeat visitor, it must be coupled with high levels of satisfaction and/or place attachment. Increasing levels of place attachment has a positive effect on both satisfaction and revisit intention.

Tourism industry professionals should take this information into consideration when creating a tourism product. Because overall satisfaction was found to have the greatest link to revisit intention, followed by place attachment, then destination image, importance should be placed on creating an overall product that fosters a high level of satisfaction. Creating a destination that cultivates destination image, attachment, and satisfaction simultaneously, will have the greatest impact on revisit intention and visitor loyalty.

#### *Theoretical Implications*

The findings of this dissertation have several implications for research into revisit intention to a rural destination. To the researcher's knowledge, this is the first revisit intention model to include place attachment as a second-order factor, examine the relationships among destination image, place attachment, and place satisfaction, and evaluate the interaction effect of involvement on motivation and destination image, place attachment, and revisit intention. Both the measurement model and the structural model were found to have good fit with the data. Additionally, the research confirmed the use of place attachment as a second-order construct. This confirmation indicates that researchers using the place attachment construct within the rural tourism research should consider utilizing the second-order construct with place identity, place affect, place dependence, and place social bonding as the four sub-dimensions.

Next, the research found significant relationships and a lack of significant relationships within the revisit intention model that conflicted with others' findings. The most notable differences being the inverse effects of destination image and involvement on revisit. These negative relationships reveal the necessity of rural tourism researchers to take into account attachment and satisfaction as both of these had the strongest relationships with revisit intention.

An interesting result with theoretical implications is the relationship of excitement and togetherness motivators on destination image and attachment. Each has the opposite effect on destination image and attachment. By focusing on each motivator individually, researchers are able to better identify the paths to revisit intention, potentially furthering our understanding of specific types of motivators and their indirect relationship with revisit intention.

Finally, this model as a whole adds a new dimension to rural tourism research. More interesting and revealing relationships have been identified through this model that can change the understanding of revisit intention to rural tourism destinations.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

Future work on revisit intention to rural destinations will take into account distance traveled and mode of transportation. This information will allow comparisons between groups to determine if there is a significant difference among them. Additionally, more detailed research into the rural tourist will be examined. The intention is to identify specific latent characteristics of the rural tourist to create a rural tourist typology similar to that of the cultural tourist typology created by McKercher (2002).

Segmentation of the tourists into marketable groups will benefit tourism industry professionals by providing target groups to focus marketing efforts.

Additionally, future research should consider the inclusion of control variables. Control variables that would be beneficial to explore would be demographic variables such as age and gender and travel pattern variables such as distance traveled, money spent, and time spent at the destination. A comparison of overnight visitors and excursionists would also create a deeper understanding of the types of visitors and the activities which they partake.

A limitation of this study is the lack of control variables within the model. Specifically, the model should have controlled for previous visitation. Previous visitation to a destination has been shown to have an effect on both motivation and destination image (Baloglu & McLeary, 1999). Controlling for this effect would reduce the potential error of the model, and may have improved the measurement model fit.

Another limitation to this study is the confinement of tourist destinations to the Southeastern United States. Due to the use of only states in the Southeast, results cannot be generalized to the population as a whole. Future studies should aim to compare regions of rural tourism destinations with one another to create a more generalizable model and potentially provide insight into differences among regions.

The results were obtained through a survey panel company. Although this is not necessarily a limitation, it does require the results be interpreted cautiously. Future research would benefit from identifying a number of rural tourist destinations to survey their tourists. These results can then be compared to the amenities offered by each destination.

## **Conclusions**

The rural United States covers a mass amount of area, and is therefore a reasonable resource to explore as a tourism option. Rural tourism has begun to grow, but small towns do not have the ability to gather a meaningful assessment about the revisit intention behaviors of rural tourists. This study tested a revisit intention model that enhances our knowledge about relationships among the rural tourist's behavioral factors. The model identified significant relationships that provide practical information for tourism industry professionals to enhance their product. It also enhances the theoretical understanding of paths to revisit intention.



## References

- Agapito, D., Pinto, P., & Mendes, J. (2017). Tourists' memories, sensory impressions and loyalty: In loco and post-visit study in Southwest Portugal. *Tourism Management*, 58, 108–118. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.10.015>
- Assaker, G., & Hallak, R. (2013). Moderating effects of tourists' novelty-seeking tendencies on destination image, visitor satisfaction, and short- and long-term revisit intentions. *Journal of Travel Research*, 52(5), 600–613. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0047287513478497>
- Auburn University. (2017, June 9). *Auburn University*. Retrieved from Office of Human Research (IRB): <https://cws.auburn.edu/OVPR/pm/compliance/irb/home>
- Baloglu, S., & McCleary, K. W. (1999). A model of destination image formation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(4), 868–897. [http://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(99\)00030-4](http://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(99)00030-4)
- Berli, A., & Martín, J. D. (2004). Factors influencing destination image. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(3), 657–681. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2004.01.010>
- Bentler, P. M. (1990). Comparative fit indexes in structural models. *Psychological Bulletin*, 107(2), 238.
- Benur, A. M., & Bramwell, B. (2015). Tourism product development and product diversification in destinations. *Tourism Management*, 50, 213–224.

<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2015.02.005>

Bosque, I. R., & Martín, H. S. (2008). Tourist satisfaction a cognitive-affective model. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(2), 551–573.

<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2008.02.006>

Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Attachment*, Vol. 1. New York: Basic Books.

Bramwell, B., and Lane, B. (1994). *Rural tourism and sustainable rural development*.

London: Channel View.

Briedenhann, J., & Wickens, E. (2004). Tourism routes as a tool for the economic development of rural areas-vibrant hope or impossible dream? *Tourism Management*, 25, 71–79. [http://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177\(03\)00063-3](http://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(03)00063-3)

Brown, B. B., & Perkins, D. D. (1992). Disruptions in place attachment. In *Place Attachment* (pp. 279–304). Springer US.

Brown, B., Perkins, D. D., & Brown, G. (2003). Place attachment in a revitalizing neighborhood: Individual and block levels of analysis. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 23(3), 259–271. [http://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944\(02\)00117-2](http://doi.org/10.1016/S0272-4944(02)00117-2)

Burnham, K. P., & Anderson, D. R. (2004). Multimodel inference: understanding AIC and BIC in model selection. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 33(2), 261-304.

Byrne, B. N. (2010). *Structural Equation Modeling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications, and programming*. (2nd, Ed.) New York: Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group.

Cánoves, G., Villarino, M., Priestley, G. K., & Blanco, A. (2004). Rural tourism in Spain: An analysis of recent evolution. *Geoforum*, 35(6 SPEC.ISS.), 755–769.

<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2004.03.005>

- Cawley, M., & Gillmor, D. A. (2008). Integrated rural tourism: *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(2), 316–337. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2007.07.011>
- Chen, C. F., & Tsai, D. (2007). How destination image and evaluative factors affect behavioral intentions? *Tourism Management*, 28(4), 1115–1122. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2006.07.007>
- Chen, F.F., Sousa, K.H., & West, S.G. (2005). Testing measurement invariance of second-order factor models. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 12(3), 471-492.
- Chen, J.S., Gursoy, D., 2001. An investigation of tourist's destination loyalty and preferences. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality*, 13(12), 79–85.
- Chen, J.V., Htaik, S., Hiele, T.M., & Chen, C. (2016). Investigating international tourists' intention to revisit Myanmar based on need gratification, flow experience and perceived risk. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 98(April), 1–20. <http://doi.org/10.1080/1528008X.2015.1133367>
- Cheng, T. M., & Wu, H. C. (2015). How do environmental knowledge, environmental sensitivity, and place attachment affect environmentally responsible behavior? An integrated approach for sustainable island tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 23(4), 557-576.
- Chew, E. Y. T., & Jahari, S. A. (2014). Destination image as a mediator between perceived risks and revisit intention: A case of post-disaster Japan. *Tourism Management*, 40, 382–393. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.07.008>
- Chi, C. G., & Qu, H. (2008). Examining the structural relationships of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty: An integrated approach. *Tourism Management*, 29(4), 624–636. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2007.06.007>

- Churchill Jr, G. A., & Surprenant, C. (1982). An investigation into the determinants of customer satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 491-504.
- Cint. (2017, July 10). *About Us*. Retrieved from Cint Insight Platform:  
<https://www.cint.com/about/>
- Cromartie, J. (2017, June 15). *Population and Migration*. Retrieved from USDA Economic Research Service: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/population-migration/>
- Cromartie, J., & Bucholtz, S. (2008, June 1). *Defining the "Rural" in Rural America*. Retrieved from United States Department of Agriculture: Economic Research Service, Amber Waves: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2008/june/defining-the-rural-in-rural-america/>
- Cromartie, J., & Parker, T. (2017, May 1). *What is Rural?* Retrieved from United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service:  
<https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/rural-classifications/what-is-rural.aspx>
- Crompton, J. L. (1979). Motivations for pleasure vacation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 6(4), 408–424. [http://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383\(79\)90004-5](http://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(79)90004-5)
- Crompton, J. L., & McKay, S. L. (1997). Motives of visitors attending festival events. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24(2), 425-439.
- Csapo, J. (2012). The Role and Importance of Cultural Tourism in Modern Tourism Industry. *Strategies for Tourism Industry - Micro and Macro Perspectives*, 201–232.  
<http://doi.org/10.5772/2685>
- Dann, G. M. S. (1977). Anomie, ego-enhancement and tourism. *Annals of Tourism*

- Research*, 4(4), 184–194. [http://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383\(77\)90037-8](http://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(77)90037-8)
- Daugstad, K. (2008). Negotiating landscape in rural tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(2), 402–426. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2007.10.001>
- del Bosque, I. R., & Martín, H. S. (2008). Tourist satisfaction a cognitive-affective model. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(2), 551–573.  
<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2008.02.006>
- Devesa, M., Laguna, M., & Palacios, A. (2010). The role of motivation in visitor satisfaction: Empirical evidence in rural tourism. *Tourism Management*, 31(4), 547–552. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.06.006>
- Dickinson, J. E., Hibbert, J. F., & Filimonau, V. (2016). Mobile technology and the tourist experience: (Dis)connection at the campsite. *Tourism Management*, 57, 193–201. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.06.005>
- Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2009). *Internet, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The tailored design method*. 3rd ed.. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Du Cros, H., & McKercher, B. (2015). *Cultural Tourism*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Routledge.
- Dunn Ross, E. L., & Iso-Ahola, S. E. (1991). Sightseeing tourists' motivation and satisfaction. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 18(2), 226–237.  
[http://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383\(91\)90006-W](http://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(91)90006-W)
- Edwards, J. R. (2009). Seven deadly myths of testing moderation in organizational research. *Statistical and Methodological Myths and Urban Legends: Doctrine, Verity and Fable in the Organizational and Social Sciences*, 143-164.
- Euscbio, C., Carneiro, M. J., Kastenholz, E., Figueiredo, E., & Soares da Silva, D. (2017). Who is consuming the countryside? An activity-based segmentation analysis

- of the domestic rural tourism market in Portugal. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 31, 197–210. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2016.12.006>
- Fleischer, A., & Felsenstein, D. (2000). Support for rural tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(4), 1007–1024. [http://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(99\)00126-7](http://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(99)00126-7)
- Fodness, D. (1994). Measuring tourist motivation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 21(3), 555–581. [http://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383\(94\)90120-1](http://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(94)90120-1)
- Frederick, M. (1992). Tourism as a rural economic development tool: An exploration of the literature. *Bibliographies and Literature of Agriculture*. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, 122.
- Furr, R. M., & Bacharach, V. R. (2014). *Psychometrics: An Introduction* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Gallarza, M. G., Saura, I. G., & García, H. C. (2002). Destination image towards a conceptual framework. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29(1), 56–78. [http://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(01\)00031-7](http://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(01)00031-7)
- Garrod, B., Wornell, R., & Youell, R. (2006). Re-conceptualising rural resources as countryside capital: The case of rural tourism. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 22(1), 117–128. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrurstud.2005.08.001>
- Gartner, W. C. (2004). Rural Tourism Development in the USA, 164, 151–164. <http://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.481>
- George, W. E., Mair, H., & Reid, D. G. (2009). *Rural Tourism Development: Localism and Cultural Change*. Tonawanda: Channel View Publications.
- Goeldner, C. R., & Ritchie, J. B. (2003). *Tourism: Principles, practices, philosophies*. John Wiley & Sons.

- Green, S. B., & Salkind, N. J. (2008). *Using SPSS for Windows and Macintosh: Analyzing and understanding data* (5th ed., pp. 325-334). Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Gross, M. J., & Brown, G. (2008). An empirical structural model of tourists and places: Progressing involvement and place attachment into tourism. *Tourism Management*, 29(6), 1141–1151. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2008.02.009>
- Gursoy, D., & Gavcar, E. (2003). International leisure tourists' involvement profile. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30(4), 906-926.
- Hair, J., Black, W., Babin, B., & Anderson, R. (2010). *Multivariate Data Analysis* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ, USA: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Halpenny, E. (2010). Pro-environmental behaviors and park visitors: the effect of place attachment. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 30(4), 409-421.
- Hammit, W. E., Kyle, G. T., & Oh, C. O. (2009). Comparison of place bonding models in recreation resource management. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 41(1), 57-72.
- Harrigan, P., Evers, U., Miles, M., & Daly, T. (2017). Customer engagement with tourism social media brands. *Tourism Management*, 59, 597–609. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.09.015>
- Hooper, D., Coughlan, J., & Mullen, M. (2008). Structural equation modelling: Guidelines for determining model fit. *Journal of Business Research*, 6(1), 53-60.
- Hou, J., C. Lin, and D. B. Morais. (2005). Antecedents of attachment to a cultural tourism destination: The case of Hakka and Non-Hakka Taiwanese visitors to Pei-Pu, Taiwan. *Journal of Travel Research*, 44(4), 221-33.

- Houston, M. J., & Rothschild, M. L. (1978). Conceptual and methodological perspectives on involvement. *Research frontiers in marketing: Dialogues and directions*, 184(187), 262-270.
- Hu, L., & Bentler, P. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 6(1), 1-55.
- Huang, S. (Sam), & Hsu, C. H. C. (2009). Travel motivation: Linking theory to practice. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 3(4), 287–295. <http://doi.org/10.1108/17506180910994505>
- Hwang, S. N., Lee, C., & Chen, H. J. (2005). The relationship among tourists' involvement, place attachment and interpretation satisfaction in Taiwan's national parks. *Tourism Management*, 26(2), 143–156. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2003.11.006>
- Iso-Ahola, S. E. (1982). Toward a social psychological theory of tourism motivation: A rejoinder. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 9(2), 256–262. [http://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383\(82\)90049-4](http://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(82)90049-4)
- John, P. L. (2017, June 10). *Downtown Revitalization*. Retrieved from USDA National Agricultural Library: <https://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/downtown-revitalization>
- Josiam, B. M., Smeaton, G., & Clements, C. J. (1999). Involvement: Travel motivation and destination selection. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 5(2), 167–175. <http://doi.org/10.1177/135676679900500205>
- Jurowski, C., & Reich, A. Z. (2000). An explanation and illustration of cluster analysis for identifying hospitality market segments. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism*



*Research*, 24(1), 67-91.

Klenosky, D. B. (2002). The “pull” of tourism destinations: A means-end investigation.

*Journal of Travel Research*, 40(May), 396–403.

<http://doi.org/10.1177/004728750204000405>

Krugman, H. E. (1966). The measurement of advertising involvement. *The Public*

*Opinion Quarterly*, 30(4), 583–596. Retrieved from

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2746964>

Kusmin, L. (2016). *Rural America at a glance. USDA-ERS Economic Brief.*

Kyle, Gerard; Graefe, Alan; Manning, Robert; Bacon, J. (2003). An examination of the

relationship between leisure activity involvement and place attachment among

hikers along the Appalachian Trail. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 35(3), 249–273.

Kyle, G. T., Mowen, A. J., & Tarrant, M. (2004). Linking place preferences with place

meaning: An examination of the relationship between place motivation and place

attachment. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 24(4), 439–454.

<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2004.11.001>

Lau, A. L. S., & Mckercher, B. (2004). Exploration versus acquisition: A comparison of

first-time and repeat visitors. *Journal of Travel Research*, 42, 279–285.

<http://doi.org/10.1177/0047287503257502>

Laurent, G., & Kapferer, J. N. (1985). Measuring consumer involvement profiles. *Journal of*

*Marketing Research*, 22, 41-53.

Lee, T. H. (2009). A structural model to examine how destination image, attitude, and

motivation affect the future behavior of tourists. *Leisure Sciences*, 31(3), 215–236.

<http://doi.org/10.1080/01490400902837787>

- Li, M., Cai, L. A., Lehto, X. Y., & Huang, J. (2010). A missing link in understanding revisit intention - The role of motivation and image. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 27, 335–348. <http://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2010.481559>
- Li, X., Li, X., & Hudson, S. (2013). The application of generational theory to tourism consumer behavior: An American perspective. *Tourism Management*, 37, 147–164. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.01.015>
- Long, P., & Lane, B. (2000). Rural tourism development in trends in recreation. *Leisure, and tourism, edited by WC Gartner and DW Lime, CABI: London.*
- Loureiro, S. M. C. (2014). The role of the rural tourism experience economy in place attachment and behavioral intentions. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 40, 1–9. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2014.02.010>
- Lupi, C., Giaccio, V., Mastronardi, L., Giannelli, A., & Scardera, A. (2017). Exploring the features of agritourism and its contribution to rural development in Italy. *Land Use Policy*, 64, 383–390. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2017.03.002>
- Mansfeld, Y., Jonas, A., & Cahaner, L. (2016). Between tourists faith and perceptions of travel risk: An exploratory study of the Israeli Haredi community. *Journal of Travel Research*, 55(3), 395–413. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0047287514550099>
- McKercher, B. (2002). Towards a classification of cultural tourists. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 4(1), 29–38. <http://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.346>
- McKercher, B., & Du Cros, H. (2002). *Cultural Tourism: The partnership between tourism and cultural heritage management*. New York: The Haworth Hospitality Press.

- Merriam-Webster Dictionary. (2017). cultural. Retrieved June 10, 2017, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cultural>
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary. (2017). tourism. Retrieved June 10, 2017, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/tourism>
- Mertler, C. A., & Reinhart, R. V. (2016). *Advanced and multivariate statistical methods: Practical application and interpretation*. Routledge.
- Murray, E.J. (1964). *Motivation and Emotion*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Needleman,
- National Rural Assembly. (2017). *Rural Compact*. Retrieved from National Rural Assembly: <http://ruralassembly.org/the-rural-compact/>
- O'Brien, R. M. (2007). A caution regarding rules of thumb for variance inflation factors. *Quality & Quantity, 41*, 673-690.
- OECD. (2017). *About the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development*. Retrieved from Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development: <http://www.oecd.org/about/>
- OECD (1994). *Tourism policy and international tourism in OECD countries: 1991-1992*. Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development.
- OECD. (n.d.). *Understanding Rural Economies*. Retrieved June 12, 2017, from [oecd.org: http://www.oecd.org/cfe/regional-policy/understanding-rural-economies.htm](http://www.oecd.org/cfe/regional-policy/understanding-rural-economies.htm)
- Oh, H. C., Uysal, M., & Weaver, P. a. (1995). Product bundles and market segments based on travel motivations: A canonical correlation approach. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 14*(2), 123–137. [http://doi.org/10.1016/0278-4319\(95\)00010-A](http://doi.org/10.1016/0278-4319(95)00010-A)

- Oliver, R. L. (1997). *Satisfaction: A Behavioral Perspective on the Consumer*. Irwin/MaGraw-Hill, New York.
- Oliver, R. L. (1999). "Whence Consumer Loyalty?" *Journal of Marketing*, 63, 33-44.
- Oppermann, M. (1998). Destination threshold potential and the law of repeat visitation. *Journal of Travel Research*, 37(2), 131-137.
- Oppermann, M. (2000). Tourism destination loyalty. *Journal of Travel Research*, 39, 78–84.
- Page, S. J. & Getz, D. (1997). *The business of rural tourism: International perspectives*. London: International Thomson Business Press.
- Pallant, J. (2013). *SPSS Survival Manual* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Open University Press.
- Park, D. B., & Yoon, Y. S. (2009). Segmentation by motivation in rural tourism: A Korean case study. *Tourism Management*, 30(1), 99–108.  
<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2008.03.011>
- Phillips, W. J., Wolfe, K., Hodur, N., & Leistritz, F. L. (2013). Tourist word of mouth and revisit intentions to rural tourism destinations: A case of North Dakota, USA. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 15, 93–104. <http://doi.org/10.1002/jtr>
- Pratminingsih, S. A., Rudatin, C. L., & Rimenta, T. (2014). Roles of motivation and destination image in predicting tourist revisit intention: A case of Bandung – Indonesia. *International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology*, 5(1).  
<http://doi.org/10.7763/IJIMT.2014.V5.479>
- Prayag, G., & Ryan, C. (2012). Antecedents of tourists' loyalty to Mauritius: The role and influence of destination image, place attachment, personal involvement, and

satisfaction. *Journal of Travel Research*, 51, 342–356.

<http://doi.org/10.1177/0047287511410321>

- Pretty, G. H., H. M. Chipuer, and P. Bramston. (2003). Sense of place amongst adolescents and adults in two rural Australian towns: The discriminating features of place attachment, sense of community and place dependence in relation to place identity. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 23(3): 273-87.
- Qu, H., Kim, L. H., & Im, H. H. (2011). A model of destination branding: Integrating the concepts of the branding and destination image. *Tourism Management*, 32(3), 465–476. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2010.03.014>
- Ramkissoon, H. (2015). Authenticity, satisfaction, and place attachment: A conceptual framework for cultural tourism in African island economies. *Development Southern Africa*, 32(3), 292–302. <http://doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2015.1010711>
- Ramkissoon, H., Graham Smith, L. D., & Weiler, B. (2013). Testing the dimensionality of place attachment and its relationships with place satisfaction and pro-environmental behaviours: A structural equation modelling approach. *Tourism Management*, 36, 552–566. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2012.09.003>
- Ratcliffe, B. M., Burd, C., Holder, K., & Fields, A. (2016). Defining Rural at the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey and Geography Brief, (December), 1–8. Retrieved from [http://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/reference/ua/Defining\\_Rural.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/reference/ua/Defining_Rural.pdf)
- Raymond, C. M., Brown, G., & Robinson, G. M. (2011). The influence of place attachment, and moral and normative concerns on the conservation of native vegetation: A test of two behavioural models. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*,

31(4), 323–335. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2011.08.006>

Ribeiro, M., & Marques, C. (2002). Rural tourism and the development of less favoured areas—between rhetoric and practice. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 4(3), 211-220.

Robinson, J. P., Shaver, P. R., & Wrightsman, L. S. (1991). Criteria for scale selection and evaluation. *Measures of personality and social psychological attitudes*, 1(3), 1-16.

Royo-Vela, M. (2009). Rural-cultural excursion conceptualization: A local tourism marketing management model based on tourist destination image measurement. *Tourism Management*, 30(3), 419–428.

<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2008.07.013>

Rural Information Center. (2016, May). *What is Rural?* Retrieved from USDA, National Agricultural Library: <https://www.nal.usda.gov/ric/what-is-rural>

Russell-Bennett, R., McColl-Kennedy, J. R., & Coote, L. V. (2007). Involvement, satisfaction, and brand loyalty in a small business services setting. *Journal of Business Research*, 60(12), 1253–1260. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2007.05.001>

Ryan, R., & Deci, E. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 54–67. <http://doi.org/10.1006/ceps.1999.1020>

Salkind, N. J. (2011). *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Saxena, G., & Ilbery, B. (2008). Integrated rural tourism: A border case study. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(1), 233-254.

- Scannell, L., & Gifford, R. (2010). Defining place attachment: A tripartite organizing framework. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 30*(1), 1–10.  
<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2009.09.006>
- Sharpley, R., & Sharpley, J. (1997). *Rural Tourism: An Introduction*. London: Thomson Business Press.
- Shoemaker, S., & Lewis, R. C. (1999). Customer loyalty: The future of hospitality marketing. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 18*, 345–370.
- Sirgy, M. J., & Su, C. (2000). Destination image, self-congruity, and travel behavior: Toward an integrative model. *Journal of Travel Research, 38*(4), 340–352.  
<http://doi.org/10.1177/004728750003800402>
- Skuras, D., Petrou, A., & Clark, G. (2006). Demand for rural tourism: The effects of quality and information. *Agricultural Economics, 35*(2), 183–192.  
<http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1574-0862.2006.00151.x>
- Snepenger, D., King, J., Marshall, E., & Uysal, M. (2006). Modeling Iso-Ahola's motivation theory in the tourism context. *Journal of Travel Research, 45*(2), 140–149. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0047287506291592>
- So, K. K. F., King, C., Sparks, B. A., & Wang, Y. (2016). The role of customer engagement in building consumer loyalty to tourism brands. *Journal of Travel Research, 55*(1), 64–78. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0047287514541008>
- Sposito, V. A., Hand, M. L., & Skarpness, B. (1983). On the efficiency of using the sample kurtosis in selecting optimal estimators. *Communications in Statistics-simulation and Computation, 12*(3), 265-272.

- Steiger, J. (2007). Understanding the limitations of global fit assessment in structural equation modeling. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 42(5), 893-898.
- Stern, M. J., Bilgen, I., & Dillman, D. A. (2014). The state of survey methodology: Challenges, dilemmas, and new frontiers in the era of the tailored design. *Field Methods*, 26(3), 284 - 301. doi:10.1177/1525822X13519561
- Tennessee-Alabama-Mississippi Rural Tourism Conference. (2017, July 13). *Tennessee-Alabama-Mississippi Rural Tourism Conference Home Page*. Retrieved from Tennessee-Alabama-Mississippi Rural Tourism Conference: <https://almstnruraltourism.com/>
- Thompson, C. S. (2004). Host produced rural tourism Towa's Tokyo antenna shop. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(1), 580-600.
- Tighe, A. J. (1986). The arts/tourism partnership. *Journal of Travel Research*, 24(3), 2-5.
- TomTom. (2010, January 26). TomTom data reveals U.S. drivers' average speed, fastest highway. Concord, MA, United States of America. Retrieved from AutoBlog: <http://www.autoblog.com/2010/01/26/tomtom-data-reveals-u-s-drivers-average-speed-fastest-highway/>
- Tsai, S., & McCabe, S. (2012). Place attachment and tourism marketing: Investigating international tourists in Singapore. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 14, 139–152. <http://doi.org/10.1002/jtr>
- Tuan, Y. F. (1977). Experience and appreciation. In children, nature, and the urban environment (pp. 26–32; GTR NE-30). Upper Darby, PA: USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Experiment Station.
- Tuan, Y. F. (1980). Rootedness versus Sense of Place. *Landscape*, 24, 3-8.



- Um, S., Chon, K., & Ro, Y. (2006). Antecedents of revisit intention. *Annals of Tourism Research, 33*(4), 1141–1158. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2006.06.003>
- U. S. Travel Association (2016). U.S. Travel Answer Sheet. Retrieved May 6, 2017, from <https://www.ustravel.org/answersheet>
- U.S. Travel Association. (2017, June 10). *About Us*. Retrieved from U.S. Travel Association: <https://www.ustravel.org/about-us>
- U.S. Travel Association. (2017, February 17). *Impact of Travel on State Economies, 2016 Edition*. Retrieved from U.S. Travel Association: <https://www.ustravel.org/research/impact-travel-state-economies-2016-edition>
- U.S. Travel Association. (2017). *U.S. Travel Answer Sheet*. Retrieved from U.S. Travel Association: <https://www.ustravel.org/answersheet>
- United Nations World Tourism Organization. (2014). Glossary of tourism terms. Retrieved from: <http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/Glossary-of-terms.pdf>
- UNWTO. (2016). *UNWTO Tourism Highlights: 2016 Edition*. Madrid. Retrieved from <http://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284418145>
- UNWTO. (2017, June 10). *Why Tourism?* Retrieved from World Tourism Organization UNWTO: <http://www2.unwto.org/content/why-tourism>
- USDA ERS. (2013, May 2). *Rural-Urban Continuum Codes*. Retrieved from United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-continuum-codes/>
- Varki, S., & Wong, S. (2003). Consumer involvement in relationship marketing of services. *Journal of Service Research, 6*(1), 83–91. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1094670503254287>

- Visit Mississippi. (2017, June 7). *Music and Arts*. Retrieved from Visit Mississippi:  
<http://www.visitmississippi.org/sitepages/music-and-arts#blues-music>
- Wang, D. (2004). Tourist behavior and repeat visitation to Hong Kong. *Tourism Geographies*, 6(1), 99–118.
- Williams, D. R., & Vaske, J. J. (2003). The measurement of place attachment: Validity and generalizability of a psychometric approach. *Forest Science*, 49(6), 830–840.  
[http://doi.org/Retrieved from](http://doi.org/)  
[http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs\\_other/rmrs\\_2003\\_williams\\_d001.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs_other/rmrs_2003_williams_d001.pdf)
- Wilson, S., Fesenmaier, D. R., Fesenmaier, J., & Van Es, J. C. (2001). Factors for success in rural tourism development. *Journal of Travel Research*, 40(2), 132–138.  
Retrieved from <http://www.scopus.com/inward/record.url?eid=2-s2.0-0035710675&partnerID=40&md5=3d7e7b9697f3a90bf29099c2f4c6a82e>
- Yoon, Y., & Uysal, M. (2005). An examination of the effects of motivation and satisfaction on destination loyalty: A structural model. *Tourism Management*, 26(1), 45–56. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2003.08.016>
- Zabkar, V., Brencic, M. M., & Dmitroviic, T. (2010). Modelling perceived quality, visitor satisfaction and behavioural intentions at the destination level. *Tourism Management*, 31(4), 537–546. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.06.005>
- Zaichkowsky, J. L. (1985). Measuring the involvement construct. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 12(3), 341–352.
- Zaichkowsky, J. L. (1986). Conceptualizing Involvement. *Journal of Advertising*, 15(2), 4–34. <http://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.1986.10672999>

Zaichkowsky, J. L. (1994). The personal involvement inventory: Reduction, revision, and application to advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 23(4), 59-70.

Zeithaml, V., Berry, L., & Parasuraman, A. (1996). The behavioral consequences of service quality. *Journal of Marketing*, 60(2), 31-46.

Zhang, H., Fu, X., Cai, L. a., & Lu, L. (2014). Destination image and tourist loyalty: A meta-analysis. *Tourism Management*, 40, 213–223.

<http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2013.06.006>

## Appendix A: IRB Information Letter

### INFORMATION LETTER for a Research Study entitled “Understanding Rural Tourism”

You are invited to participate in a research study investigating rural tourism and the individuals that travel to these destinations. This study is being conducted by Amy Bardwell, a graduate student at Auburn University, under the direction of Dr. David Martin, a professor in the Department of Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Management at Auburn University to fulfill the requirement of the doctoral dissertation. You were selected to receive this electronic survey based on your visitation to a rural location and are age 19 or older.

If you choose to participate in this research study, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire. Your total time commitment will be approximately 15-20 minutes.

There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study. There are no costs to participants nor is there any compensation. Any information gathered through this research project may be used to fulfill the requirement of dissertation research, published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional conference.

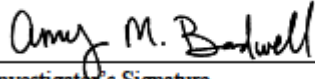
If you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw at any time during the study by closing out your browser. If you choose to withdraw, your data cannot be withdrawn because it will be unidentifiable. Once you've submitted anonymous data, it cannot be withdrawn since it will be unidentifiable. Your participation is completely voluntary. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University or the Department of Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Management.

Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous. We will protect your privacy and the data you provide by ensuring no identifiable information is collected.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please feel free to contact Amy Bardwell at [amb0085@auburn.edu](mailto:amb0085@auburn.edu).

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334) 844-5966 or e-mail at [hsubjec@auburn.edu](mailto:hsubjec@auburn.edu) or [IRBChair@auburn.edu](mailto:IRBChair@auburn.edu).

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW. YOU MAY PRINT A COPY OF THIS LETTER TO KEEP.

  
Investigator's Signature                      12/5/2016  
Date

*The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from January 6, 2017 to January 5, 2020. Protocol # 16-486 EX1701.*

[LINK TO SURVEY](#)

## Appendix B: CITI Certification

### COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI PROGRAM) COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS REPORT\*

\* NOTE: Scores on this Requirements Report reflect quiz completions at the time all requirements for the course were met. See list below for details. See separate Transcript Report for more recent quiz scores, including those on optional (supplemental) course elements.

- **Name:** Amy Bardwell (ID: 887486)
- **Email:** amb0085@auburn.edu
- **Institution Affiliation:** Auburn University (ID: 964)
- **Institution Unit:** Nutrition, Dietetics, and Hospitality Management
- **Phone:** 662-832-0286
  
- **Curriculum Group:** IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel - Basic/Refresher
- **Course Learner Group:** IRB # 2 Social and Behavioral Emphasis - AU Personnel
- **Stage:** Stage 1 - Basic Course
- **Description:** Choose this group to satisfy CITI training requirements for Key Personnel (Including AU Faculty, Staff and Students) and Faculty Advisors Involved primarily in Social/Behavioral Research with human subjects.
  
- **Report ID:** 12626939
- **Completion Date:** 03/19/2014
- **Expiration Date:** 03/19/2017
- **Minimum Passing:** 80
- **Reported Score\*:** 86

REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE MODULES ONLY	DATE COMPLETED	SCORE
The Federal Regulations - SBE (ID: 502)	04/21/08	5/6 (83%)
Assessing Risk - SBE (ID: 503)	04/21/08	4/5 (80%)
Informed Consent - SBE (ID: 504)	04/21/08	4/5 (80%)
Privacy and Confidentiality - SBE (ID: 505)	04/21/08	5/5 (100%)
Students In Research (ID: 1321)	04/21/08	7/10 (70%)
Unanticipated Problems and Reporting Requirements In Social and Behavioral Research (ID: 14928)	03/19/14	3/3 (100%)
Belmont Report and CITI Course Introduction (ID: 1127)	03/19/14	3/3 (100%)
Vulnerable Subjects - Research Involving Workers/Employees (ID: 483)	04/21/08	4/4 (100%)
Conflicts of Interest In Research Involving Human Subjects (ID: 488)	04/21/08	2/2 (100%)

For this Report to be valid, the learner identified above must have had a valid affiliation with the CITI Program subscribing Institution identified above or have been a paid Independent Learner.

CITI Program  
 Email: [citisupport@miami.edu](mailto:citisupport@miami.edu)  
 Phone: 305-243-7970  
 Web: <https://www.citiprogram.org>

## Appendix C: Rural Tourism Survey

## **Rural Tourism Survey**

In the past twelve to twenty-four months, think of a time you traveled to a rural destination in the Southeastern United States for either a day trip or vacation. These states include: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Of the choices below, choose the state, town, and then the county that best suits your travel destination. Keep this destination in mind as you answer the remaining questions in this survey. If the county that you visited is not listed, then it is not considered rural based on the criteria being used. Thank you for your participation, but please do not continue with the survey.

Drop Down Menu:

State

Town

County

Welcome! The purpose of this study is to better understand why people choose to travel to rural destinations. Your participation in this study is greatly appreciated and should take no more than 8 to 12 minutes of your time. Your honest feedback will help to better understand what motivates individuals to travel to rural areas. The results collected from this survey are completely anonymous and will contribute to a dissertation on rural tourism which will serve as a necessary component for the researcher to complete the Ph.D. program at Auburn University. Additionally, the results may be presented at a professional meeting and/or used for publication. If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact the researcher Amy Bardwell at [amb0085@auburn.edu](mailto:amb0085@auburn.edu). Attached is also the information letter about the research. You can download this and keep for your records. Please click the ">>" button below to continue.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the rural destination you previously indicated?

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I get pleasure from being on vacation in this rural area.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I attach great importance to being on vacation in this rural area.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a lot of interest in rural attractions as a vacation destination.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being on vacation here is a bit like giving a gift to one's self.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It gives me pleasure getting involved in the various things to do here.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You can tell a lot about a person/family by whether or not they go on vacations here.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If reading this, then choose disagree.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This area offers cultural and historical attractions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This area is culturally diverse.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This area has a variety of quality accommodations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This area has a great level of service.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



This destination is accessible.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This destination has a good reputation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This destination offers a variety of accommodations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
For what I like to do, I could not imagine anything better than the settings and facilities provided by this destination.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
For the activities I enjoy the most, the settings and facilities provided by this destination are the best.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I enjoy visiting this area and its environment more than any other destinations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I identify strongly with this area.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that this area is part of me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visiting this area says a lot about who I am.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am very attached to this destination.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel a strong sense of belonging to this destination and its settings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This destination means a lot to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>Many of my friends/family prefer this destination over many other destinations.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>If I were to stop visiting this destination, I would lose contact with a number of friends.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>My friends/family would be disappointed if I were to start visiting other settings and facilities.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>I believe I did the right thing when I chose to visit this area.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>Overall, I am satisfied with my decision to visit this destination.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>If you are reading this survey then please select strongly agree.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>I am happy about my decision to visit this destination.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>I am planning to return to this area in the future.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>I am excited to talk to others about my experiences at this destination.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p>I intend to revisit this destination in the next 2 years.</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I plan to revisit this destination in the next 2 years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I desire to visit this destination in the next 2 years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I probably will visit this destination in the next 2 years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q4 For each of the following statements, indicate what level of importance each of the items has for you when planning a leisure vacation.

	Not at all important (1)	Slightly important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Very important (4)	Extremely important (5)
Get refreshed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Escape from a busy job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relax away from the ordinary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relax daily tension	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be physically active	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feel at home away from home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not have to rush	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Share a familiar place with others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inspire community consciousness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meet people with similar interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Go to places friends haven't been	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If you are paying attention select moderately important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Choose not at all important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal safety, even when traveling alone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Explore new places	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Experience new and different lifestyles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Learn new things, increase knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel to historical heritage sites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experience traditional culture for children	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be together as a family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visit places family came from	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experience solitude	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indulge in luxury	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do exciting things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Find thrills and excitement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have fun, be entertained	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please answer the following questions about your most recent visit to the destination you indicated in the first question.

How likely are you to return to this destination for leisure travel?

- Extremely unlikely (1)
- Moderately unlikely (2)
- Slightly unlikely (3)
- Neither likely nor unlikely (4)
- Slightly likely (5)
- Moderately likely (6)
- Extremely likely (7)

On average, how many days do you spend in in this area when visiting?

On average, how many people (adults and children) are in your travel group when visiting this destination? Include yourself.

How frequently do you visit this area?

- I have only visited once. (1)
- 2-3 times a year. (2)
- 4-6 times a year. (3)
- More than 6 times a year. (4)

When visiting this area, approximately how much money did you spend in all?

When visiting this area, approximately how much money did you spend on food?

When visiting this area, approximately how much money did you spend on lodging?

When visiting this area, approximately how much money did you spend on entertainment and shopping?

What is the approximate distance you travel to get to this destination?

- Less than 50 Miles (1)
- 50-100 Miles (2)
- 101-200 Miles (3)
- 201-300 Miles (4)
- 301-400 Miles (5)
- 401-500 Miles (6)
- More than 500 Miles (7)

What is your age?

What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)



What is your annual household income?

- Under \$15,000 (1)
- \$15,000 - \$24,999 (2)
- \$25,000 - \$34,999 (3)
- \$35,000 - \$44,999 (4)
- \$45,000 - \$54,999 (5)
- \$55,000 - \$64,999 (6)
- \$65,000 - \$74,999 (7)
- \$75,000 - \$84,999 (8)
- \$85,000 - \$94,999 (9)
- \$95,000 an above (10)

What is your highest level of education completed?

- Some High School (1)
- High School (2)
- Vocational/Trade School (3)
- Bachelor's Degree (4)
- Master's Degree (5)
- Doctorate Degree (6)

What is your employment status?

- Student (1)
- Not employed (2)
- Self-employed (3)
- Employed (4)
- Retired (5)

What is your marital status?

- Married (1)
- Widowed (2)
- Divorced (3)
- Separated (4)
- Never married (5)