



Perceived Cultural Congruence, Place Attachment, and Intention to Participate in Coastal Community-Based Tourism Revitalization

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how residents' perceived cultural congruence with community-based tourism (CBT) initiatives influences their place attachment and their intention to engage in coastal tourism revitalization. A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted with 373 adult residents in Medan, North Sumatera, Indonesia. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the hypothesized relationships, with place attachment operationalized as a reflective higher-order construct encompassing place identity, place affect, and place dependence. Results showed that perceived cultural congruence had a strong positive effect on place attachment ($\beta = 0.627$, $f^2 = 0.648$, $P < 0.001$) and a significant direct effect on intention to participate ($\beta = 0.130$, $P = 0.008$). Place attachment positively predicted intention to participate ($\beta = 0.557$, $f^2 = 0.323$, $P < 0.001$) and partially mediated the relationship between cultural congruence and participation (indirect $\beta = 0.349$, $P < 0.001$; total effect $\beta = 0.479$). The model explained 39.3% of variance in place attachment and 41.5% in intention to participate. Path coefficients were stable across residents with shorter and longer residential histories. Drawing on self-congruity theory and place attachment theory, this study is among the first to establish perceived cultural congruence as a substantively strong antecedent of place attachment and participatory intentions in a coastal CBT revitalization context. It advances resident-centered theorization of CBT by empirically confirming a cultural alignment to place bonding to participation pathway, extends self-congruity theory beyond destination loyalty and word-of-mouth to collective civic engagement, and offers actionable guidance for culturally sensitive tourism governance.

Keywords: Perceived Cultural Congruence, Place Attachment, Intention to Participate, Community-Based Tourism, Coastal Tourism

JEL Classifications: M31, Z32, L83

1. INTRODUCTION

Resident participation lies at the heart of community-based tourism (CBT). Without the active involvement of local people, CBT initiatives risk losing both their cultural legitimacy and their long-term sustainability (Nugroho and Numata, 2020). In coastal settings, where tourism is interwoven with fragile ecosystems, traditional livelihoods, and deeply rooted place identities, this challenge is especially acute. Yet a fundamental question remains underexplored: when residents perceive that tourism development aligns with their cultural values and community identity, does this

sense of cultural fit strengthen their emotional bonds to place and motivate them to participate in revitalization?

CBT places community involvement, equitable benefit-sharing, and the protection of local ways of life at its core (Winton, 2023). Residents in these settings are far from passive: They actively shape place meanings, safeguard local culture, and influence the direction of tourism development (Nugroho and Numata, 2020). When tourism is perceived as consistent with community values and coastal identity, residents are more likely to support and champion revitalization efforts (Eusébio et al., 2018). But when

it is seen as misaligned, indifferent to local customs, or culturally dissonant, it can erode the very bonds that make community participation possible.

Place attachment research has established that residents' emotional ties to place are a powerful driver of pro-tourism attitudes and behavior (Dwyer et al., 2019). Encompassing place identity, place dependence, and place affect, these bonds have been linked to environmentally responsible behavior, support for sustainable tourism, and broader civic engagement in community-based development (Lee and Oh, 2018; Orgaz-Aguera et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2025). In coastal settings, residents with strong place attachment are more likely to act as stewards of local resources and contribute to tourism agendas that serve their communities (Winton, 2023). What has received far less attention is whether the cultural congruence between tourism initiatives and residents' identity can serve as an antecedent to these bonds, and whether place attachment then channels that cultural alignment into concrete participatory behavior.

Self-congruity theory offers a promising theoretical lens. It holds that people respond more positively to places that resonate with their self-concept (Frías-Jamilena et al., 2018). When residents perceive that tourism narratives, symbols, and practices reflect their cultural values, they are more likely to experience the destination as an authentic expression of who they are. Prior research shows that such congruence enhances evaluations of places, deepens engagement, and encourages advocacy behaviors like word-of-mouth (Šegota et al., 2021). Identity-based congruity, in particular, is a stronger predictor of destination attachment than functional fit alone (Usakli et al., 2022; Wassler et al., 2019). Applied to resident communities, this logic suggests that when tourism revitalization feels culturally authentic, grounded in local heritage, traditions, and ways of life, it may deepen residents' sense of belonging and strengthen their attachment to place.

Culture and place are deeply intertwined. Heritage, everyday traditions, and shared practices are central to how residents construct meaning in their communities (Hoang et al., 2020). Tourism that honors these elements tends to generate pride and a sense of continuity, reinforcing residents' emotional connection to their locality (Ramkissoon, 2020). Tourism that distorts or commodifies them risks the opposite: Eroding place bonds and provoking resistance. This interplay between cultural alignment, place meanings, and behavioral responses remains undertheorized in the CBT literature.

Place attachment has increasingly been framed as a mediator between residents' cognitive evaluations and their behavioral intentions. In heritage and cultural destinations, favorable place perceptions strengthen attachment, which in turn promotes pro-tourism attitudes and participatory behavior (Styliadis, 2018; 2020). In coastal settings, place identity has been shown to mediate the relationship between functional dependence on local resources and environmentally responsible action, while positive sustainability attitudes translate into behavioral support only when residents report strong place attachment (Lee and Oh, 2018; Winton, 2023). These findings suggest that emotional bonds to place do not simply reflect existing attitudes; they actively transform them into behavior.

Resident participation in CBT encompasses a wide range of activities: Joining planning processes, volunteering, co-creating tourism experiences, and engaging in community advocacy (Nugroho and Numata, 2020). Research confirms that when residents feel tourism aligns with their values and they are emotionally invested in their community, they are more willing to contribute to its revitalization (Lee, 2013; Gautam, 2022, 2023). Yet the specific pathway through which cultural congruence shapes participatory intentions, whether directly or through the mediating role of place attachment, has not been tested.

Three gaps in the existing literature motivate this study. First, while place attachment is well established as a driver of general tourism support, its antecedents remain narrowly studied. Most research has focused on functional factors such as perceived economic benefits or tourism impacts, and self-congruity scholarship in tourism has concentrated on loyalty and revisit intentions rather than participatory behavior (Wu and Lai, 2022; Styliadis, 2018). The role of perceived cultural congruence as an antecedent of place attachment has not been systematically examined. Second, intention to participate in CBT revitalization is a behaviorally distinct and practically important outcome that remains understudied. Existing self-congruity and person-place fit research has addressed word-of-mouth and residential retention rather than collective civic engagement in revitalization (Šegota et al., 2021; Cifci, 2021). Third, coastal communities present distinct socio-ecological and cultural conditions that have rarely been the focus of integrated models linking cultural alignment, place attachment, and participatory intentions (Winton, 2023; Lee and Oh, 2018).

This study responds to these gaps by developing and testing a model in which residents' perceived cultural congruence with CBT revitalization initiatives strengthens place attachment, which in turn fosters intention to participate.

Three research questions guide the inquiry:

- RQ1: Does perceived cultural congruence predict place attachment among coastal residents?
- RQ2: Does place attachment predict residents' intention to participate in CBT revitalization?
- RQ3: Does place attachment mediate the relationship between perceived cultural congruence and intention to participate?

In answering these questions, the study makes three contributions: it establishes cultural congruence as a novel antecedent of place attachment; it confirms the partial mediating role of higher-order place attachment in translating cultural alignment into participatory behavior; and it extends self-congruity theory to the domain of CBT revitalization.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Conceptualizing Perceived Cultural Congruence in Tourism

2.1.1. Cultural alignment and residents' evaluations

When tourism development reshapes local values, lifestyles, and interpersonal relations, the question of cultural fit, whether

tourism practices feel consistent with community norms, becomes a central concern for residents (Allaberganov and Catterall, 2023). Place images that reflect residents' lived realities tend to generate stronger evaluations and deeper emotional bonds with the destination (Stylidis, 2018), and residents whose self-concept aligns with how their community is represented tend to evaluate it more favorably and champion it through word-of-mouth (Šegota et al., 2021). Drawing on these insights, this study defines perceived cultural congruence as the degree to which residents perceive that tourism revitalization initiatives are consistent with local cultural identity, values, traditions, and everyday practices. This definition frames cultural congruence as a resident-centered cognitive evaluation, grounded in subjective experience rather than objective heritage attributes, that shapes how residents respond emotionally and behaviorally to tourism development.

2.1.2. Sociocultural impact perceptions and cultural congruence

How residents perceive tourism's social effects shapes, in turn, how they relate to place. Positive perceptions of tourism's impact on community cohesion, lifestyle, and cultural integrity can strengthen emotional bonds and motivate residents to protect and promote local tourism resources (Ramkissoon, 2020). Segmentation studies at urban World Heritage Sites show that residents vary considerably in how they weigh positive and negative sociocultural impacts, with attachment strength and community embeddedness influencing these evaluations (Pavlic et al., 2020). In community-based and park-adjacent tourism contexts, residents' cost-benefit appraisals shape how attachment translates into support, suggesting that cultural and social appraisals function as an important interpretive filter between residents' place bonds and their behavioral responses (Nugroho and Numata, 2020).

2.1.3. Cultural congruence, place image, and identity

Residents' place image, how they perceive and evaluate their community as a destination, is a meaningful antecedent of both place attachment and support for tourism (Ganji et al., 2020). Images that encompass the physical, social, and cultural character of a place are linked to stronger attachment and more supportive attitudes (Tournois and Djerić, 2019), and favorable place images indirectly strengthen tourism support by shaping how residents interpret tourism's broader community consequences (Tosun et al., 2020). Tourism revitalization that is perceived as culturally congruent, reinforcing valued images, local heritage, and community life, can therefore be expected to enhance both place identity and place affect, deepening residents' sense of connection to their community (Stylidis, 2018). Based on this reasoning, the study proposes:

H₁: Perceived cultural congruence positively influences place attachment.

2.2. Place Attachment as Mediating Emotional Bond

2.2.1. Structure and role of place attachment

Place attachment is understood as the emotional and symbolic bond between people and the places they inhabit (Dwyer et al., 2019). In resident communities, it is typically multidimensional, comprising place identity (the extent to which a place defines

one's sense of self), place dependence (the functional value a place holds for one's activities and goals), and place affect (the emotional resonance of the place). Residents in heritage destinations develop particularly strong bonds with local heritage, experiencing it as integral to both their self-identity and daily life (Hoang et al., 2020). Social processes, including host-tourist interactions, emotional solidarity, and community involvement, further reinforce these bonds (Patwardhan et al., 2020), indicating that attachment is not static but actively shaped through lived encounters with tourism (Woosnam et al., 2018).

2.2.2. Antecedents of attachment in tourism contexts

Residents' place attachment is shaped by a range of cognitive and social factors. Positive perceptions of tourism's social effects, including enhanced feelings of pride, belonging, and community cohesion, can directly strengthen attachment (Ramkissoon, 2020). Place image also contributes: how residents perceive their community, its social character, cultural significance, and visual identity, shapes the emotional connection they feel toward it (Stylidis, 2020). Proximity to heritage tourism sites deepens attachment further; residents closer to heritage cores tend to report stronger identity-based bonds and heightened awareness of tourism's dual capacity to enrich and disrupt (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2019). In culturally rich settings such as Hoi An, attachment is particularly anchored in cultural heritage and its continuing relevance to everyday life (Hoang et al., 2020). Even under conditions of reduced tourism, residents with stronger place attachment tend to maintain more positive interpretations of tourism's value to their community (Pai et al., 2023).

2.2.3. Place attachment and pro-tourism intentions

A consistent finding across the literature is that residents who feel more attached to their community tend to support tourism more actively and engage in a wider range of pro-tourism behaviors. Attached residents are more likely to perceive tourism as aligned with their interests, to endorse its development, and to encourage it through recommendation and advocacy (Eusébio et al., 2018; Wong et al., 2021; Song et al., 2024). Meta-analytic evidence reinforces this picture: perceived benefits have a strong positive effect on resident support, while perceived costs are weaker and less consistent predictors, suggesting that the evaluative orientation attached residents bring to tourism shapes how they weigh its trade-offs (Gursoy et al., 2018). At the community level, place attachment works alongside emotional solidarity and community satisfaction to drive resident support (Schlesinger et al., 2023; Phuc and Nguyen, 2020), and its effects extend beyond attitude to behavior: More attached residents are more likely to endorse sustainable tourism development across diverse heritage contexts (Olya et al., 2018; Gu and Ryan, 2008; Ribeiro et al., 2018). Taken together, the evidence consistently positions place attachment as a pivotal mediating construct between residents' culturally grounded perceptions of tourism and their participatory intentions. This points to place attachment as a meaningful predictor of residents' concrete participatory behavior in revitalization contexts:

H₂: Place attachment positively influences residents' intention to participate in tourism revitalization activities.

2.3. From Attachment to Intention to Participate in Tourism Revitalization

2.3.1. Resident participation and support as behavioral outcomes

Resident participation in tourism encompasses a broad continuum of behaviors, from passive endorsement to active advocacy, planning involvement, and co-creation of tourism experiences. Place attachment and cultural identity shape how residents interpret their encounters with tourism, orienting strongly attached residents toward more supportive and engaged responses (Gu and Ryan, 2008; Shen and Shen, 2020). Emotional solidarity and community identification reinforce this orientation, with both pathways generating positive behavioral intentions (Erul and Woosnam, 2021). The strength of participation-attachment links varies by context: in rural destinations, community ties tend to be more pronounced, making attachment a particularly strong driver of support and involvement (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017; Woosnam et al., 2024). Psychological empowerment has similarly been identified as a key predictor of sustainable tourism support, with empowered residents showing stronger community identification and greater willingness to engage (Strzelecka et al., 2017; Aleshinloye et al., 2021).

2.3.2. Forms of participation in community-based and coastal contexts

Participation takes distinct forms depending on the structure and stage of CBT development. In settings adjacent to protected areas, residents' willingness to participate is jointly shaped by perceived benefits, attachment, and community involvement (Nugroho and Numata, 2020). Sustainability perceptions, spanning economic, sociocultural, and environmental dimensions, shift across the CBT life cycle, underscoring the need for adaptive governance that sustains meaningful resident involvement throughout revitalization (Lee and Jan, 2019). Participation also generates its own returns: active involvement in rural tourism strengthens interpersonal trust in tourists while deepening residents' positive orientations toward development (Huo et al., 2023). These patterns suggest that emotional bonds, while necessary, are not on their own sufficient; enabling structures, accessible opportunities, and responsive governance are equally important in converting attachment into active community engagement. When tourism is perceived as culturally aligned, residents are more likely to see participation as a natural expression of their identity, generating a direct pathway from cultural congruence to participatory intention:

H₃: Perceived cultural congruence positively influences intention to participate.

2.3.3. Value co-creation and psychological ownership in tourism participation

Residents' participation in tourism revitalization often takes the form of co-creation, the collaborative production of cultural and tourism experiences that draw on local knowledge, heritage, and identity. Place identity is a particularly strong predictor of spontaneous cultural conservation: residents who see their place as an extension of themselves are more motivated to preserve and promote local culture through tourism (Yang et al., 2021). Emotional solidarity with visitors amplifies this

tendency, encouraging more supportive and participatory engagement (Erul et al., 2020), and value co-creation has been shown to enhance residents' well-being, reinforcing the intrinsic rewards of active involvement (Chen et al., 2020). When heritage tourism brings perceived injustice, however, whether through displacement of livelihoods, exclusion from governance, or commodification of cultural assets, residents' willingness to co-create can diminish, and high place attachment may fuel resistance rather than support (Liu et al., 2022; Lalicic and Garaus, 2020; Zheng et al., 2020). Feelings of psychological ownership over the destination can either amplify pro-environmental and advocacy behaviors (Liu et al., 2021; Gupta and Singh, 2024) or, when expressed as territoriality, generate opposition to tourism change (Yim, 2021). Cultural conservation, co-creation, and destination advocacy together constitute the key behavioral forms of participation in tourism revitalization that this study seeks to explain (Guan et al., 2025).

2.3.4. Psychological mechanisms: from congruence to participation

The pathway from cultural alignment to participatory behavior operates through residents' emotional bonds to place. When tourism revitalization resonates with residents' cultural self-image, it reinforces place identity and deepens place affect, the sense that this community is genuinely theirs (Šegota et al., 2021; Allaberganov and Catterall, 2023). These strengthened bonds, in turn, translate into greater willingness to act on behalf of the community, through advocacy, cultural conservation, planning involvement, and co-creation (Ramkissoon, 2020; Yang et al., 2021). In coastal CBT settings, where cultural heritage is embedded in maritime livelihood and everyday community life, the salience of this alignment is particularly acute (Hoang et al., 2020). Community participation has been shown to mediate the relationship between residents' sustainability attitudes and their pro-environmental behavior, confirming that enabling genuine involvement is critical to converting cultural alignment into active revitalization participation (Cheng et al., 2019). Across heritage, urban, and coastal settings, perceived cultural alignment consistently strengthens place bonds, which in turn motivate pro-tourism and participatory behaviors (Eusébio et al., 2018; Ramkissoon, 2020). This three-stage pathway from cultural congruence through place attachment to intention to participate constitutes the theoretical core of the present study, leading to the final hypothesis:

H₄: Place attachment mediates the relationship between perceived cultural congruence and intention to participate.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual model. Perceived cultural congruence is the exogenous predictor; place attachment, operationalized as a reflective higher-order construct, is the proposed mediator; and intention to participate is the outcome.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships among perceived cultural congruence, place attachment, and intention to participate in coastal CBT

revitalization. PLS-SEM was selected as the analytical method for three reasons: the study is prediction-oriented rather than theory-confirmatory; the model includes a reflective higher-order construct (place attachment) that PLS-SEM accommodates efficiently through the two-stage approach; and PLS-SEM does not require multivariate normality, making it appropriate for community survey data of the kind used here (Hair et al., 2019). Analyses were conducted using SmartPLS 4, following a two-step sequence in which the measurement model was evaluated before the structural model.

3.2. Study Context and Sampling

The study was conducted in Belawan and Labuhan, two coastal communities on the northern waterfront of Medan, North Sumatera, Indonesia. Both communities have deep-rooted connections to the sea, historically sustained by fishing, small-scale trade, and maritime livelihoods, and have in recent years become sites of CBT revitalization efforts that draw on local heritage, coastal culture, and traditional culinary practices. This setting makes these communities well-suited to examining how perceived cultural congruence between tourism development and residents' lived culture shapes emotional bonds to place and willingness to engage in revitalization. Residents here are not passive observers but active stakeholders whose participation is essential to the legitimacy and sustainability of CBT (Nugroho and Numata, 2020).

The target population comprised adult residents (18 years and older) who had lived in either community for at least 1 year, ensuring sufficient familiarity with the local culture and ongoing tourism activities. Data were collected through on-site intercept

surveys at community gathering points, including coastal promenades, markets, and community centers, supplemented by door-to-door visits in residential areas.

The survey yielded 373 usable responses. Following the inverse square root method for PLS-SEM power assessment (Hair et al., 2019), the minimum required sample for the largest endogenous block (two predictors of intention to participate) is approximately $1/\sqrt{0.05} \times 1.96 \approx 156$; the obtained sample substantially exceeds this threshold, providing sufficient statistical power to detect medium effect sizes at $\alpha = 0.05$.

3.3. Measures

The questionnaire comprised four sections: (1) Perceived cultural congruence, (2) place attachment, (3) intention to participate in tourism revitalization, and (4) socio-demographic and contextual variables. All latent constructs were operationalized reflectively using multi-item, 7-point Likert-type scales (Hair et al., 2019).

Perceived cultural congruence was measured using five items capturing the degree to which residents view CBT revitalization initiatives as consistent with local cultural values, traditions, and identity. Items were adapted from resident self-congruity and place evaluation scales (Šegota et al., 2021), with wording modified to reflect cultural alignment between tourism initiatives and local practices. Responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Place attachment was operationalized as a reflective higher-order construct comprising three first-order dimensions: place identity, place affect, and place dependence, each measured with three items adapted from Ramkissoon et al. (2013) and Hoang et al. (2020). Items were refined to reflect the coastal CBT context, and the same 7-point agreement scale was used.

Intention to participate was measured using five items assessing residents' willingness to engage in revitalization activities, including attending planning meetings, co-creating tourism experiences, and volunteering in community projects. Items were adapted from Chen and Dwyer (2018) and Guan et al. (2025). Responses ranged from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely). Full

Figure 1: Conceptual model of the study

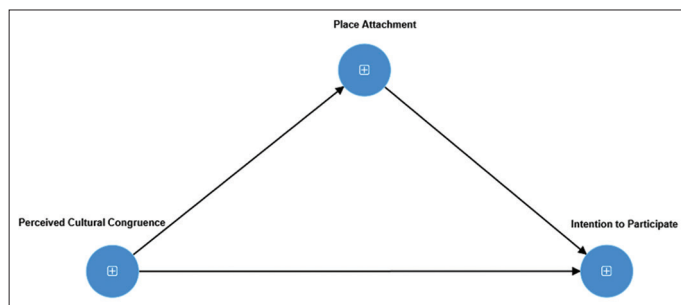
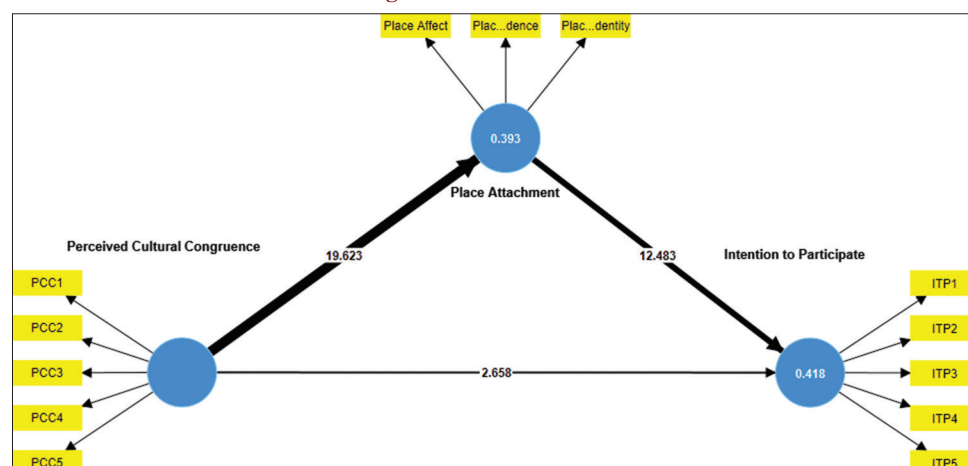


Figure 2: Structural results



item wording, response scales, and sources for all three constructs are presented in the Appendix (Table A1).

The draft questionnaire was reviewed by three academic experts in tourism and community-based development for content validity. A pilot test with 30 residents confirmed internal consistency; no items were removed, but minor wording refinements were made to improve clarity. Socio-demographic and tourism-related contextual variables (age, gender, education, income, length of residence, employment in tourism, household tourism income dependence) were also collected, with length of residence subsequently used to define groups for the multi-group analysis (Cheng et al., 2022; Eusébio et al., 2018).

3.4. Data Collection

Data were collected between July and December 2024, during a period of routine CBT activity. Trained local enumerators approached residents, explained the study purpose, assured anonymity, and obtained informed consent before administering the questionnaire. Ethical principles of voluntary participation and the right to withdraw were observed throughout. To reduce common method bias at the design stage, predictor and criterion items were placed in separate questionnaire sections, items were neutrally worded, and respondents were told there were no right or wrong answers (Podsakoff et al., 2012). The questionnaire was administered in the local language following a translation and back-translation procedure to ensure semantic equivalence.

3.5. Data Screening

Completed questionnaires were screened for missing data, straight-line responding, and outliers. Cases with excessive missing values or clearly patterned responses were removed. For the small number of remaining missing values, which appeared to be random and item-level in nature, pairwise deletion was applied during PLS-SEM estimation rather than imputation, preserving the integrity of the covariance structure. Descriptive statistics were examined for all indicators; no transformation was applied, as PLS-SEM is robust to non-normal distributions (Hair et al., 2019).

3.6. Data Analysis

The measurement model was evaluated following the criteria of Hair et al. (2019). Indicator reliability was assessed via outer loadings (threshold >0.70); internal consistency via composite reliability ($CR > 0.70$); and convergent validity via average variance extracted ($AVE \geq 0.50$). Discriminant validity was assessed using the HTMT ratio of correlations, with values below 0.85 confirming that the three latent constructs are empirically distinct (Henseler et al., 2015). For the higher-order place attachment construct, a two-stage approach was applied: first-order dimensions were assessed, then the second-order construct was modeled using latent variable scores.

The structural model was evaluated through path coefficients and their significance, explained variance (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2) via blindfolding. Mediation was tested using bootstrapped indirect effects (5,000 resamples), with significance and magnitude of the indirect effect determining

whether mediation was partial or full. PLSpredict was applied to assess out-of-sample predictive accuracy for intention to participate.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Respondent Profile

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic and contextual profile of the 373 respondents. The sample was nearly balanced by gender (51.5% male, 48.5% female). The dominant age group was 26-35 years (30.0%), followed by 36-45 years (25.7%), reflecting a predominantly working-age sample. Senior high school graduates formed the largest educational group (33.5%), followed by university graduates (27.3%) and junior high school graduates (13.1%). Monthly household income was distributed around the statutory minimum wage for Medan in 2024 (IDR 3,769,082, approximately USD 240/month), with 37.5% of respondents earning above this level. For the multi-group analysis, the sample was divided into two near-equal groups by length of residence: short-term residents (1-5 years; $n = 186$, 49.9%) and long-term residents (over 5 years; $n = 187$, 50.1%). Just over two-fifths of respondents (41.3%) reported partial household dependence on tourism-related income.

4.2. Non-Response Bias and Common Method Bias

Non-response bias was assessed first, as a prerequisite for evaluating data quality. Following the wave analysis procedure recommended for face-to-face surveys (Armstrong and Overton, 1977), early respondents (first 25% of returns) were

Table 1: Socio-demographic and contextual profile of respondents ($n=373$)

Characteristic	Category	n	Percentage
Gender	Male	192	51.5
	Female	181	48.5
Age (years)	18-25	63	16.9
	26-35	112	30.0
	36-45	96	25.7
	46-55	67	18.0
	Over 55	35	9.4
Education	Primary school or below	29	7.8
	Junior high school	49	13.1
	Senior high school	125	33.5
	Diploma	68	18.2
Monthly household income (IDR)	University degree	102	27.3
	2,000,000-2,809,915	68	18.2
	2,810,001-3,769,082	127	34.0
	(at or below min. wage)		
	3,769,083-6,000,000	140	37.5
Length of residence	(above min. wage)		
	Over 6,000,000	38	10.2
	1-5 years (short-term)	186	49.9
Household dependence on tourism income	Over 5 years (long-term)	187	50.1
	Yes	154	41.3
	No	219	58.7

The statutory city-level minimum wage for Medan in 2024 was IDR 3,769,082/month (approximately USD 240/month), as set by the North Sumatera Provincial Government (North Sumatera Governor's Circular No. 500.15.14.1/15696, 2023). The statutory provincial minimum wage for North Sumatera was IDR 2,809,915/month (approximately USD 178/month). Length of residence categories reflect the groupings used in the multi-group analysis (Section 5.5)

compared with late respondents (last 25%) on all 19 indicators using independent samples *t*-tests. No statistically significant differences were found across any construct (all $P > 0.05$), confirming that the sample is not systematically biased by non-response (Table 2).

Common method bias (CMB) was addressed through both procedural and statistical means. At the design stage, predictor and criterion items were separated across questionnaire sections, items were neutrally worded, and anonymity was assured (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Post hoc, three complementary statistical tests were applied (Table 3). Harman's single-factor test showed the first unrotated factor accounting for 47.33% of total variance, below the 50% threshold. Full collinearity VIF values for all constructs (PCC = 1.687, PA = 1.296, ITP = 1.648) were well below the 3.3 threshold recommended by Kock (2015). Paths from the marker variable to all three main constructs were non-significant

(all $P > 0.05$). These results confirm that CMB does not pose a substantive threat to the validity of the findings.

4.3. Measurement Model

The measurement model was evaluated in two stages. At the first-order level, all 19 indicators loaded satisfactorily on their respective constructs (outer loadings >0.70). Composite reliability values ranged from 0.849 to 0.909, and AVE values ranged from 0.698 to 0.792, confirming convergent validity across all first-order constructs. At the second-order level, the three dimensions of place attachment loaded strongly onto the higher-order construct: Place affect ($\lambda = 0.877$), place dependence ($\lambda = 0.845$), and place identity ($\lambda = 0.853$), with CR = 0.823 and AVE = 0.737. Full results are reported in Table 4.

Discriminant validity was assessed using the HTMT ratio and the Fornell-Larcker criterion at both measurement levels. At the

Table 2: Non-response bias assessment

Construct	Mean (early)	Mean (late)	t-value (range)	P-value (range)	Remarks
Perceived cultural congruence	3.926-4.167	3.849-3.966	-0.220-1.706	0.089-0.826	No difference
Place attachment	3.750-4.019	3.913-4.042	-1.448-0.567	0.148-0.890	No difference
Intention to participate	3.898-4.139	3.913-3.974	-0.348-1.073	0.284-0.956	No difference

All t-value ranges are non-significant ($P > 0.05$). Non-response bias is not a concern

Table 3: Common method bias assessment

Method	Test/indicator	Value (%)	Threshold (%)	Remarks
Harman's single-factor test	Variance explained by Factor 1	47.33	<50	No CMB concern
Full collinearity vif (Kock, 2015)	PCC	1.687	<3.3	No CMB concern
	PA	1.296	<3.3	No CMB concern
	ITP	1.648	<3.3	No CMB concern
				No CMB concern
Marker variable test	MV to PCC ($\beta=0.087$, $\sigma=0.122$)	$t=0.710$	$P>0.05$	No CMB concern
	MV to PA ($\beta=0.020$, $\sigma=0.056$)	$t=0.353$	$P>0.05$	No CMB concern
	MV to ITP ($\beta=-0.076$, $\sigma=0.087$)	$t=0.867$	$P>0.05$	No CMB concern

PCC: Perceived cultural congruence, PA: Place attachment, ITP: Intention to participate, MV: Marker variable. Marker variable paths assessed via bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples

Table 4: Measurement model: Outer loadings, reliability, and convergent validity

Level	Construct	Item/dimension	Outer loading	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
First-order	Intention to participate	ITP1	0.871	0.892	0.896	0.698
		ITP2	0.874			
		ITP3	0.809			
		ITP4	0.799			
		ITP5	0.821			
	Place dependence	PAD1	0.869	0.904	0.909	0.722
		PAD2	0.885			
		PAD3	0.874			
	Place affect	PAF1	0.897	0.869	0.869	0.792
		PAF2	0.896			
		PAF3	0.877			
	Place identity	PAI1	0.892	0.849	0.849	0.768
		PAI2	0.871			
		PAI3	0.844			
	Perceived cultural congruence	PCC1	0.845	0.838	0.841	0.756
		PCC2	0.870			
		PCC3	0.818			
		PCC4	0.893			
		PCC5	0.821			
Second-order	Place attachment (HOC)	Place affect	0.877	0.822	0.823	0.737
		Place dependence	0.845			
		Place identity	0.853			

HOC: Higher-order construct, estimated via the two-stage approach. CR: Composite reliability, AVE: Average variance extracted. All outer loadings >0.70 , CR >0.70 , and AVE ≥ 0.50 confirm convergent validity at both levels

Table 5: Discriminant validity: HTMT ratio and Fornell-Larcker criterion

Level	Construct	HTMT					Fornell-Larcker				
		ITP	PCC	PAF	PAD	PAI	ITP	PCC	PAF	PAD	PAI
First-order	ITP	n/a					0.835				
	PCC	0.526	n/a				0.479	0.850			
	PAF	0.647	0.617	n/a			0.572	0.548	0.890		
	PAD	0.609	0.598	0.720	n/a		0.532	0.526	0.619	0.876	
	PAI	0.623	0.618	0.737	0.672	n/a	0.540	0.541	0.630	0.569	0.869
Second-order		ITP	PCC	PA			ITP	PCC	PA		
	ITP	n/a					0.835				
	PCC	0.526	n/a				0.479	0.850			
	PA	0.743	0.725	n/a			0.638	0.627	0.859		

Bold diagonal values in the Fornell-Larcker matrix are square roots of AVE. ITP: Intention to participate, PC: Perceived cultural congruence, PAF: Place affect, PAD: Place dependence, PAI: Place identity, PA: Place attachment (second-order HOC). All HTMT values < 0.85 and all diagonal values exceeding off-diagonal correlations confirm discriminant validity at both measurement levels

first-order level, all HTMT values fell below 0.85, and the square root of each construct's AVE exceeded its correlations with all other constructs. The same criteria were satisfied at the second-order level, where place attachment as a higher-order construct was evaluated alongside PCC and ITP. Full results are reported in Table 5.

4.4. Structural Model

The overall model fit was acceptable: SRMR = 0.051, well below the 0.08 threshold, and NFI = 0.923, exceeding the recommended 0.90 cutoff (Table 6). Variance inflation factor values for all predictor paths were well below 5.0 (PCC to ITP: 1.648; PCC to PA: 1.000; PA to ITP: 1.648), confirming that multicollinearity was not a concern.

Table 7 and Figure 2 report the path coefficients, bootstrapped statistics, and effect sizes for all hypothesized relationships. All four paths were statistically significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, providing support for each hypothesis.

Perceived cultural congruence had a strong positive effect on place attachment ($\beta = 0.627$, $t = 19.623$, $P < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.648$), supporting H_1 . Place attachment positively predicted intention to participate ($\beta = 0.557$, $t = 12.483$, $P < 0.001$, $f^2 = 0.323$), supporting H_2 . Perceived cultural congruence also had a small but significant direct effect on intention to participate ($\beta = 0.130$, $t = 2.658$, $P = 0.008$, $f^2 = 0.018$), supporting H_3 . The indirect effect of perceived cultural congruence on intention to participate through place attachment was significant ($\beta = 0.349$, $t = 10.141$, $P < 0.001$), and the persistence of a significant direct effect confirms partial mediation, supporting H_4 . The total effect of perceived cultural congruence on intention to participate was $\beta = 0.479$.

The model explained 39.3% of variance in place attachment ($R^2 = 0.393$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.391$) and 41.5% in intention to participate ($R^2 = 0.418$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.415$). Blindfolding yielded Q^2 values of 0.286 for both endogenous constructs, confirming adequate predictive relevance (Table 8). PLSpredict analysis (Table 9) showed moderate out-of-sample predictive accuracy for intention to participate indicators ($Q^2_{\text{predict range}}: 0.102\text{--}0.218$) and high predictive accuracy for the place attachment dimensions ($Q^2_{\text{predict range}}: 0.275\text{--}0.297$), with PLS-SEM prediction errors comparable to or slightly better than those of a naïve linear model benchmark.

Table 6: Model fit indices

Fit index	Value	Threshold
SRMR	0.051	<0.08
d_ULS	0.233	n/a
d_G	0.106	n/a
Chi-square	230.796	n/a
NFI	0.923	> 0.90

4.5. Multi-Group Analysis

To examine whether the structural relationships varied by length of residence, multi-group analysis (MGA) was conducted following measurement invariance composite model (MICOM) testing. MICOM assesses whether the composite scores for each construct are computed equivalently across groups, a necessary precondition for valid between-group path comparisons. Results confirmed configural invariance, compositional invariance, and partial scalar invariance for all three constructs (Table 10), supporting the use of MGA.

Path comparisons between short-term and long-term resident groups revealed no statistically significant differences for any path (all $P > 0.05$), indicating that the structural model is stable across the two groups (Table 11).

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Perceived Cultural Congruence and Place Attachment (H_1)

Perceived cultural congruence was the strongest predictor in the model, exerting a large positive effect on place attachment ($\beta = 0.627$, $f^2 = 0.648$). This result is consistent with self-congruity theory: when tourism revitalization reflects the cultural values, traditions, and lived experiences that residents associate with their community, it reinforces their sense of place identity and deepens emotional attachment to their locality (Usakli et al., 2022; Li et al., 2020; Styliadis, 2018). The large effect size is notable. It positions perceived cultural congruence not merely as a statistically significant predictor but as a substantively important one, comparable in magnitude to functional determinants of place attachment examined in prior research (Šegota et al., 2021; Allaberganov and Catterall, 2023). In the coastal Medan context, where maritime heritage, traditional livelihoods, and local cultural practices are central to

Table 7: Structural model results: Path coefficients, indirect effects, and effect sizes

Effect type	Path	β	μ	σ	t-value	P-value	f ²	Decision
Direct	PCC to PA	0.627	0.627	0.032	19.623	<0.001	0.648	H ₁ Supported
Direct	PA to ITP	0.557	0.557	0.045	12.483	<0.001	0.323	H ₂ Supported
Direct	PCC to ITP	0.130	0.131	0.049	2.658	0.008	0.018	H ₃ Supported
Indirect	PCC to PA to ITP	0.349	0.349	0.034	10.141	<0.001	n/a	H ₄ Supported
Total	PCC to ITP	0.479						

PCC: Perceived cultural congruence, PA: Place attachment, ITP: Intention to participate, β : path coefficient, μ : Bootstrapped mea, σ : Standard deviation, f² effect size benchmarks: 0.02=small, 0.15=medium, 0.35=large (Cohen, 1988). Based on 5,000 bootstrap resamples

Table 8: Explanatory power and predictive relevance

Endogenous variable	R ²	Adjusted R ²	SSO	SSE	Q ² (1-SSE/SSO)
Place attachment	0.393	0.391	1,119.000	798.638	0.286
Intention to participate	0.418	0.415	1,865.000	1,331.281	0.286

R²=coefficient of determination; Q²>0 indicates predictive relevance (blindfolding procedure)

Table 9: PLSpredict results

Indicator	Q ² predict	PLS-SEM RMSE	PLS-SEM MAE	LM RMSE	LM MAE	Interpretation
ITP1	0.179	1.491	1.205	1.495	1.203	Moderate
ITP2	0.218	1.427	1.164	1.435	1.163	Moderate
ITP3	0.102	1.533	1.269	1.543	1.278	Moderate
ITP4	0.125	1.522	1.265	1.530	1.272	Moderate
ITP5	0.156	1.467	1.195	1.459	1.191	Moderate
Place affect	0.297	0.841	0.691	0.850	0.698	High
Place dependence	0.275	0.855	0.696	0.854	0.693	High
Place identity	0.289	0.846	0.706	0.848	0.704	High

Table 10: Measurement Invariance (MICOM) results

Construct	Original correlation	Permutation mean	5% quantile	Permutation P-value	Interpretation
ITP	1.000	1.000	0.999	0.342	Invariance established
PCC	1.000	1.000	0.999	0.597	Invariance established
PA	0.999	1.000	0.999	0.095	Invariance established

Table 11: Multi-group analysis (MGA) results

Path	β (Long-term)	β (Short-term)	P-value (2-tailed)
PCC to ITP	0.138	0.125	0.880
PCC to PA	0.626	0.631	0.932
PA to ITP	0.586	0.530	0.531
PCC to PA to ITP	0.367	0.335	0.640

Non-significant P values (all>0.05) indicate no statistically significant differences in path coefficients between short-term and long-term resident groups

community identity, this finding suggests that tourism initiatives experienced as authentically grounded in local culture generate considerably stronger emotional investment among residents than those perceived as externally imposed or culturally indifferent (Hoang et al., 2020; Ramkissoon, 2020).

5.2. Place Attachment and Intention to Participate (H₂)

Place attachment had a significant medium-to-large effect on intention to participate ($\beta = 0.557$, $f^2 = 0.323$). Residents who feel emotionally invested in their community are not only more supportive of tourism in a general sense but are more willing to take specific, proactive actions: attending planning meetings, co-creating tourism experiences, volunteering in revitalization projects, and contributing to cultural conservation (Eusébio et al., 2018; Nugroho and Numata, 2020). This result extends evidence from metropolitan and heritage tourism contexts, where

place attachment has been linked to destination brand-building and advocacy behaviors (Chen and Dwyer, 2018), to the specific domain of coastal CBT revitalization. The effect size ($f^2 = 0.323$) further indicates that deepening residents' place bonds is not only theoretically meaningful but practically consequential: programs that strengthen attachment are likely to generate meaningful gains in participatory behavior (Truong et al., 2025; Aleshinloye et al., 2024).

5.3. Direct Effect of Perceived Cultural Congruence on Intention to Participate (H₃)

Perceived cultural congruence also exerted a small but statistically significant direct effect on intention to participate ($\beta = 0.130$, $f^2 = 0.018$). While modest in magnitude, this direct pathway carries theoretical importance: it reveals that cultural alignment motivates participation not only through its effect on place bonds but also through a more immediate cognitive channel. When residents perceive tourism as consistent with their cultural identity, they are more likely to experience participation as an expression of who they are rather than an externally requested obligation, and this cognitive resonance appears sufficient to motivate engagement independently of emotional attachment (Rasoolimanesh et al., 2017; Megeirhi et al., 2020; Ganji et al., 2020). The coexistence of both pathways, a dominant affective route through place attachment and a smaller but meaningful direct cognitive route, reflects the multidimensional nature of residents' decision to

engage in revitalization.

5.4. Mediating Role of Place Attachment (H_4)

The indirect effect of perceived cultural congruence on intention to participate, operating through place attachment, was significant ($\beta = 0.349$, $t = 10.141$, $P < 0.001$). Given that a significant direct effect also persisted, the results confirm partial rather than full mediation. Place attachment is thus the primary mechanism through which cultural alignment translates into participatory behavior, but it does not completely account for the relationship. This pattern is consistent with the cognition to affect to intention sequence theorized in place-based research (Nugroho and Numata, 2020; Ramkissoon, 2020), and mirrors the partial mediation findings of Winton (2023) and Cheng et al. (2019) and Gannon et al. (2020) in coastal and CBT contexts, respectively. The model explained 39.3% of variance in place attachment and 41.5% in intention to participate. These levels are appropriate for a theoretically focused, two-antecedent model and are consistent with effect-size benchmarks in community tourism research. The remaining unexplained variance is not a weakness but an invitation: it points to additional predictors, such as perceived economic benefits, empowerment, emotional solidarity, and governance quality, whose roles in shaping participatory intentions merit investigation in future research (Nguyen et al., 2021).

5.5. Structural Invariance Across Resident Groups

The structural relationships were fully stable across short-term and long-term resident groups, with no path differing significantly between groups (all $P > 0.05$). This invariance has two important implications. Theoretically, it suggests that perceived cultural congruence functions as a motivational antecedent of place attachment and participatory intentions regardless of how deeply embedded residents are in the community. Cultural alignment does not require years of accumulated residency to take hold; even residents with shorter histories in the community respond to culturally grounded tourism in ways that strengthen their place bonds and willingness to participate. This challenges assumptions in the literature that attachment-based behavioral intentions are primarily the preserve of long-established residents (Cheng et al., 2022). Practically, it means that culturally sensitive CBT programs can be designed as genuinely community-wide interventions, without the need for segmentation by residential tenure, improving both their reach and their administrative efficiency.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1. Theoretical Contributions

This study makes three interconnected theoretical contributions. First, it establishes perceived cultural congruence as a substantively strong antecedent of place attachment in coastal CBT settings ($\beta = 0.627$, $f^2 = 0.648$), a pathway that had been theoretically anticipated but not previously tested empirically (Šegota et al., 2021; Hoang et al., 2020). The large effect size positions cultural alignment as among the most proximal drivers of residents' place bonds, extending place attachment theory by identifying a novel cultural antecedent alongside the functional and social determinants that have dominated the literature.

Second, the study advances self-congruity theory by demonstrating that cultural alignment shapes residents' participatory intentions through both an affective channel (mediated by place attachment) and a direct cognitive channel, extending the theory from its conventional applications to destination loyalty and word-of-mouth (Cifci, 2021; Wu and Lai, 2022) to the domain of collective civic engagement in CBT revitalization. The partial mediation finding adds nuance: cultural fit operates not only by reinforcing place identity but also through more direct mechanisms of value resonance and community solidarity that motivate participation independently.

Third, by operationalizing place attachment as a reflective higher-order construct using the two-stage PLS-SEM approach, confirming its mediating role through bootstrapped indirect effects, and assessing out-of-sample predictive accuracy through PLSpredict, the study offers a methodologically rigorous template for future higher-order construct research in resident-focused tourism scholarship (Hair et al., 2019; Ramkissoon et al., 2013).

6.2. Practical Implications

The findings offer four evidence-based recommendations for destination managers, CBT planners, and local authorities responsible for coastal tourism revitalization.

First, cultural alignment should be embedded as a foundational design principle rather than an afterthought. The strong effect of perceived cultural congruence on place attachment ($\beta = 0.627$) indicates that programs perceived as misaligned with local values, even when economically appealing, risk weakening the emotional foundation on which sustained resident participation depends.

Second, residents should be positioned as co-designers rather than consultants in tourism planning and heritage product development. Co-created, culturally grounded experiences are more likely to reinforce place identity and affect than programs designed by external parties and presented to the community for endorsement.

Third, because the cultural congruence and participation pathway proved equally strong across short-term and long-term residents, program designers do not need to segment their engagement strategies by length of residence. Culturally sensitive revitalization programs can be designed and delivered as community-wide initiatives, improving both reach and efficiency.

Fourth, program sustainability requires ongoing monitoring. Destination authorities should establish regular community feedback mechanisms to assess whether residents continue to perceive revitalization initiatives as culturally aligned as programs evolve, preventing the gradual drift from authentic local expression toward standardized tourism formats that can erode the sense of congruence on which resident engagement depends.

6.3. Limitations and Future Research

This study has five limitations that together point toward a productive future research agenda.

The cross-sectional design precludes causal inference. Longitudinal studies that track how residents' cultural congruence perceptions, place attachment, and participatory intentions change across different stages of CBT development would substantially strengthen confidence in the proposed causal pathway.

Convenience sampling in a single coastal setting limits generalizability. Stratified probability sampling across multiple coastal CBT communities in different national and cultural contexts is needed to assess how well the model travels across settings with varying cultural traditions, governance structures, and tourism trajectories.

The parsimonious two-antecedent model leaves approximately 60% of variance in participatory intentions unexplained. Future research should extend the model by incorporating additional predictors such as perceived economic benefits, psychological empowerment, emotional solidarity with tourists, and governance quality, which prior research suggests are meaningful drivers of resident participation (Nguyen et al., 2021; Lalicic and Garaus, 2020).

Qualitative and mixed-methods research would add depth that surveys cannot provide. Understanding which specific cultural narratives, symbols, and practices residents consider most, and least, congruent with tourism revitalization requires contextual inquiry that goes beyond Likert scales.

Finally, the role of digital environments in mediating place attachment and participatory intentions warrants attention. As residents increasingly express and negotiate place meanings through social media and digital platforms, future research should examine whether digitally mediated place experiences shape the cultural congruence and participation pathway in ways that complement or complicate the face-to-face community dynamics examined here (Kamata, 2021).

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APPENDIX

Table A1: Measurement instrument

Construct	Dimension	Item code	Item description	Scale	Source
Perceived cultural congruence		PCC1	The tourism revitalization initiatives in this community reflect local cultural values.	7-point Likert (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	Adapted from Šegota et al. (2021)
		PCC2	The tourism activities promoted here are consistent with the traditions of this community.		
		PCC3	Tourism development in this area respects the cultural identity of local residents.		
		PCC4	The way tourism is developed here aligns with how I see my community's culture.		
		PCC5	Tourism revitalization efforts preserve rather than alter our local cultural practices.		
Place attachment	Place identity	PAI1	This coastal community is part of who I am.	7-point Likert (1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree)	Adapted from Ramkissoon et al. (2013); Hoang et al. (2020)
		PAI2	I identify strongly with this community.		
		PAI3	Being a member of this community reflects important aspects of my identity.		
	Place affect	PAF1	I feel a strong sense of belonging to this community.		
		PAF2	I am emotionally attached to this coastal community.		
		PAF3	This community means a great deal to me.		
	Place dependence	PAD1	This community offers the best conditions for the things I like to do.		
		PAD2	I depend on this community for my daily livelihood.		
		PAD3	No other place could replace what this community provides for me.		
Intention to participate		ITP1	I intend to attend community meetings related to tourism planning in this area.	7-point Likert (1=very unlikely, 7=very likely)	Adapted from Chen and Dwyer (2018); Guan et al. (2025)
		ITP2	I am willing to co-create tourism experiences that showcase local culture and heritage.		
		ITP3	I plan to volunteer in tourism revitalization projects in this community.		
		ITP4	I intend to support tourism entrepreneurship initiatives that reflect our local identity.		
		ITP5	I would actively participate in efforts to revitalize tourism in this coastal community.		

All items used a 7-point response format. Place attachment was modeled as a reflective higher-order construct with place identity, place affect, and place dependence as first-order dimensions. Item wording was adapted to the coastal CBT revitalization context and verified for semantic equivalence through translation and back-translation