

Testing self-congruity theory in Bektashi faith destinations: The roles of memorable tourism experience and destination attachment

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Abstract

The study extends the current literature by examining self-congruity and its relationship with possible psychological determinants of travelers' satisfaction and revisit intention. A quantitative study approach was administered on data collected from travelers to the Bektashi faith destinations in Turkey. Through 357 valid questionnaires, the study confirms that both actual and ideal self-congruity do not directly affect overall satisfaction and revisit intention. Memorable tourism experience fully mediates the relationship of actual and ideal self-congruity with overall satisfaction and revisit intention. However, only actual self-congruity directly affects destination attachment. Memorable tourism experience partially and fully mediates the relationships of actual and ideal self-congruity with destination attachment, respectively. Lastly, destination attachment moderates the relationships of actual self-congruity with overall satisfaction and revisit intention. This study also offers several practical implications for responsible authorities in faith destinations.

Keywords

Destination attachment, faith destinations, memorable tourism experience, overall satisfaction, revisit intention, self-congruity

Introduction

The self-congruity theory has been broadly investigated in the marketing literature (Sirgy, 2018). This theory's main idea is that consumers prefer a specific brand congruent with their self-image (Rather and Hollebeck, 2019). A meaningful congruence occurs when a brand image matches consumers' self-image, resulting in favorable consumers' attitudes and behaviors (Huaman-Ramirez, 2020). Likewise, self-congruity is effective in examining travelers' attitudes and behaviors in tourism destinations (Sop, 2020). Travelers identify themselves based on the attributes that underlie a destination they visit or consider themselves similar to travelers of the same destination (Sirgy et al., 2018). Therefore, several authors (e.g., Chen et al.,

2020; Usakli and Baloglu, 2011; Wassler and Hung, 2015) have also applied to self-congruity theory for providing a deeper insight into the favorable attitudes and behaviors of travelers and called for more studies to validating this theory with other possible psychological connections in fostering satisfaction and positive behaviors of travelers in destinations.

Except for a few studies (e.g., Bosnjak et al., 2016; Kim and Thapa, 2017; Pratt and Sparks, 2014), existing tourism studies addressing self-congruity in the destination-marketing concept

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have scarcely entrained on a specific destination concept. However, congruence between travelers and destinations can be interpreted only based on the experience-driven reflection that individuals are self-identifying at a particular destination, and this reflection influences other attitudes and behaviors (Bekk et al., 2015; Usakli and Baloglu, 2011).

In this context, faith destinations are sacred places that are closely related to the culture and tradition of residents, thereby offering an active avenue for interaction that fosters attachment owing to experiences (Gross and Brown, 2006; Mazumdar and Mazumdar, 2004). Thus, self-congruity might be more relevant to these destinations since the ensuing experience is seen to be a true source of self-identity, relevant to one's expression of who s/he is. In this case, the traveler's experience in these destinations will be well remembered. This memorable encounter might result in several other psychological results, including destination attachment (Vada et al., 2019), satisfaction, and revisit intention (Kim, 2018). Despite many studies (e.g., Jorgensen and Stedman, 2006), a positive experience triggers self-congruity, linked to tailoring satisfaction and revisit intention. Only a few authors (e.g., Tsai, 2016; Vada et al., 2019) have scarcely mentioned the role of the memorable tourism experience in this relation, thereby failing to fully observe its importance in the destination-marketing context.

Furthermore, destination attachment arises as a means of self-expression (Gross and Brown, 2006). More specifically, when congruence exists between travelers' self-image and a destination image, travelers are more likely to establish an emotional attachment, which engenders positive post-visit behaviors (Malär et al., 2011). Although destination attachment has been identified as a critical element in traveler-destination relationships of self-congruity in the experiential economy, empirical studies that elaborate these relationships are limited. Only, few studies (e.g., Huang et al., 2017; Japutra et al., 2019; Malär et al., 2011) mentioned that travelers with a higher degree of attachment are more likely to identify themselves and thereby satisfy from their visiting and revisit that destination further in the future. In destination-marketing settings, this study proposes that one of the crucial precursors of an acknowledged relationship is self-congruity as the travelers expect to express their self-image through attachment with the destination.

Correspondingly, determining the meaning carried by faith destinations, including the link that they cultivate among self-congruity, destination attachment, and memorable experience—rather than ascertaining the attributes of objectives—is essential for realizing a better understanding of overall satisfaction and revisit intention among travelers.

Prior tourism studies have examined several psychological relationships with self-congruity that serve as satisfaction and loyalty antecedents, such as destination image (Sirgy and Su, 2000), destination choice (Beerli et al., 2007), brand personality (Kumar, 2016; Usakli and Baloglu 2011), involvement (Huaman-Ramirez, 2020), and engagement (Chen et al., 2020). However, despite its significance, self-congruity theory in tourism destination studies has been predominantly examined beyond the social identity perspective (Rather, 2017, 2018). The social identity perspective encourages the studies related to the customer's self-concept (e.g., self-esteem, self-expression, self-identification) in forming a meaningful relationship with brands to lead the positive outcomes (Rather, 2018) because the customer does not require plainly act with other consumers (or even know them), yet perceives themselves as a member of a social group (Kuenzel and Halliday, 2008).

To the best of the author's knowledge, in the sense of tourism destinations in general and faith tourism in particular, the relationships between self-congruity, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention in the scope of the mediating role of memorable tourism experience, and the moderating role of destination attachment remain scant. To fill this gap, by incorporating with social identity perspective, this quantitative study empirically tested an integrative structural model that links travelers' self-congruity with faith destinations, their memorable experience and destination attachment, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention in a better way (Figure 1). By doing so, this current study differentiates itself from previous literature.

Beyond traditional discourses on the previous models, with a new model, this study contributes to the theoretical advancement of knowledge by offering a better understanding of satisfaction and revisit intention in faith destinations through their relationship between self-congruity, destination attachment, and memorable tourism experience. In Turkey, all Bektashi faith destinations have preserved their historical and cultural structures following Sufi Islamic understanding.

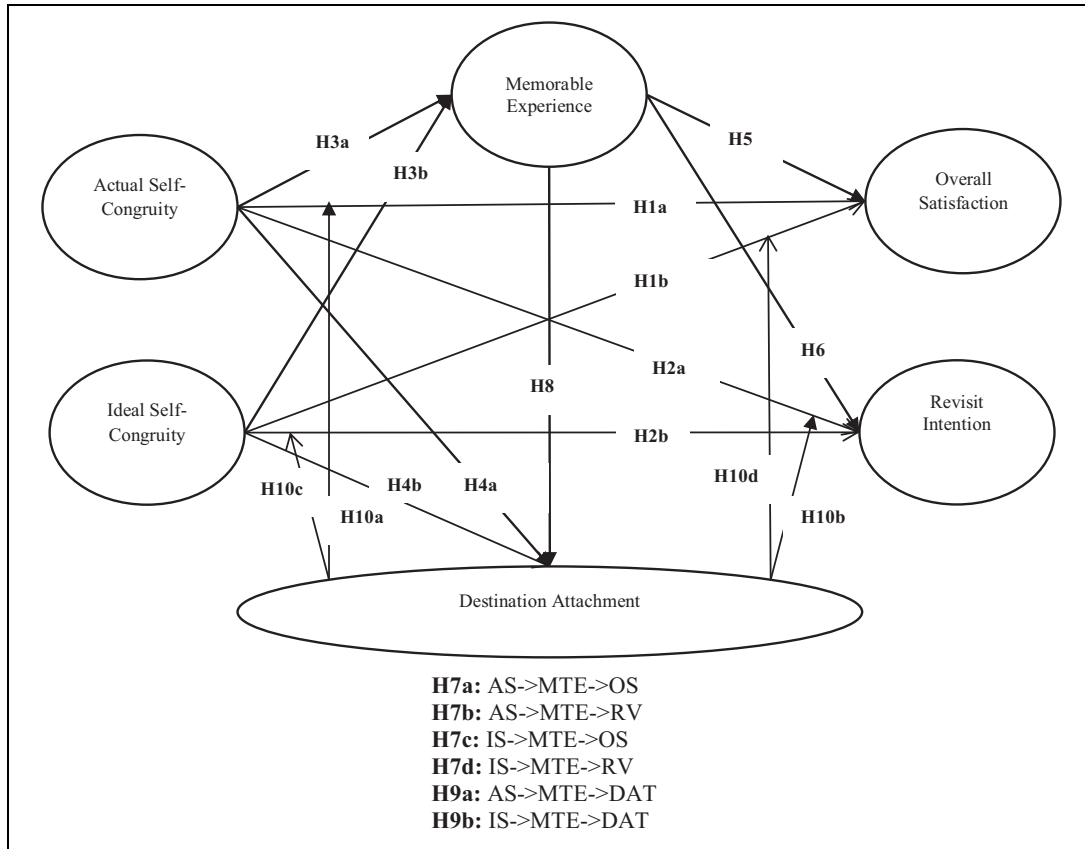


Figure 1. Conceptual model.

Therefore, Bektashi faith destinations in Turkey were considered an appropriate sample for this study. Several practical implications and suggestions for further studies in faith tourism destinations were also discussed.

Self-congruity consequences

Self-concept is deemed an essential driver of consumer behavior and is defined as the accumulation of individuals' considerations and sentiments having coherence with her/himself with an object (Rosenberg, 1979). It is related to the individuals' beliefs about their identities, lifestyles, and preferences and thus positively influences consumer-brand identification (Rather and Camilleri, 2019).

Researchers also highlighted the role of self-congruity on self-image expression (i.e., image congruence, self-congruence and, self-image congruence) that has its roots within the self-congruity theory in the literature. The self-congruity theory focuses on why individuals prefer specific brands and associate a link with their self-image by using them. Its aspect is multidimensional (Sirgy and Su,

2000): Actual self is 'how consumers perceive themselves'. The ideal self is 'how the consumer would like to be'. The social self is 'how consumers think others perceive themselves'. The ideal social self is 'how the consumer would like others to perceive themselves'.

Overall satisfaction and revisit intention

Travelers explore 'who they are' or 'how they see themselves' in that destination by matching themselves to a destination (Sirgy and Su, 2000). Therefore, self-congruity is crucial for examining travelers' post-purchase variables, such as satisfaction and revisit intention (Sop, 2020). Satisfaction is associated with the degree of positive feeling generated by the experience (Chen and Chen, 2010). Although numerous studies in tourism and hospitality marketing widely are identified the relationship between satisfaction and self-congruity (Sop, 2020). Only a few studies (e.g., Abdallat, 2012; Chon, 1992; Kim and Thapa, 2017) have examined this relationship in the destination-marketing context, which might not serve the literature in the strict sense.

Therefore, this study postulates that travelers who sense a high degree of congruence between their personalities and their perceived characteristics of the faith destinations will be satisfied for visiting these destinations. Thus, this study proposes:

H_{1a}: Actual self-congruity positively affects overall satisfaction.

H_{1b}: Ideal self-congruity positively affects overall satisfaction.

Overall satisfaction is attributed as one of the important predictors of revisit intention, whereas it does not grantee alone to tourist retention (Hultman et al., 2015). However, a study by Liu et al. (2012) shows a piece of evidence that self-congruity is positively related to loyalty when controlling for the positive effect of satisfaction on loyalty. Except that, numerous studies confirm the positive relationship between self-congruity and revisit intention in the destination-marketing literature (e.g., Killic and Sop, 2012; Sirgy and Su, 2000; Usakli and Baloglu, 2011; Zhang et al., 2014). Thus, this study suggests:

H_{2a}: Actual self-congruity positively affects revisit intention.

H_{2b}: Ideal self-congruity positively affects revisit intention.

Memorable tourism experience

The customer experience (CE) is an essential domain in experiential marketing, which has multidimensional constructs, including sensory (SENSE), effectiveness (FEEL), physical, behavior, and lifestyles (ACT), creative cognitive (THINK), and social-identity (RELATE) (Rather and Hollebeek, 2021). Relatedly, Voorhees et al. (2017) noted that differing sub-experiences could transpire across one's journey stage. Given the role of positive experience in travelers' self-identification from the perspective of congruity theory (Rather et al., 2018), it can be proposed that social-identity (RELATE) sub-experience of CE could exist across one's travel stages to the focal destination (Voorhee et al., 2017). Besides, many studies (e.g., Chen and Rahman, 2018; Kim, 2018) also highlight the importance of the stored memory of travelers' brand experience on their satisfaction and loyalty.

Although several studies in the customer experience domain have noted a direct link between self-congruity and tourism experience

(e.g., Beerli et al., 2007; Hosany and Martin, 2012; Pool et al., 2016; Sirgy and Su, 2000), there is still no empirical evidence about the relationship between self-congruity and memorable tourism experience. However, the memorable tourism experience can be a crucial antecedent of traveler-destination congruence since the memorable tourism experience arises when tourists visit a focal destination and find something meaningful that connects themselves with a specific place (Quinlan and Carmichael, 2010). Bosnjak et al. (2016) also suggest that from a psychological perspective, eudemonistic identity theory allows for a better understanding of self-expressiveness because this theory asserts that participation in meaningful physical activities provides a sense of self-expressiveness as well (Waterman et al., 2008). Given the role of memorable tourism experience in providing meaningful activities relevant to memory, hence it is more likely to have a significant relationship with self-congruity. In line with the above discussion, this study proposes:

H_{3a}: Actual self-congruity positively affects memorable experiences.

H_{3b}: Ideal self-congruity positively affects memorable experiences.

Destination attachment

When an individual perceives him/herself as emotionally intertwined with a brand's attributes to express his/her self-image, this circumstance enables him/her to create a substantial attachment to the brand (Malär et al., 2011). Similarly, destination attachment (DA) emerges when travelers create a psychological bond between their self-image and a visiting destination (Tsai, 2012), which in turn plays a cornerstone role in the center of travelers' attitudes and behaviors (Prayag and Ryan, 2012). Given the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1975), DA is a response to experiences linked to a specific destination. Destination attachment is used interchangeably with place attachment and is defined as the emotional bond that a traveler develops with a focal destination (Kumar, 2016). Destination attachment has been broadly identified in two components, including (i) place identity, which relevant to travelers' symbolic attachment toward a destination owing to self-identification, (ii) place dependence, which reflects the travelers' functional attachment to a place in meeting a destination

and travelers' needs, wants, or desires (Rather et al., 2019). Following other studies (e.g., Prayag and Ryan, 2012), which have adopted destination attachment as a unidimensional according to its interdependence of attachment's facets, this study, therefore, addresses the destination attachment uni-dimensionally.

Previous studies have confirmed that overall satisfaction and loyalty have a significant and robust relationship with destination attachment (Kumar, 2016; Ramkissoon and Mavondo, 2014; Ramkissoon et al., 2013; Tsai, 2012; Yuksel et al., 2010). Relatedly, Malär et al. (2011) noted that the stronger match between brand image and self-congruity strengthens the brand's emotional bonding. Several studies (e.g., Huang et al., 2017; Japutra et al., 2019) also confirm this relationship and suggest that actual self-congruity is a better predictor than ideal self-congruity for brand attachment. Thus, this study proposes:

H_{4a}: Actual self-congruity positively affects destination attachment.

H_{4b}: Ideal self-congruity positively affects destination attachment.

Mediating effects of memorable tourism experience

Memory has a crucial role in the tourism experience since memorability creates a positive impression of an attraction and enhances the overall quality of the tourism experience, ensuring tourists obtain unforgettable moments (Tsai, 2016). Previous researches confirm the relationship between memorable tourism experience, satisfaction, and revisit intention in the destination-marketing context (e.g., Chen and Rahman, 2018; Kim, 2014, 2018). This study expects to confirm those relationships in faith destinations as well. Thus, this study proposes:

H₅: Memorable tourism experience positively affects overall satisfaction.

H₆: Memorable tourism experience positively affects revisit intention.

Berli et al. (2007) stated that the higher agreement between a destination's image and one's self-concept increase travelers' propensity to visit that destination. Hosany and Martin (2012) also indicate that self-congruity affects travelers' experiences but indirectly influences satisfaction levels. Besides, the study of Rather et al. (2020) suggested that travelers probably create a positive

attitude and behavioral intentions with memorable tourism experiences when they identify themselves through a destination. These suggestions provide only limited knowledge to understand the relationship between self-congruity, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention in destination-marketing phenomena. There is no empirical evidence of the mediating effect of memorable tourism experience between self-congruity, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention. Therefore, the study anticipates that travelers who express their self-image with memorable tourism experiences are more likely to be satisfied and revisit that destination as a means of self-congruity in faith tourism destinations. Hence, it proposes:

H₇: Memorable tourism experience mediates the relationship between actual self-congruity and overall satisfaction (H_{7a}); actual self-congruity and revisit intention (H_{7b}); ideal self-congruity and overall satisfaction (H_{7c}); between ideal self-congruity and revisit intention (H_{7d}).

Besides, Tsai (2012) noted that travel's holistic experience offers enjoyment for travelers, which guides self-congruity as a feeder of attachment. Tsai (2016) also pointed out that the destination local cuisine interaction enables travelers to create a positive-unforgettable memory, and thus enhance the attachment to local attractions and loyalty. Vada et al. (2019) also found that travelers become more attached to a destination when they have an unforgettable experience regarding positive memories. More specifically, the travel experience plays a crucial role in affecting destination attachment (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2006). Therefore, the study anticipates that travelers who express their self-image with memorable tourism experiences are more likely to be greatly attached to the destination. Hence, the study proposes:

H₈: Memorable tourism experience positively affects destination attachment.

H₉: Memorable tourism experience mediates the relationship between actual self-congruity and destination attachment (H_{9a}); ideal self-congruity and destination attachment (H_{9b}).

Moderating effects of destination attachment

Destination attachment is an essential part of the self-concept, linked to evoking meaningful

emotions that affect one's attitude and behavior (Yuksel et al., 2010). According to Kumar and Nayak (2014), self-congruity positively affects travel satisfaction, which in turn influences revisit intention directly and indirectly through destination attachment. A study by Patwardhan et al. (2019) also demonstrated that destination attachment positively influences the revisit intention.

Moreover, evidence from studies has underscored two contrasting research streams regarding the direction between satisfaction and destination attachment (Chen and Dwyer, 2018). While one research stream (i.e., mainly in tourism) regards that place attachment as a predictor of satisfaction (e.g., Prayag and Ryan, 2012; Yuksel et al., 2010), others (i.e., mainly in environmental psychology) argues that satisfaction is a predictor of destination attachment (e.g., Ramkissoon and Mavondo, 2015). In this respect, Ramkissoon (2016) indicates that destination attachment to natural and cultural environments might drive travelers to engage in pro-environmental behaviors. Therefore, given the close relation of faith with culture, contrarily to traditional tourism studies, this study posits within the context of faith destinations that destination attachment will moderate the relationship between self-congruity, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention. Hence, the study proposes:

H₁₀: Destination attachment moderates the relationship between actual self-congruity and overall satisfaction (H_{10a}); actual self-congruity and revisit intention (H_{10b}); ideal self-congruity and overall satisfaction (H_{10c}); ideal self-congruity and revisit intention (H_{10d}).

Method

Research instrument

A self-administered survey with two separate sections was used to measure the proposed conceptual framework. The first section comprised demographic (e.g., age) and tripographic (e.g., frequency of visitation) data, whereas the second section consisted of multiple-item scales regarding relationships in the proposed model.

The self-congruity scale was adopted from diverse sources (Litvin and Goh, 2002; Sirgy and Su, 2000; Usakli and Baloglu, 2011) and concentrated only based on two components (i.e., actual and ideal) since the social self-measures profoundly correlates highly with actual and ideal self-dimensions (Beerli et al., 2007).

Besides, a five-point Likert-type scale was used ('1' Strongly Disagree to '5' Strongly Agree). The memorable tourism experience scale was gathered from (Kim, 2014, 2018), the destination attachment (Veasna et al., 2013), the overall satisfaction (Chi and Qu, 2008), the revisit intention (Bonn et al., 2007).

Study setting and sample

Bektashism is a Sufi dervish order within Islam, which has its roots in the Quran and prophet of Islam-Hz. Muhammad, including the veneration of Ali—the fourth caliph. The head of Bektashism, Haji Bektash Veli, who still has a great devotion among Turks, settled in Anatolia to develop religious thought around the 12th century (Shankland, 1996).

As a continuation of Haji Bektash Veli Sufism, there are 12 main Bektashi dervish lodges which are located in four provinces of Turkey (i.e., Istanbul, Antalya, Erzincan, and Tunceli) and became the centers for Turkish culture, development, and Islamic religious thought; Sarı Saltık, Baba Mansur, Aguicen, Kara Donlu Can Baba, Seyit Derviş Cemal, Kuresan/Mahmut Hayrani, Cemal Abdal, Seyh Ahmet Dede, Karaca Ahmet, Hıdır Abdal, Sahkulu, and Abdal Musa.

The study population involved visitors of those 12 Bektashi faith places. All these places do not have any official data regarding their visitors' numbers, therefore considering the scarcity of the official data, a convenience sampling method was adopted to collect data.

The questionnaire was involved with an expert panel of two academicians with a solid background to ensure content validity. Panel feedback resulted in only minor wording modifications to the questionnaire. To ensure also face validity, a pilot test was also employed with a convenience sample of 50 visitors. The pilot test confirmed that the questionnaire was well structured, and thus no further modification was required. To achieve a reliable and vivid reflection of respondents' experiences, the data was also collected from the respondents who were on their way back home from Bektashi faith places. Four-hundred questionnaires (PS. A total of 100 questionnaires for each province) were collected to travelers over a period of July and August 2019. Based on the cutting-edge data collection, 43 questionnaires were excluded due to missing data, and 357 valid questionnaires were retained for the structural analysis (Astrachan et al., 2014).

Of the 357 filled questionnaires, 260 questionnaires were filled by repeater travelers (72.8%), and 97 by first-timer travelers (27.2%). Just over half of the respondents were male ($n = 184$; 51.5%), while 173 respondents were female (48.5%). Likewise, just over half of the respondents were married ($n = 191$; 53.5%), while 166 respondents were single (46.5%). Of the 357 respondents ($n = 238$, 66.7%) were at middle ages, which range between 35 and 64 years, with only 46 respondents being aged 65 years or older (12.9%), whereas 73 respondents were younger travelers (20.4%). Most of the respondents ($n = 167$, 46.8%) had a secondary level of education at most, while only 91 (25.5%) were tertiary educated (e.g., undergraduate or postgraduate). And, 99 (27.7%) had a primary level of education.

Analysis

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was adopted to test the interrelationships among latent constructs and their measured variables in Smart PLS (Reisinger and Mavondo, 2006). To measure the proposed causal relationships among the unobserved constructs, the SEM serves as a suitable procedure. Likewise, PLS-SEM is consistent in determining the structural equation modeling (Hair et al., 2017) by determining the significance level of the factor loadings, path coefficients, and the proposed hypothesis with the Bootstrapping method (Hair et al., 2011). Besides, compared to covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM), PLS-SEM does not require more restrictive normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2017). As is the case in this study, PLS-SEM enables retention of more indicator variables at the theory development, enhancing the validity and reliability of the tested model in terms of providing better insights for future research and managerial implications (Astrachan et al., 2014).

Results

Assessment of model

To assess the measurement model, convergent validity and discriminant validity, factor loadings, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and HTMT values were examined. Hair et al. (2017) recommend threshold values of composite reliability (CR), Cronbach's alpha scores, and factor loadings should not be lower than (0.7). Nevertheless, whether

the loadings do not affect the composite reliability, factor loadings of items between 0.4 and 0.7 are considered accepted. Besides, the average variance explained (AVE) is recommended to be higher than 0.5 for all constructs (Hair et al., 2017). Moreover, assessing the factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted is adopted to establish convergent validity (Hair et al., 2011). As presented in Table 1, factor loadings were not less than 0.6. Cronbach's Alpha values were not less than 0.7, composite reliability (CR) values were above 0.7, and the average variance explained (AVE) was within the recommended thresholds.

The next step was involved in measuring discriminant validity by using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). The cutoff value of HTMT is recommended to be below one (Hair et al., 2017). Table 2 presents all HTMT values, and the results demonstrated that both convergent and discriminant validity were significant. Since all examinations regarding model assessment verged around the recommendation thresholds, there was no need for any modification (e.g., deleting items) on the original model. For further analysis, the bootstrapping method was applied to get the significance of the path coefficients, hypotheses, mediating effects, and moderating effects.

Further, the common method variance (CMV) was examined with a full collinearity assessment in PLS-SEM. In this regard, all factor level VIF's resulted in less than the threshold of 5.0, which indicates that the study model is free from CMV (Hair et al., 2011).

Structural model

To compare the effects of the structural model relationships, the goodness of fit index for the structural model is to be checked primarily. However, PLS-SEM cannot generate overall goodness of fit indices; therefore, several studies (e.g., Ali et al., 2016) suggest applying R^2 scores as the primary way to test the explanatory power of the models. The geometric mean and averages of r^2 and communality offer an appropriate way to examine the PLS path modeling by providing the Goodness of Fit (GoF) index (Tenenhaus et al., 2004, 2005). The following cutoff value in behavioral research for the GoF analysis: $GoF_{small} = 0.1$; $GoF_{medium} = 0.25$; $GoF_{large} = 0.36$ (Hoffmann and Birnbrich, 2012). Table 3 presents that the value of goodness of fit is 0.733, which can be considered a very good fit for assessment.

Table 1. Model assessment.

Measurement Items	Factor Loadings	Cronbach's			
		Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
AS—Actual Self-Congruity (Reflective)		0.923	0.924	0.923	0.799
AS1	0.909**				
AS2	0.909**				
AS3	0.863**				
IS—Ideal Self-Congruity (Reflective)		0.915	0.915	0.915	0.782
IS1	0.893**				
IS2	0.866**				
IS3	0.894**				
DA—Destination Attachment (Reflective)		0.954	0.955	0.954	0.720
DA1	0.896**				
DA2	0.802**				
DA3	0.877**				
DA4	0.808**				
DA5	0.858**				
DA6	0.761**				
DA7	0.882**				
DA8	0.894**				
MTE—Memorable Tourism Experience (Reflective)		0.973	0.977	0.973	0.609
MTE1	0.809**				
MTE2	0.878**				
MTE3	0.847**				
MTE4	0.775**				
MTE5	0.747**				
MTE6	0.836**				
MTE7	0.743**				
MTE8	0.631**				
MTE9	0.599**				
MTE10	0.581**				
MTE11	0.568**				
MTE12	0.838**				
MTE13	0.875**				
MTE14	0.832**				
MTE15	0.828**				
MTE16	0.855**				
MTE17	0.886**				
MTE18	0.798**				
MTE19	0.884**				
MTE20	0.894**				
MTE21	0.839**				
MTE22	0.794**				
MTE23	0.626**				
MTE24	0.582**				
RI—Revisit Intention (Reflective)		0.927	0.929	0.928	0.811
RV1	0.922**				
RV2	0.856**				
RV3	0.921**				
OS—Overall Satisfaction (Reflective)		0.938	0.939	0.938	0.791
OS1	0.906**				
OS2	0.911**				
OS3	0.898**				
OS4	0.842**				

t-values. **2.58 (p < 0.01).

To further test the path coefficients' significance, a bootstrapping with 5000 iterations was

Table 2. Discriminant validity.

Constructs	AS	DA	IS	MTE	RV	OS
AS						
DA	0.756					
IS	0.883	0.717				
MTE	0.754	0.857	0.763			
RV	0.714	0.868	0.710	0.824		
OS	0.745	0.875	0.736	0.863	0.907	

Table 3. The goodness of fit index.

Constructs	AVE	r2
DAT	0.720	0.767
MTE	0.609	0.616
RV	0.811	0.704
OS	0.791	0.769
AC	0.799	
IC	0.782	
Average Scores	0.752	0.714
AVE*r2	0.537	
(GOF = √ (AVE × R2))	0.733	

applied within two models; full and partial mediation. The path between self-congruity (i.e., actual and ideal) and overall satisfaction and the path between revisit intention was only available in the full mediation model (see Table 3).

As presented in Table 4, there was a small, but positive relationship between actual self-congruity and destination attachment ($\beta = 0.309$, $p < 0.01$); and memorable tourism experience ($\beta = 0.372$, $p < 0.01$). The relationship between actual self-congruity and overall satisfaction ($\beta = 0.176$, $p < 0.01$); and revisit intention ($\beta = 0.151$, $p < 0.01$; $p < 0.05$) were not significant in the partial mediation model. However, the results show that the actual self-congruity positively influences overall satisfaction ($\beta = 0.247$, $p < 0.01$) and, revisit intention ($\beta = 0.261$, $p < 0.01$) in the full mediation model. That implies higher congruence between the travelers' actual self and the destination outcomes in a higher propensity of overall satisfaction and revisit intention. Besides, this means that the memorable tourism experience might mediate the relationship. Similarly, the relationship between the ideal self-congruity and overall satisfaction ($\beta = 0.369$, $p < 0.01$); and revisit intention ($\beta = 0.532$, $p < 0.01$) were not significant in the partial mediation model. However, the results show that the ideal self-congruity positively influences overall satisfaction ($\beta = 0.309$, $p < 0.01$) and, revisit intention ($\beta = 290$,

Table 4. Hypotheses testing.

Hypotheses	f^2	Partial mediation			Full mediation			Decisions
		Std. β	Std. Deviation	T Statistics	Std. β	Std. Deviation	T Statistics	
H1a: AS -> OS	0.027	0.176	0.108	1.633 ^{ns}	0.261	0.094	2.767**	Supported
H1b: IS -> OS	0.001	0.040	0.106	0.369 ^{ns}	0.309	0.096	3.221**	Supported
H2a: AS -> RV	0.017	0.151	0.111	1.388 ^{ns}	0.247	0.092	2.668**	Supported
H2b: IS -> RV	0.003	0.068	0.119	0.532 ^{ns}	0.290	0.089	3.270**	Supported
H3a: AS -> MTE	0.079	0.372	0.132	2.806**				Supported
H3b: IS -> MTE	0.111	0.439	0.130	3.400**				Supported
H5: MTE -> OS	0.828	0.703	0.068	10.429**				Supported
H4a: AS -> DAT	0.083	0.309	0.111	2.767**	0.256	0.090	2.856**	Supported
H4b: IS -> DAT	0.006	-0.085	0.121	0.708 ^{ns}	0.304	0.096	3.199**	Supported
H6: MTE -> RV	0.573	0.662	0.071	9.305**				Supported
H8: MTE -> DAT	0.796	0.690	0.058	11.886**				Supported

t-values. *1.96 ($p < 0.05$); **2.58 ($p < 0.01$) / ^{ns} not significant.

$p < 0.01$) in the full mediation model. That means that higher congruency between travelers' ideal self and the Bektashi faith destinations enhances the propensity to conduct overall satisfaction and revisit intention. Besides, this also means that the memorable tourism experience might mediate the relationship.

Likewise, the relationship between ideal self-congruity and destination attachment was not significant ($\beta = -0.085$, $p < 0.01$). In contrast, its relationship with memorable tourism experience was small and positive ($\beta = 0.439$, $p < 0.01$) in the partial mediation model. However, the results show that the ideal self-congruity positively influences destination attachment ($\beta = 0.304$, $p < 0.01$) in the full mediation model. That also means that the higher congruity between the traveler's ideal self with Bektashi faith destinations, the greater the propensity to attach the destination. Besides, this also means that the memorable tourism experience might mediate the relationship. Lastly, there was a large and positive relationship between memorable tourism experience and destination attachment ($\beta = 0.690$, $p < 0.01$); revisit intention ($\beta = 0.662$, $p < 0.01$); and overall satisfaction ($\beta = 0.703$, $p < 0.01$) in the partial mediation model. According to these relationships, the hypotheses between H_{1a} and H₆ were supported (Figure 2).

The corrected r^2 was conducted to assess the effects of one construct on the other. Self-congruity and memorable tourism experience explained 76.9% of the overall satisfaction ($r^2 = 0.769$); and 70.4% revisit intention ($r^2 = 0.704$). Likewise, self-congruity and memorable tourism experience explained 76.7% of the destination attachment ($r^2 = 0.767$). Besides, self-

congruity explained 60.9% of the memorable tourism experience ($r^2 = 0.609$).

The value of the f^2 effect: $f^2_{\text{small}} = 0.02$; $f^2_{\text{medium}} = 0.15$; $f^2_{\text{large}} = 0.35$ (Hair et al., 2017). Table 4 also presents the f^2 effect size of this study. The effect size of actual self-congruity on destination attachment and memorable tourism experience was small. The effect size of ideal self-congruity on memorable tourism experience was also small. The effect size of memorable tourism experience to destination attachment, revisit intention and, overall satisfaction was large. Moreover, q^2 values are suggested to be larger than 0 for predicting the relevance of endogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2017). For all q^2 values of this study (memorable tourism experience = 0.352; destination attachment = 0.531; overall satisfaction = 0.590; revisit intention = 0.553) were positive.

Mediating effects

The indirect effect and bias-corrected 95% bootstrap confidence interval (CI) was considered for testing the mediation effects based on Baron and Kenny's approach (Zhao et al., 2010). When CI excludes zero, this means that there is a positive relationship between variables. In this context, the indirect effect of actual self-congruity on destination attachment is significant (95% CI [0.075, 0.428]). The result reveals that the memorable tourism experience mediates the relationship between actual self-congruity and destination attachment. The direct effect of actual self-congruity on destination attachment is significant ($\beta = 0.256$, $p < 0.01$), and it is a complimentary mediation (Zhao et al., 2010).

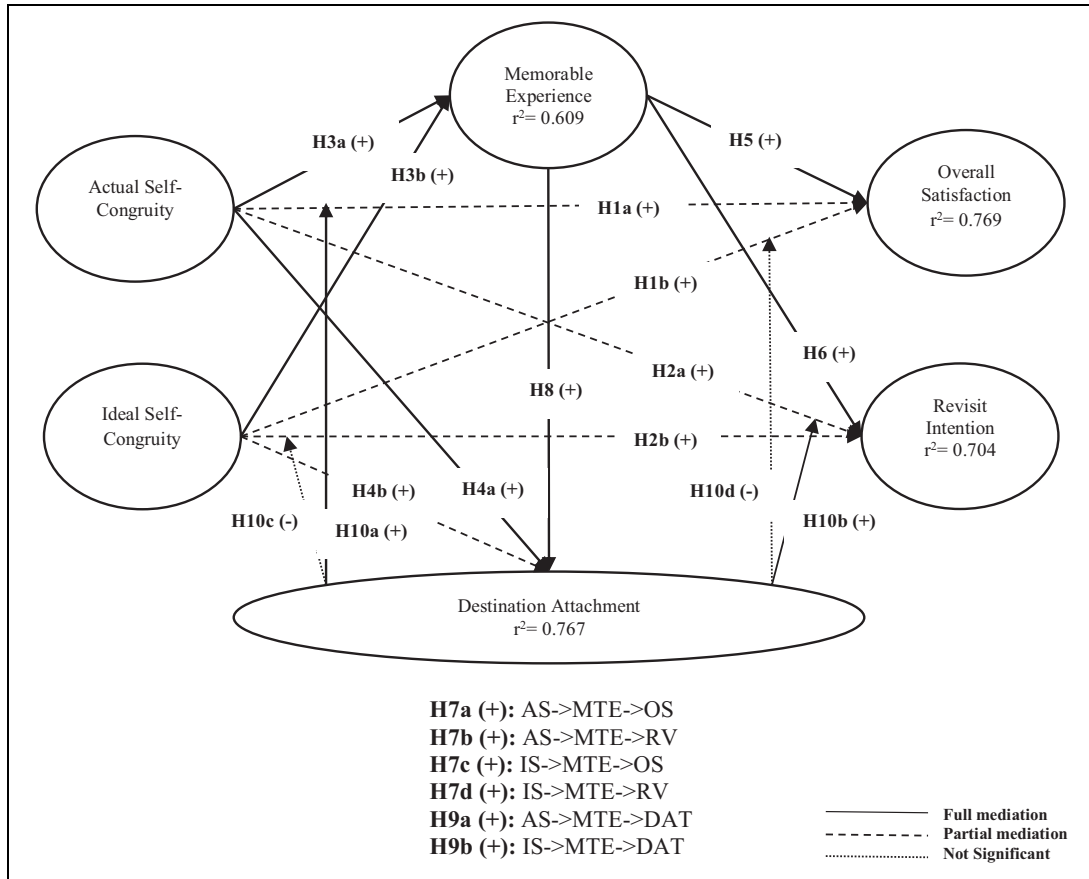


Figure 2. Structural model.

Likewise, the confidence interval for the indirect effect of ideal self-congruity on destination attachment (95% CI [0.126, 0.499]) excludes zero. The result shows that H₈ was supported. The direct effect of ideal self-congruity on destination attachment is also significant ($\beta = 0.256$, $p < 0.01$), it is also a complementary mediation since (Zhao et al., 2010). Besides, the confidence interval for the indirect effect of actual self-congruity on overall satisfaction (95% CI [0.076, 0.448]) and revisit intention (95% CI [0.069, 0.430]) exclude zero.

Memorable tourism experience was found to mediate the relationship between actual self-congruity and overall satisfaction; revisit intention. The direct effect of actual self-congruity on overall satisfaction ($\beta = 0.176$, $p < 0.01$) and revisit intention ($\beta = 0.151$, $p < 0.01$) are not significant; it is an indirect-only mediation (Zhao et al., 2010). Similarly, the confidence interval for the indirect effect of ideal self-congruity on overall satisfaction (95% CI [0.125, 0.507]) and revisit intention (95% CI [0.120, 0.476]) exclude zero. Memorable tourism experience was found

to mediate the relationship between the ideal self-congruity and overall satisfaction; revisit intention. Besides, the direct effect of ideal self-congruity on overall satisfaction ($\beta = 0.040$, $p < 0.01$) and revisit intention ($\beta = 0.068$, $p < 0.01$) are not significant; it is also an indirect-only mediation (Zhao et al., 2010). According to these relationships, the hypothesized H_{7a}, H_{7b}, H_{7c}, H_{7d}, H_{10a}, and H_{10b} were supported (Table 5).

Moderating effects

The moderating effect was measured using the PLS product-indicator approach, which offers a reliable estimate of the error attenuated (Chin et al., 2003) and improves the hypotheses' validation (Henseler and Fassott, 2010). To assess destination attachment's moderating effect, actual self-congruity and ideal self-congruity (predictor), respectively, and destination attachment (moderator) were multiplied to create interaction constructs to predict overall traveler satisfaction and revisit intention. The moderating

Table 5. Mediating effects.

Mediating Effects	Standard β	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	Bias-corrected bootstrap	
				95% confidence interval	Decisions
H7a: AS -> MTE -> OS	0.261	0.094	2.767**	[0.076, 0.448]	Supported
H7b: AS -> MTE -> RV	0.247	0.092	2.668**	[0.069, 0.430]	Supported
H7c: IS -> MTE -> OS	0.309	0.096	3.221**	[0.125, 0.507]	Supported
H7d: IS -> MTE -> RV	0.290	0.089	3.270**	[0.120, 0.476]	Supported
H9a: AS -> MTE -> DAT	0.256	0.090	2.856**	[0.075, 0.428]	Supported
H9b: IS -> MTE -> DAT	0.304	0.096	3.199**	[0.126, 0.499]	Supported

Note: bootstrapping based on $n = 5000$ subsamples.
t-values. *1.96 ($p < 0.05$); **2.58 ($p < 0.01$).

Table 6. Moderating effects.

Moderating Effects	Standard β	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	Bias-corrected bootstrap	
				95% confidence interval	Decisions
H10a: AS -> OS	-0.101	0.034	3.000**	[-0.162, -0.029]	Supported
H10b: AS -> RV	-0.072	0.028	2.539*	[-0.126, -0.016]	Supported
H10c: IS -> OS	-0.054	0.031	1.700	[-0.112, 0.012]	Not Supported
H10d: IS -> RV	-0.048	0.027	1.700	[-0.099, 0.008]	Not Supported

Note: bootstrapping based on $n = 5000$ subsamples.
t-values. *1.96 ($p < 0.05$); **2.58 ($p < 0.01$).

effect of destination attachment was found only significant on the relationship between actual self-congruity and overall satisfaction ($\beta = -0.101$, $p < 0.01$); revisit intention ($\beta = -0.072$, $p < 0.01$), and this relationship also found negative. According to these relationships, only the hypothesis H_{10a} and H_{10b} were supported, whereas H_{10c} and H_{10d} were not supported (Table 6).

Conclusion

Theoretical implications

This study demonstrates the self-congruity theory's effectiveness in the tourism field regarding the faith tourism destination concept. From the theoretical viewpoint, this is the first attempt that empirically tests the relationship among self-congruity, memorable tourism experience, attachment, overall satisfaction, and revisits intention in an integrative model. Besides, this study contributes to previous studies' theoretical framework, which was not considered the social identity perspective of overall satisfaction and revisit intention by including roles of memorable tourism experience and destination attachment. By doing so, it also responds to call for several studies (e.g., Chen et al., 2020; Usakli and Baloglu, 2011; Wassler and Hung, 2015) about conducting further empirical studies for exploring and identifying other psychological variables

influential on the relationship between self-congruity and travelers' post-visit behavior.

First, the empirical results confirm the relationship of self-congruity with overall satisfaction and; revisit intention. Actual self-congruity and ideal self-congruity indirectly affect overall satisfaction and revisit intention. Except for studies (e.g., Kilic and Sop, 2012; Sirgy and Su, 2000; Usakli and Baloglu, 2011; Zhang et al., 2014), which proposed the direct relationships between self-congruity and travelers' post-consumption evaluations, this finding supports both Cifci et al. (2016) and Japutra et al. (2019), which also revealed indirect relationships between self-congruity and travelers' post-consumption evaluations. Moreover, it has strengthened the limited evidence of previous studies (e.g., Abdallat, 2012; Chon, 1992; Kim and Thapa, 2017) on the positive relationship between self-congruity and satisfaction.

Second, as predicted, a positive relationship between self-congruity and the memorable tourism experience exists, expanding the scope of previous research that suggested a direct link between self-congruity and tourism experience (e.g., Beerli et al., 2007; Pool et al., 2016; Sirgy and Su, 2000). Furthermore, these findings support Quinlan and Carmichael's (2010) assertion that the extent of self-concept affects memorable tourism experience depends on finding something that connects themselves to a specific

destination. By revealing the role of self-congruity on the memorable tourism experience in faith destinations, this study results in extending the findings of Pool et al. (2016), which suggested self-congruity affects travelers' perceived experience in the Islamic-historical destination.

Validating also the previous studies' findings (e.g., Chen and Rahman, 2018; Kim, 2014, 2018), the current study demonstrates that memorable experience positively relates to overall satisfaction and revisit intention. Besides, the memorable tourism experience was put forward as an important mediator of the relationship between self-congruity, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention. This study's findings reveal that the memorable tourism experience has a full mediation effect in both the relationship between self-congruity with overall satisfaction and the relationship with revisit intention.

Third, findings support prior researches (e.g., Kumar, 2016; Ramkissoon and Mavondo, 2014; Ramkissoon et al., 2013; Tsai, 2012; Yuksel et al., 2010), suggesting that the extent of self-concept affects travelers' destination attachment. However, the actual self-congruity directly affects destination attachment, which shows actual self-congruity is a stronger predictor of brand attachment. With this result, this study supports a growing number of previous studies that proposed actual self-congruity is a better predictor of brand attachment (e.g., Japutra et al., 2019; Malär et al., 2011). The study also highlights that the memorable tourism experience directly affects destination attachment. This result also supports Jorgensen and Stedman's (2006) and Vada et al. (2019) findings that memorable tourism directly affects destination attachment. Further, the study put forward memorable tourism experience as an important mediator of the relationship between self-congruity and destination attachment. Findings reveal that memorable tourism experience partially mediates the relationship of actual self-congruity and ideal self-congruity on destination attachment.

Lastly, this study put forward destination attachment as an important moderator of the link between self-congruity, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention, respectively. The findings reveal that only actual self-congruity requires strong emotions (i.e., destination attachment) to trigger overall satisfaction and revisit intention behavior in a negative direction. Interestingly, the results show that higher destination attachment results in a lower propensity to conduct overall satisfaction and revisit intention

concerning actual self-congruity, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention. That might be due to two possible reasons. The first is that considering a large number of repeater travelers (i.e., 72.8%) among respondents of this study sample, and actual self-congruity may influence satisfaction level negatively because of the increased feeling of destination attachment with repeat visitation in discovering the faith destinations. This supposition has concurred with the previous studies (Beerli et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2012; Sirgy and Su, 2000) that suggested the first-time visitors showed more robust effects self-congruity in forming overall satisfaction and repeat visitation. Another explanation might be related to the fact that the actual self-congruity might capture the emotional feelings of assimilation or erosion toward the faith of the destinations, and this may cause a decrease in overall travel satisfaction after a while of feeling the attachment with strong emotion. Likewise, the tendency to revisit might also decline indirectly for the same reason.

Practical implications

From a practical viewpoint, the findings also provide several practical implications for destination authorities in developing long-term and successful relationships with their visitors.

First, the current study's findings conform to previous research in confirming that self-congruity has a positive effect on memorable tourism experience, destination attachment, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention. Therefore, faith destination authorities should put self-congruity as a feasible tool in their strategic destination management plans. Mazumdar and Mazumdar (2004) mentioned that faith destinations are a sacred place, which has a close relation to locals' culture and tradition and thus offers an active socializing component to destination attachment owing to the experiential. Given the role of faith destinations in enhancing culture and development of religious thought. Faith destination authorities should enable visitors to broaden their overall satisfaction and loyalty by allowing them to create a harness with an attachment between the destination and themselves and hence shall sustain the number of repeat visitors. To ensure this, faith destinations' authorities should cooperate with today's faith leaders. These places can also be opened to worship service to sustain the rituals by enabling travelers to interact with residents.

Second, the memorable tourism experience enhances overall satisfaction and revisit intention and directly affects destination attachment. Besides, it has mediation effects respectively in the relation of self-congruity and destination attachment (i); overall satisfaction (ii); revisit intention (iii). Enhancing the memorable tourism experience should therefore be a critical managerial goal. Scannell and Gifford (2010) suggest that experiencing social interaction drives a social-based place bond in a particular destination. Accordingly, destination authorities should not ignore organizing some memorial events to reflect the destination image to visitors, which offer a glimpse of local's psychology, emotions, and culture by bringing travelers and locals together (Patwardhan et al., 2019). Because, many studies (e.g., Torres, 2016) suggest that host and guest interaction provides a memorable tourism experience, which tailors satisfaction and revisits intention owing to the emotional attachment (Tsai, 2012, 2016).

Third, given that the memorable tourism experience has a close relationship with authenticity (Seyfi et al., 2020), responsible authorities should also pay special attention to developing some specific authenticity clues attached to the destination stereotype and real life. This study also agrees with previous studies (e.g., Beerli et al., 2007; Huang et al., 2017; Litvin and Goh, 2002; Wassler and Hung, 2015) in terms of call for enhancing the perceived understanding of the stereotype and real life of a destination for travelers to enable them to create congruence between destination and their self-image. Considering Sthapit's (2017) suggestion on prolonging the memorability, some authentic souvenirs regarding regional belief should be offered to travelers to trigger self-congruity with faith destinations.

Fourth, the findings reveal that actual self-congruity has an opposite influence on overall satisfaction and; revisit intention with destination attachment's moderating role. Presumably, this situation may be caused by the excess in the number of repeater visitors or the destination's erosion of faith. The prominent feature linked to travelers' profile is repeater travelers (72.8%) who were in the middle ages (66.7%). That means that Bektashi faith destination authorities should consider on diversification of markets to appeal to first-time attendees. Specifically, they should invest in attracting more young travelers by motivating them too. For instance, organizing recent events for youth tourism, offering accommodation at affordable prices, and letting them

benefit from discounted transportation services can be suitable for a start. In connection with this, facilitating an active venue between travelers and residents can enhance travelers' attachment and appeal to satisfaction and loyalty. In particular, restructuring Bektashi faith institutions, contributing to the cultivation of new faith servers traditionally, and fulfilling the faith by competent people can be critical strategies to prevent erosion in the Bektashi Sufi orders.

Fifth, many studies have currently highlighted the possible changes in travelers' post-purchase behaviors due to the current global COVID-19. Given the role of innovativeness in consumers' attitudes and behaviors (Hollebeek and Rather, 2019), incorporating the innovativeness in the service delivery process can promote the recovering the quality of service by minimizing service failures, thereby positively contributes visitors' satisfaction and revisit intention (Shams et al., 2020). This study, therefore, agrees with the suggestion of prior studies (e.g., Rather, 2021a, 2021b) regarding the use of interactive technologies (e.g., social media, Virtual Reality, computerized booking systems, artificial intelligence) to ensure/ or sustain travelers' positive attitudes and revisit intention during COVID-19. By doing this, destination authorities might also cultivate another avenue for travelers to shape progressively their own tourism experiences (Rather and Hollebeek, 2021; Rather et al., 2019), which offers a deploy attempt to strengthen the congruence and attachment to destinations in the economic downturn. Following the study findings of Yin et al. (2020), this study also suggests that engaging with interactive technologies will contribute to the destination attractiveness in preventing these destinations from being crowded during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, in line with Rather and Hollebeek's (2020) suggestion, this study also suggests that sharing stories of historical characters in Bektashi faith destinations and their relationship with faith through social media might provide a memorable experience travelers' minds. It can also contribute to travelers' congruence with the destination and stimulate their attachment owing to the self-identification, which further enhance overall satisfaction and revisit intention.

Limitations and future research

This paper is not without limitations as all other academic studies. First, the study sample involves only visitors to Bektashi faith

destinations in a maturing tourism destination (Turkey), thus limiting the findings' generalizability. Second, this study revealed that the relationship between self-congruity, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention is moderated in the opposite direction by destination attachment. Likewise, the frequency of visits is argued to affect self-congruity power (Beerli et al., 2007). Given that this study's sample is mostly biased toward repeat visitors (72.8%), it is difficult to analyze whether the power of self-congruity, memorable tourism experience, and destination attachment are differently based on visitation frequency. Therefore, future studies should examine these relationships. Third, this study explores the memorable tourism experience uni-dimensionally. The memorable tourism experience scale should be used as multidimensional for further studies. Fourth, this research model used five variables, which might limit understanding the development of behavioral intentions and memorable tourism experience. Fifth, further studies may use diverse psychological antecedents to discover other primary factors that influence travelers' post-purchase variables, such as customer engagement (Abou-Shouk and Soliman, 2021; Hollebeek et al., 2019; Rather and Hollebeek, 2021) and customer co-creation (Rather et al., 2019; Shams et al., 2020). Lastly, the quantitative data of this study was collected before the COVID-19 pandemic; given the possible changes in travelers' post-purchase habits owing to the current global COVID-19 pandemic (Rather, 2021a, 2021b), the same research model and design should be replicated in pandemic within different destination contexts in further studies.


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Supplemental material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

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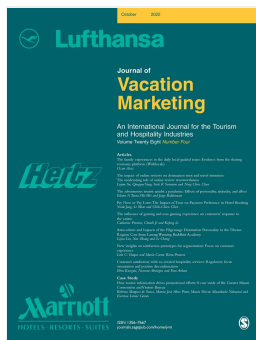
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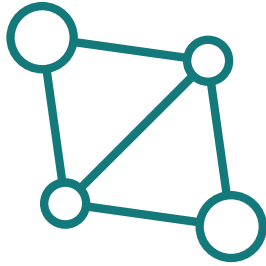


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