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Validating Scale for Measuring Destination Brand Image

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ABSTRACT

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Destination Brand Image; Destination Brand Association; Destination Brand Personality; Destination Attitudinal Loyalty; Pakistan.

This research validates a scale to assess the destination brand image with its two components: Destination Brand Personality (DBP) and Destination Brand Associations (DBA). Factor analysis (FA) based on 159 survey responses from foreign visitors to Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan, revealed that DBP has five dimensions with 22 items (Sincerity Tranquillity and Charming, Sophisticated and Reliable, Vibrant and Creative, Courteousness, and Conformity), while DBA has six dimensions with 23 items (Destination Recreation and Lifestyle Appeal, Perceived Destination Value, Socio-Cultural and Nature Appeal, Tourist Support and Convenience Facilities, Social and Leisure Outing Appeal and Escape). The validated scale can allow destination marketing companies to accurately measure the brand image and to position the brand effectively to strengthen brand equity. The combination of DBA and DBP as cognitive and affective images within the same framework to measure their combined impact on Destination Attitudinal Loyalty (DAL) represents an original contribution that fills an important gap in the literature and provides a broader conceptualization of destination branding.

1. Introduction

In the context of modern tourism, a destination's

strategic branding has developed into an essential part of efficient destination management (Tsaur et



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al., 2016). Executives in destination marketing are constantly developing strategies to attract both new and returning tourists in an effort to increase market share and tourism earnings. Developing a destination's identity as a unique brand is essential, mainly because potential tourists rely significantly on a place's perceived image when making decisions. Strategic place branding works in two ways: it strengthens positive perceptions that already exist while simultaneously destroying negative stereotypes by promoting new, positive associations (Mihailovich, 2006). By allowing marketing and brand managers to precisely match their offerings with the particular preferences of their targeted audience, this branding mechanism is essential for engaging a variety of consumer segments (Keller, 2013). Practically, building adequate market awareness, uniqueness, and institutional prestige is the main goal of brand overseers (Keller, 2013b). Keller (1993) developed the well-known Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) framework to operationalize the building of a strong brand. Konecnik and Gartner (2007) developed the unique Customer-Based Brand Equity for Tourist Destinations (CBBETD) model by tailoring this conceptualization to the particulars of travel and tourism. The destination brand image is a fundamental tenet of this destination-centric framework. In keeping with this goal, Bosnjak (2010) contends that a thorough assessment of destination image in all of its component elements must be part of the baseline stage of any empirical tourism study. Conceptually a destination image is a person's collective perceptions, thoughts and opinions about a particular region (Crompton, 1979). Similar, Hunt (1975) defined destination brand image as the network of impressions or overall impression that an individual has of a destination. Marketers are vigorously developing strategies to increase visitor arrivals as rivalry among travel hubs raises on a global scale. In order to gain market positioning and distinct differentiation, it is crucial to create and maintain an appealing destination image. In order to achieve this, destination strategists must intentionally take into consideration the affective and cognitive aspects of the destination brand image when developing their marketing campaigns (Hosany et al., 2007).

The idea that destination image functions as a

multidimensional construct is reinforced by the necessity for scholars to take into consideration the different aspects of a destination in order to measure and analyze how it is perceived (Echtner and Ritchie, 1993). This perception is based on both cognitive and affective components, according to a wide range of foundational definitions (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997). Madden et al. (2016) observed that the structural framework of Dann (1996), which proposes a sequential process where travelers form an intellectual (cognitive) image of a destination before developing an emotional (affective) connection, is often consistent with modern hospitality research. Examining these elements in more detail, Gartner (1993) defined the cognitive dimension as a traveler's collective attitudes and beliefs about a location. In a similar vein, Baloglu and McCleary (1999) described this cognitive component as consumers' preexisting knowledge and particular perceptions of a destination's unique features. This intellectual side is complemented by the affective dimension, which typically becomes the primary dimension of the destination image as visitors begin to consider their options and make narrowing down their vacation plans (Gartner, 1993). The affective component as defined by Baloglu and McCleary (1999) is characterized by personal feelings, attachments, and overall liking of a destination. These emotional and cognitive threads intermingle to create a composite and integrated destination image that is either negative or positive (Beerli and Martín, 2004). Thus, the challenge for marketing firms is to communicate both sides, with both more emotional and functional benefits (Hosany et al., 2007).

The literature on destination brand image still lacks a generally accepted scale for assessing destination image, despite the huge amount of literature devoted to the topic (Pike and Bianchi, 2013). Additionally, in a tourism context, a little empirical research has specifically addressed brand association and brand personality as the proxy dimensions for cognitive and affective brand image using Davis's (2002) approach. In order to close this gap, the current study intends to assess a destination brand image measurement scale by operationalizing it through two main lenses: destination brand associations and destination brand personality as the cognitive and

affective components.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Destination Brand Associations

The main mechanism by which a brand expresses its value to customers is through brand associations (Davis, 2002). According to Keller (2013), these connections create a network of knowledge in a customer's memory that influences how they perceive the brand. In a similar vein, Chen (2010) characterizes them as a combination of knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions that form a cohesive mental connection. Customers create these connections by associating particular ideas with the brand. In the end, these associations and how well they distinguish a brand from rivals determine its market position. These mental associations facilitate the processing of information, enhance brand recall, increase positive emotions, support purchases, and aid in brand extensions. According to Aaker (1991), these connections may result from features, applications, costs, or sources of the product.

Marketers must consciously establish distinctive, favorable associations that satisfy consumer needs and outperform rivals in order to develop a strong brand. These mental connections are a fundamental component of Customer-Based Brand Equity since they aid consumers in creating an overall brand image (Keller, 2013a). According to earlier studies, these correlations affect customer loyalty and decisions. For instance, Pike (2007) and Bianchi et al. (2014) discovered a favorable correlation with attitudinal loyalty. Nevertheless, some research (Chinomona and Maziriri, 2017; Susanto et al., 2019) found that this connection to final purchases was statistically insignificant. This study is assessing destination brand association as a crucial cognitive component of a destination's image, as there has not been much research done on this idea in the tourism industry.

2.2 Destination Brand Personality

The human characteristics that customers project onto businesses are the main focus of the idea of brand personality (Keller, 2013). In order to broaden this perspective, Davis (2002) developed the "brand persona," classifying these characteristics into human-like categories like

psychology, physical characteristics, and demographics. In a similar vein, Aaker (1991) described the idea as the collective human attributes that customers attribute to a brand. Researchers apply these concepts to geographical locations in tourism. Dickinger and Lalicic (2016) showed that destination personality plays a major role in shaping consumer attitudes and emotions, which are key to making favorable impressions on travelers. Destination personality also impacts traveler behavior and serves to position a tourist destination (Usakli and Baloglu, 2011). When a visitor finds self-expression at a destination that is consistent with his or her self-identity, an emotional connection is made, which can lead to repeat visits and word-of-mouth recommendations. But while creating a brand identity requires heavy marketing and long-term investment, these perceptions become psychological anchors that are hard to change (Aaker, 1991). Consumers tend to choose brands that help them communicate who they are to others, either because they want to be seen as having the brands they desire or because they actually have the brands they desire (Aaker, 1991; Batra et al., 1996). Destination managers need to use regional personality traits in their marketing campaigns in a competitive marketplace (Murphy et al., 2008). Strong identities enhance deep emotional ties (Aaker, 1996), which in turn drive financial success, brand loyalty, and loyalty (Thomson et al., 2005).

True destination branding requires the construction of a multidimensional personality, which affects consumer preferences and purchasing behavior (Mengxia, 2007), and which is harder for competitors to replicate, thus helping managers protect their pricing and market share (Batra et al., 1996). Although the cross-cultural application of Aaker's initial framework was criticized (Geuens et al., 2009), scholars such as Kumar and Nayak (2018) have created customized scales for particular markets. Nevertheless, destination personality has a very strong predictive power. It has a direct correlation with both long-term loyalty (Nysveen et al., 2013; Mengxia, 2007) and return visits and recommendations (Usakli and Baloglu, 2011). By analyzing affective aspects of destination brand image, this study seeks to close a gap by testing destination brand personality as the emotional

(affective) component of brand image.

2.3 Destination Attitudinal Loyalty

Oliver (1999a), defined attitudinal loyalty as psychological commitment or intent to repurchase the brand. Based on Tripartite Theory and Oliver's phases of loyalty, Li and Petrick suggested that these two phases are combined into an attitudinal stage followed by a behavioral stage consistent with Ajzen (1991) and more broadly agreed upon idea in general that loyalty is multi-dimensional construct (Jones & Taylor 2007), whereas behaviorally loyal consumers purchase a wider range of products and advocate for the company (Agyei, Kilika).

3. Theoretical Bases of the Study

Dann's (1996) model of how people create perceptions of destinations is still used in contemporary tourism research (Madden et al., 2016). Travelers process a place in three stages, according to Dann: cognitive (thoughts), affective (feelings), and conative (actions). Researchers must consider destination image as multifaceted in order to fully comprehend this perception (Echtner and Ritchie, 1993). The cognitive domain (beliefs and knowledge) and the affective domain (emotions and feelings) are the two primary components of standard definitions (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997). Therefore, in order to effectively market themselves, destinations must highlight both useful features and emotional advantages (Hosany et al., 2007). This study separates destination brand image into brand association and brand personality using Davis's (2002) approach. According to Davis (2002), brand associations demonstrate a brand's efficacy and value in daily life. In like vein, Chen (2010) characterizes these associations as the entirety of a consumer's knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions. This study treats destination brand association as the cognitive pillar because it aligns with classical cognitive imagery. Conversely, Hosany et al. (2007) contend that the primary affective dimension is destination personality. This is consistent with Patterson's (1999) theory that brand personality is an emotional reaction to a destination's characteristics. This research examines destination personality as the affective component of brand image since personality is directly related to affective components like emotional ties and visitor attachments (Baloglu

and McCleary, 1999).

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Scale Development

The scale development was executed through five steps included: item formulation and pilot testing; data collection; scale refinement using a Factor Analysis (FA); reliability and validity tests and SmartPLS validation. Items for DBA and DBP were initially generated from the literature and respondent demographics analyzed via descriptive statistics. Factors, including those with eigenvalues greater than 1.0, were extracted using Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) in conjunction with an Oblique Promax rotation; this is recommended when a sample is to be used for later structural equation modeling (Samuels, 2017) and ideal where data are not normally distributed (Costello & Osborne, 2005). The steps followed here are similar to those outlined by Samuels (2017), with items that loaded below 0.3 or had communality values less than 0.2 typically being deleted as well as any item loading on more than one factor above the arbitrary cut-off of 75%. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin metric should be at least 0.5, and the cumulative variance explained by retained factors should exceed 50%. If a sample is smaller than 300 cases, then an average communality is to be computed for items that are retained and values from 0.5-0.6 are acceptable; at least one item per factor should be retained. Finally, factors identified through these procedures were theoretically labeled according to their underlying items in order to fully describe the theoretical meaning (Samuels, 2017).

Lastly, Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of these metrics; coefficients greater than 0.70 indicated acceptable reliability (Hair et al., 2014). Finally, the predictive validity of the scale was examined by using SmartPLS to model its structural relationship with destination attitudinal loyalty.

4.2 Item generation and selection

A wide variety of possible items were first taken from well-known literature in order to assess destination brand image. The selection process was based on the fundamental definitions of DBA and DBP. This strategy complies with Netemeyer et al., (2003) methodological recommendations, who pointed out that the initial phases of scale

design should start with a large, thorough collection of potential items that can then be improved through content assessments. As a result, 40 items for DBA and 44 items for DBP were initially selected from earlier research.

Tables 1 and 2 provide specifics about these baseline item pools, respectively. These items were subjected to a thorough screening process after collection in order to determine both face and content validity.

Table 1: *Scale Items for Destination Brand Associations*

NO	Scale Items	Source
1	Suitable accommodation	(Pike, 2009)
2	A safe destination	(Pike, 2009)
3	Good value for money	(Pike, 2009)
4	Affordable packages	(Pike, 2009); (Huang et al., 2015)
5	Beautiful scenery/natural wonders	(Pike, 2009); (Qu et al., 2011); (Huang et al., 2015)
6	Pleasant climate	(Pike, 2009)
7	Within a comfortable drive	(Pike, 2009)
8	Uncrowded	(Pike, 2009)
9	Good cafes and restaurants	(Pike, 2009)
10	Friendly local people	(Qu et al., 2011); (Pike, 2009); (Huang et al., 2015)
11	Lots to see and do	(Pike, 2009)
12	High levels of service (<i>Related to tour guide, accommodation, transportation, food etc.</i>)	(Pike, 2009)
13	Places for swimming	(Pike, 2009)
14	Not touristy (<i>Attractiveness due to not too much tourists and full of things to do</i>)	(Pike, 2009)
15	Places for walking	(Pike, 2009)
16	Family destination	(Qu et al., 2011); (Pike, 2009); (Huang et al., 2015)
17	Good shopping facilities	(Qu et al., 2011); (Pike, 2009)
18	Historical places	(Pike, 2009)
19	Trendy atmosphere	(Pike, 2009); (Qu et al., 2011)
20	Good fishing and boating	(Pike, 2007)
21	Restful & Relaxing atmosphere	(Pike, 2007); (Qu et al., 2011)
22	Places for experiencing nature	(Pike, 2007)
23	Easy access to the area	(Qu et al., 2011)
24	Reasonable cost of hotels/restaurants	(Qu et al., 2011)
25	Local cuisine (<i>food</i>)	(Qu et al., 2011)
26	Welcome/Information Centres	(Qu et al., 2011)
27	Cultural events/festivals	(Qu et al., 2011)

28	Clean/unspoiled environment	(Huang et al., 2015) ; (Qu et al., 2011)
29	Good Internet service	(Qu et al., 2011)
30	Availability of travel information	(Qu et al., 2011)
31	Impressive attractions	(Huang et al., 2015)
32	Good tourism related services	(Huang et al., 2015)
33	Wealthy clientele (<i>Rich tourists</i>)	(Chen, 2010)
34	Buddy outing (<i>Good for outing with friends</i>)	(Chen, 2010)
35	Business outing (<i>Good for business outing</i>)	(Chen, 2010)
36	Single's outing	(Chen, 2010)
37	Social outing (<i>Good for outing to meet new people</i>)	(Chen, 2010)
38	Experience of local culture	(Huang et al., 2015)
39		
40	A better understanding of Gilgit-Baltistan as a tourist destination.	(Huang et al., 2015)

Table 2: Scale Items for Destination Brand Personality

No	Scale Item	Source
1	Welcoming	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
2	Polite	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
3	Diverse (<i>Variety</i>)	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
4	Respectful	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
5	Religious	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
6	Spiritual	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
7	Violent	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
8	Depraved (<i>Immoral</i>)	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
9	Peaceful	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
10	Agreeable (<i>Pleasant</i>)	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
11	Adventurous	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
12	Enthusiastic (<i>Excited, motivated</i>)	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
13	Passionate (<i>Romantic</i>)	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
14	Traditionalist	(Kumar & Nayak, 2018).
15	Imaginative	(Chen & Phou, 2013); (Aaker, 1997)
16	Unique	(Chen & Phou, 2013)
17	Cheerful (<i>Joyful</i>)	(Chen & Phou, 2013); (Aaker, 1997)
18	Tough (<i>Hard, Dangerous</i>)	(Aaker, 1997);(Chen & Phou, 2013)

19	Rugged (Rocky)	(Chen & Phou, 2013)
20	Masculine (<i>Belong to Male gender</i>)	(Chen & Phou, 2013)
21	Contemporary (<i>Modern</i>)	(Chen & Phou, 2013)
22	Up to date	(Chen & Phou, 2013); (Aaker, 1997)
23	Sentimental (<i>Emotional</i>)	(Chen & Phou, 2013)
24	Family oriented	(Chen & Phou, 2013)
25	Good looking	(Chen & Phou, 2013)
26	Glamorous (stylish)	(Chen & Phou, 2013)
27	Reliable (<i>trustworthy</i>)	(Ekinci & Hosany, 2006); (Aaker, 1997)
28	Sincere	(Ekinci & Hosany, 2006)
29	Wholesome (<i>moral</i>)	(Ekinci & Hosany, 2006); (Aaker, 1997)
30	Friendly	(Ekinci & Hosany, 2006)
31	Exciting	(Papadimitriou et al., 2015)
32	Daring (<i>adventurous, bold</i>)	(Papadimitriou et al., 2015);(Aaker, 1997)
33	Spirited (<i>Brave</i>)	(Aaker, 1997);(Papadimitriou et al., 2015)
34	Original	(Papadimitriou et al., 2015)
35	Honest	(Papadimitriou et al., 2015); (Aaker, 1997)
36	Down to earth	(Aaker, 1997);(Papadimitriou et al., 2015)
37	Energetic	(Usakli & Baloglu, 2011)
38	Alive	(Usakli & Baloglu, 2011)
39	Vibrant (<i>Dynamic, lively</i>)	(Usakli & Baloglu, 2011)
40	Showy (<i>Impressive</i>)	(Usakli & Baloglu, 2011)
41	Young	(Usakli & Baloglu, 2011)
42	Feminine (<i>Belong to Female gender</i>)	(Usakli & Baloglu, 2011)
43	Charming	(Aaker, 1997);(Usakli & Baloglu, 2011)
44	Upper-class	(Aaker, 1997);(Usakli & Baloglu, 2011)

Researchers frequently perform pre-testing and pilot testing to guarantee content validity, using professional guidance to improve the tool's quality by adding, removing, or refining items (Lewis et al., 2005). Eight repetitive questions (01, 05, 06, 14, 21, 27, 29, and 32) were eliminated from the DBA section, and 14 redundant questions (16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 23, 26, 29, 31, 32, 34, 38, 40, and 42) were eliminated from the DBP section in response to expert input. The inter-item correlation between the remaining questions were examined prior to beginning the pilot test. A lower cutoff of 0.11 is occasionally acceptable, despite the fact that inter-

item correlations between 0.30 and 0.70 typically demonstrate good validity (DeVon et al., 2007). This 0.11 baseline was passed by all of the remaining DBA questions. Nevertheless, two DBP questions item 7 (violent) at -0.017 and item 8 (depraved/immoral) at 0.037 scored too low and were eliminated, leaving 28 DBP items and 32 DBA items for the following stage. The updated instrument was then tested in a pilot study. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2019), pilot tests are small-scale studies with a small number of participants, typically between 25 and 100 (Cooper et al., 2006). When forty responses were

collected, the validity and reliability analysis of the study began. Factor analysis was then conducted for the 32 DBA and 28 DBP items, with Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) scores ranging from 0.523 to 0.847 suggested by Malhotra (2010)

and all sections Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) results significant. Table 3, show that the items that remain are significant and that they are important for measuring each concept.

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's test Results

Construct	KMO	Bartlett's Test
DBA	0.523	Significant
DBP	0.658	Significant

Cronbach's Alpha (CA) coefficients ranging from 0.910 to 0.940 were obtained from reliability testing. The internal uniformity for each variable is fully acceptable, indicating strong measurement reliability, as each quantified value easily surpassed the set 0.70 benchmark. As a result,

these diagnostic results validate high internal consistency and confirm the reliability of each unique variable's individual items. Table 4 below provides a detailed summary of the CA evaluation's findings.

Table 4: Reliability of Constructs

Construct	No. of Items	C. A. (α)
DBA	32	0.940
DBP	28	0.910

4.3 Data collection

The data was then collected with final questionnaire consisted of a 32-item scale to measure DBA and a 28-item scale to measure DBP, each rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree for the DBA metrics and ranging from describes-perfectly to doesn't-describe-at-all for the DBP dimensions. This study utilized a non-probability sampling design utilizing a purposive sampling approach and quota sampling with an international tourist population (target population) who had visited GB and a strict quota (half, or 50% of the sample, was from Gilgit region and half, or 50% of the sample, was from Baltistan region).

4.3.1 Data Cleaning and Response Overview

A total of 161 completed responses were returned, demonstrating a response rate of 53.7% that falls within the methodological guidelines set by Ali et al. (2021). The initial screenings showed that the data set had no missing values; yet, an outlier assessment led to the elimination of two cases, so the final analysis was made on a sample size of 159 valid cases.

5. Results

5.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The final sample consisted of 64.2% males and 35.8% females, with 51.5% being Asian, 24.5% European, 18.8% from the Americas, 4.4% from Australia, and 0.006% from Africa, 38.4% being 26–35 years old, 26.4% between 36 and 45, 14.5% between 46 and 55, 12.6% between 18 and 25, and 8.2% 56 years or older, 44.7% holding a master's degree, 39.6% a bachelor's degree, and 8.2% a doctorate, 0.6% having high school diplomas, and 6.9% having diplomas. The occupation of the respondents was as follows: professionals (43.3%), entrepreneur (21%), other (17%), and students (10.8%). Most respondents were married with children (51.6%), single (38.4%), recently married (5.7%), and divorced (4.4%). Income data revealed that the respondents earned 0–100,000 PKR (24.5%), 200,000–300,000 PKR (22.6%), and over PKR 500,000 (34.5%). Lastly, the majority of visitors stayed in GB for more than 15 days (44.6%), 11–15 days (22.9%), and 3–10 days (14.6%).

5.2 Scale Purification, Reliability and Validity

Factor analysis then performed on the two major dimensions (DBA and DBP) into discrete,

manageable components. Before performing this analysis, three important statistical rules were verified: First, the sample size should be adequate. This is verified by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) metric, and values of 0.8 to 0.9 are regarded as excellent (Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999). Because the KMO scores for both DBA and DBP fell within this wide range, this study complied with the rule. Secondly, the data type needs to be suitable. Hair et al. (2006) claimed that metric variables are necessary for factor analysis. Since both DBA and DBP used continuous metric scales, this rule was satisfied. Third, the relationships between the data must be strong enough to support grouping them (Hair et al., 1998). In order to determine whether the variables were entirely unrelated, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) was employed (Malhotra, 2010). The final rule was satisfied since significant correlations were demonstrated because the BTS significance values for both dimensions were significantly below 0.05. After these guidelines were verified, independent factor analyses were performed on the 28 items for DBP and the 32 items for DBA to verify the stability of their factor structures.

5.2.1 Factor Analysis of DBA:

Table 5: *KMO and Bartlett's Test*

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.873
	Approx. Chi-Square	1954.849
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	253
	Sig.	.000

The 32 items of the DBA scale were used for the FA. The analysis initially identified six distinct dimensions using a Promax rotation and a minimum factor loading cut-off of 0.3. After that, nine items were eliminated one by one because they either loaded too weakly or onto too many factors. There were 23 strong items that fit neatly into the six-factor structure and had good correlations with one another.

The DBA scale's Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) score was 0.873 (see Table 5), which is significantly higher than the necessary 0.50 and indicates that the data is highly suitable for factor analysis. The variables are appropriately correlated, as demonstrated by the highly significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS) ($p = .000$). In the end, the extraction verified six dimensions with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 (see Table 6), which collectively account for 69.230 percent of the variance. For the DBA items, the average communality was 0.593. The average communality value (see Table 7) falls precisely within the acceptable 0.5 to 0.6 range recommended by Samuels (2017) because this study employs a sample size of 100 to 200 participants.

Table 6: Pattern Matrix

	Factor					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
DBA20: GOOD FISHING AND BOATING	.903					
DBA16: FAMILY DESTINATION	.726					
DBA19: TRENDY ATMOSPHERE	.653					
DBA33: WEALTHY CLIENTELE	.600					
DBA13: PLACES FOR SWIMMING	.551					
DBA18: HISTORICAL PLACES	.493					
DBA4: AFFORDABLE PACKAGES		.864				
DBA24: REASONABLE COST OF HOTELS/RESTAURANTS		.835				
DBA2: GOOD VALUE FOR MONEY		.723				
DBA25: LOCAL CUISINE		.430				
DBA3: A SAFE DESTINATION		.400				
DBA39: A BETTER UNDERSTANDING FOR GB AS TOURIST DESTINATION			.740			
DBA40: POTENTIAL OF INCREASE IN ECONOMY			.703			
DBA38: EXPERIENCE OF LOCAL CULTURE			.665			
DBA22: PLACES FOR EXPERIENCING NATURE			.613			
DBA9: GOOD CAFES AND RESTAURANTS				.701		
DBA17: GOOD SHOPPING FACILITIES	.407			.634		
DBA30: AVAILABILITY OF TRAVEL INFORMATION				.400		
DBA37: SOCIAL OUTING					.975	
DBA36: SINGL'S OUTING					.550	
DBA15: PLACES FOR WALKING						.776
DBA8: UNCROWDED						.472
DBA10: FRIENDLY LOCAL PEOPLE						.342

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Table 7: Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
DBA2: GOOD VALUE FOR MONEY	.592	.573
DBA3: A SAFE DESTINATION	.519	.494
DBA19: TRENDY ATMOSPHERE	.673	.664
DBA4: AFFORDABLE PACKAGES	.574	.647
DBA16: FAMILY DESTINATION	.633	.659
DBA24: REASONABLE COST OF HOTELS/RESTAURANTS	.699	.740
DBA33: WEALTHY CLIENTELE	.669	.666
DBA36: SINGL'S OUTING	.514	.506
DBA37: SOCIAL OUTING	.601	.905
DBA9: GOOD CAFES AND RESTAURANTS	.646	.708
DBA13: PLACES FOR SWIMMING	.606	.572
DBA15: PLACES FOR WALKING	.542	.731
DBA20: GOOD FISHING AND BOATING	.608	.634
DBA8: UNCROWDED	.349	.319
DBA10: FRIENDLY LOCAL PEOPLE	.341	.261
DBA17: GOOD SHOPPING FACILITIES	.704	.752
DBA30: AVAILABILITY OF TRAVEL INFORMATION	.593	.579
DBA38: EXPERIENCE OF LOCAL CULTURE	.581	.556
DBA39: A BETTER UNDERSTANDING FOR GB AS TOURIST DESTINATION	.613	.705
DBA40: POTENTIAL OF INCREASE IN ECONOMY	.424	.469
DBA22: PLACES FOR EXPERIENCING NATURE	.348	.362
DBA25: LOCAL CUISINE	.608	.521
DBA18: HISTORICAL PLACES	.598	.614
Average	.567	.592

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

The extracted dimensions were named for ease in interpretation: Destination Recreation and Lifestyle Appeal was the six-item first factor as this related directly to recreational activities and lifestyle preferences that tourists would find in GB; Perceived destination value was the second factor, with five different items captured by this dimension (as it reflected overall perceived value of the trip); thirdly, a four-item dimension labeled Destination Socio-Cultural and Nature Appeal because socio-cultural aspects as well as nature

were part of these dimensions; fourthly, Tourist Support and Convenience Facilities consisted of three items related to infrastructure for tourists or hospitality facilities in GB; fifth Social and Leisure Outing Appeal captures the breadth of outing options; sixth dimension Escape, which encapsulates wanderlust.

Reliability of these six dimensions was analyzed using internal consistency and the Cronbach's alpha metrics, which is the most common way to assess reliability, and the scale's stability is based

on the standards set forth by Hair et al. (2006), that a Cronbach's alpha of at least 0.70 is required for the scale to be used for further statistical evaluations, although in an exploratory research framework, an alpha of 0.60 is also statistically

acceptable (Hair et al., 1998). These benchmark criteria were met by the computed alpha coefficients for each of the six factors in this study, demonstrating their reliability and confirming their appropriateness for statistical analysis.

Table 8: *Cronbach's alpha for DBA*

Sno.	Factor	No. Of items	Alpha-value
1	Destination Recreation and Lifestyle Appeal	6	0.868
2	Perceived Destination Value	5	0.843
3	Socio-Cultural and Nature Appeal	4	0.770
4	Tourist Support and Convenience Facilities	3	0.835
5	Social and Leisure Outing Appeal	2	0.784
6	Escape	3	0.571

5.2.2 Factor Analysis of DBP

Data on DBP analyzed for factor analysis using procedures described in Samuels (2017). After preliminary diagnostics for inter-item correlations suggested that one item did not reach statistical threshold (correlation coefficient -0.013) therefore excluding it and performing a FA with Promax rotation technique with a minimum loading of 0.3; eliminating five items which cross-loaded or loaded poorly and retaining the following 22 items: they load cleanly into five-factor structure. The preliminary statistical assumptions needed to underpin this factor analytical approach were robustly satisfied for DBP scale: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure

of sampling adequacy =.891 exceeded minimum recommended threshold of .50; and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS), which tests whether the underlying correlation matrix is significantly different from an identity matrix, was statistically significant at $p=.000$. Five distinct DBP factors were extracted with eigenvalues greater than one accounting for 66.681 percent variance explained by all five factors (see Table 10); average communality of items on DBP scale computed to be .558 and meets empirical parameters set forth in Samuels (2017), which is also within the recommended range of 0.5-0.6 as suggested for a study with similar participant numbers by DeVon et al. (2007).

Table 9: *KMO and Bartlett's Test for DBP*

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.891
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1853.613
	df	231
	Sig.	.000

Table 10: *PaternMatrix for DBP*

	Factor ^a				
	1	2	3	4	5
DBP30:FRIENDLY	.901				
DBP25:GOOD LOOKING	.843				
DBP33:SPIRITED (BRAVE)	.815				
DBP43:CHARMING	.565		.312		
DBP36:DOWN TO EARTH	.554				
DBP28:SINCERE	.513				
DBP35:HONEST	.507				
DBP4:RESPECTFUL	.467				
DBP44:UPPER CLASS		.791			
DBP22:UP TO DATE		.779			
DBP24:FAMILY ORIENTED		.751			
DBP27:RELIABLE (TRUSTWORTHY)		.659			
DBP41:YOUNG		.621			
DBP14:TRADITIONALIST		.539			
DBP13:PASSIONATE (ROMANTIC)		.434			
DBP11:ADVENTUROUS			.781		
DBP12:ENTHUSIASTIC (EXCITED, MOTIVATED)			.739		
DBP10:AGREEABLE (PLEASANT)			.697		
DBP1:WELCOMING				.799	
DBP2:POLITE				.770	
DBP5:RELIGIOUS					.785
DBP6:SPIRITUAL					.615

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Table 11: *Communalities*

	Initial
DBP1:WELCOMING	.513
DBP2:POLITE	.545
DBP4:RESPECTFUL	.437
DBP5:RELIGIOUS	.493
DBP6:SPIRITUAL	.559
DBP10:AGREEABLE (PLEASANT)	.562
DBP11:ADVENTUROUS	.512
DBP12:ENTHUSIASTIC (EXCITED, MOTIVATED)	.642

DBP13:PASSIONATE (ROMANTIC)	.468
DBP14:TRADITIONALIST	.490
DBP22:UP TO DATE	.572
DBP24:FAMILY ORIENTED	.610
DBP25:GOOD LOOKING	.580
DBP27:RELIABLE (TRUSTWORTHY)	.625
DBP28:SINCERE	.690
DBP30:FRIENDLY	.557
DBP33:SPIRITED (BRAVE)	.588
DBP35:HONEST	.681
DBP36:DOWN TO EARTH	.508
DBP41:YOUNG	.509
DBP43:CHARMING	.669
DBP44:UPPER CLASS	.466
AVERAGE	0.558

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Each factor was given a unique label that reflected the salient features of its constituent items in order to give the extracted components conceptual meaning. Sincerity tranquility and charm were chosen as the first factor, which consists of eight components that capture qualities like aesthetic appeal, integrity, deference, humility, and amiability. The second factor, known as Sophistication and Reliability, consists of seven elements associated with prestige, modernity, passion, and dependability. The third factor, Vibrant and Creative, was found to be composed of three items that represented a sense of adventure, agreeableness, and enthusiasm. The

fourth factor, which is referred to as courteousness, consists of two components that indicate friendly and polite behavioral characteristics. Lastly, two items related to religious devotion and spiritedness make up the fifth factor, which is categorized as conformity. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were then used to assess the internal consistency of these five derived factors. All calculated alpha values exceeded the Hair et al. (2006) recommended threshold of 0.761. These statistical results validate the five-factor structure's suitability for further analytical research by demonstrating its robustness and dependability.

Table 12: *Cronbach's alpha for DBP*

Sno.	Factor	No. Of items	Alpha-value
1	Sincerity, Tranquillity and Charming	8	0.890
2	Sophisticated and Reliable	7	0.845
3	Vibrant and Creative	3	0.821
4	Courteousness	2	0.761
5	Conformity	2	0.770

5.3 Testing Scale with SmartPLS

5.3.1 Assessment of the Measurement Model

The SmartPLS 3.3 was used to assess the inferential statistics in this study (Ringle et al.,

2015). Table 13 provides specific factor loadings for each item onto their corresponding constructs. In particular, factor loadings for items DBA3, DBA6, DBP4, and DBP5 fell between 0.50 and 0.70. Because loadings of 0.50 or higher are regarded as acceptable, these particular items were included in the analysis. This strategy supports the claims made by Hair et al. (2019), who observe that as long as they achieve statistical significance, outer loadings of at least 0.5 are appropriate and pertinent. Importantly, every item in this study that fell between 0.5 and 0.7 attained statistical significance. Additionally, Hair et al. (2014) advise that the decision to remove an indicator should take into account the potential

effects on the construct's overall content validity. To maintain this content validity, indicators with lower outer loadings are usually kept, but items with loadings less than 0.40 must be routinely eliminated (Hair et al., 2011). The items with loadings between 0.5 and 0.7 were safely retained because every item in this study exceeded the 0.50 threshold and all subsequent metrics for construct reliability and convergent validity, including Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), rho_A, and Cronbach's Alpha (CA), surpassed their necessary benchmarks. As a result, no indicators were removed from the final measurement model.

Table 13: *Measurement model Assessment*

Construct	Items	Loadings	C.A	rho_A	CR	AVE
DBA	DBA1	0.854	0.822	0.580	0.871	0.537
	DBA2	0.842				
	DBA3	0.584				
	DBA4	0.813				
	DBA5	0.685				
	DBA6	0.560				
DBP	DBP1	0.837	0.791	0.811	0.856	0.547
	DBP2	0.811				
	DBP3	0.704				
	DBP4	0.650				
	DBP5	0.676				
AL	COGL	0.930	0.837	0.837	0.924	0.860
	AFL	0.920				

The assessment then turns to looking at internal consistency reliability, which is typically calculated using Jöreskog's (1971) Composite Reliability (CR). The data in Table 13 shows that all constructs' CR values, which ranged from 0.86 to 0.92, were higher than the 0.70 benchmark. These results, supported by indicator loadings that fell within an acceptable range of 0.56 to 0.93, indicate a strong and satisfactory degree of internal consistency among the constructs.

Determining the convergent validity of the construct measures is the third step in evaluating the reflective measurement model. Each

construct's Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was computed to measure this. As stated by Hair et al. (2019), an AVE of 0.50 or higher is typical, meaning that the construct effectively explains at least 50% of the variance in its items. Every construct AVE exceeded this 0.50 threshold, meeting the requirements, according to the Table 13.

Verifying discriminant validity is the fourth step. The conventional framework developed by Fornell and Larcker (1981) was first used to achieve this. The square root of the AVE for each construct was consistently higher than its

correlations with other constructs, as shown in Table 14, meeting the Fornell and Larcker criterion for established discriminant validity. Additionally, Henseler et al. (2015) suggested the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations as a contemporary substitute for the Fornell-Larcker approach (Voorhees et al., 2016). Henseler et al. (2015) pointed out that when

constructs have similar conceptual boundaries, a more stringent threshold of 0.85 is suitable. Adequate discriminant validity is further confirmed by the results in Table 15, which show that all HTMT ratios stayed below 0.9. Figure 1 depicts the overall measurement model used in this investigation.

Table 14: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	AL	DBA	DBP
AL	0.927		
DBA	0.494	0.733	
DBP	0.524	0.527	0.739

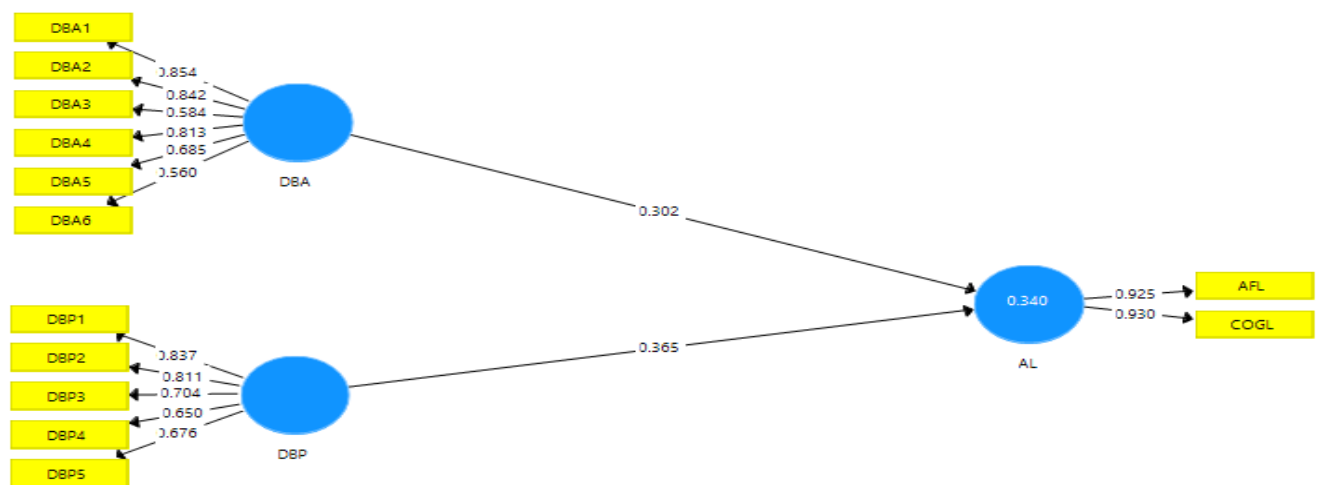
The instrument showed strong discriminant validity because the values for Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR), and Cronbach's Alpha (CA) consistently exceeded their respective minimum thresholds and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratios stayed safely below the maximum parameter of 0.85. In

the end, these results effectively validate the four-step criteria for the measurement model described by Hair et al. (2019), demonstrating that the data has the necessary validity and reliability to support further statistical testing. As a result, the study moves on to the next phase, which entails evaluating the structural model.

Table 15: Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) Loadings

	AL	DBA	DBP
AL			
DBA	0.578		
DBP	0.630	0.631	

Figure 1: Measurement Model



5.3.2 Assessment of Structural Model (Inner Model)

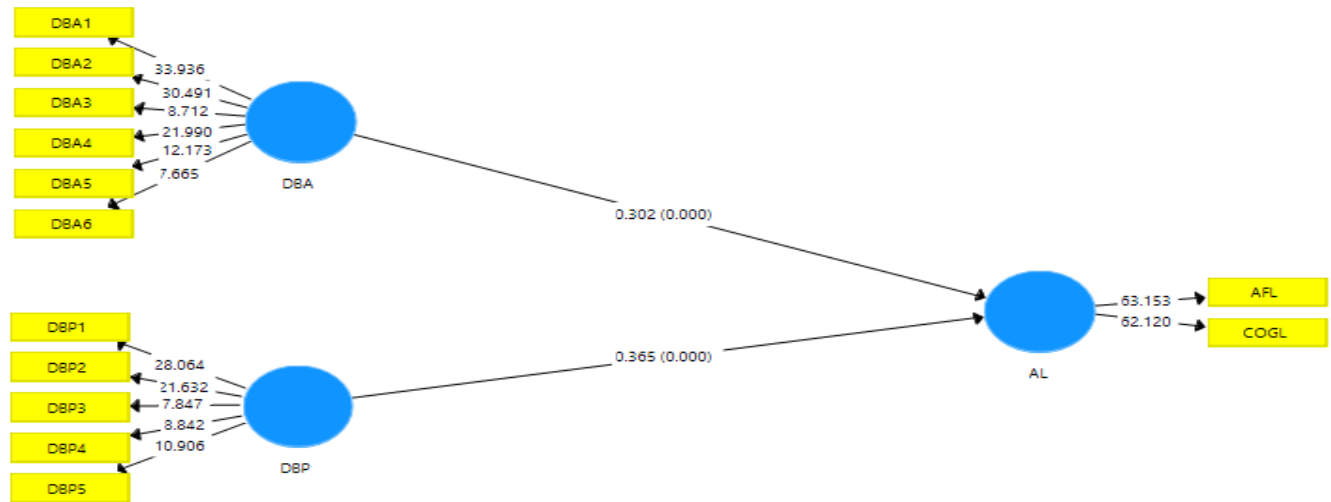
The first step in structural model involves

analysing possible collinearity problems in order to investigate the structural model. All Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values fall well below the

strict benchmark of 3.3 suggested by Diamantopoulos and Siguaw (2006), which is confirmation that multicollinearity is not a concern in this study and that the results of the regression will not be biased by the data (see Table 16). The f^2 test given by Chin (2010) is then used to calculate the effect sizes that particular independent variables have on the endogenous

constructs. Cohen's (1988) thresholds indicate that small, medium, and large effects are represented by f^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35, respectively. In this study, DBP shows a moderate effect on the same outcome variable, while DBA shows a small-to-moderate effect on DAL. Figure 2 below provides a visual representation of the overall structural framework created for this study.

Figure 2: Structural Model



5.3.2.1 Assessment of direct Relationships

DBA and DBP are two exogenous constructs that predict attitudinal loyalty (AL), the only endogenous variable in the study's structural framework. The statistical results for the proposed pathways were produced after the Partial Least Square (PLS) algorithm was run in conjunction with bootstrapping techniques. The empirical data

clarifies the direct relationships between the exogenous determinants and the endogenous outcome.

In other words, there was a strong direct effect of DBA on loyalty ($\beta = 0.302$, $t = 3.855$). The same pattern held true for DBP and DAL. DBP significantly and positively influenced DAL ($\beta = +0.365$, $t = 4.143$).

Table 16: Relationship Among Variables

Relationship	Path Coefficients (β)	t-values	p-values*	LL	UL	f^2	VIF
DBA -> DAL	0.302	3.855	0.000	0.149	0.456	0.100	1.384
DBP -> DAL	0.365	4.143	0.000	0.202	0.547	0.146	1.384

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

6. Discussion

The objective of this research was to develop an all-encompassing scale to measure destination brand image based with the two components DBP and DBA, as well as their combined effect on destination attitudinal loyalty. This study broadens knowledge of the notion of destination brands by empirically demonstrating that cognitive and affective aspects are represented in one structural framework using a two-step

analytical method (factor analysis and structural equation modeling with partial-least-squares) and its evaluation of the measurement model establishes psychometric validity for the newly developed scale. The composite reliability (CR), internal consistency, and average variance extracted values were strong (0.856 to 0.924, 0.650 to 0.860 respectively) for endogenous constructs DAL as well as exogenous constructs DBA and DBP; attitudinal loyalty was also

confirmed by the high value of AVE (AVE = 0.860). While individual indicator weights for several items were below ideal level (DBA3 = 0.584, DBA6 = 0.560, and DBP4= 0.650), they remained in place because overall values of both AVEs and CR met strict criteria to ensure model validity without compromising its exploratory nature, which was also confirmed by multidimensional structures revealed from the exploratory analysis.

7. Conclusion

7.1. Theoretical and Practical Implications

This study adds to destination branding literature by proposing a dual-dimensional framework that considers DBA and DBP, which are the cognitive dimension and affective dimension of destination brand image respectively. The two dimensions empirically demonstrated their substantial contributions toward Destination Attitudinal Loyalty (DAL), thus providing an integrated scale to measure Destination Brand Image more comprehensively than fragmented traditional models. It also provides a strategic roadmap for DMOs that can maximize DAL by matching communicated identity with its perceived value proposition and delivering value-driven service delivery alongside personality positioning to prevent perceived prices from exceeding

experiential benefits and weakening tourists' loyalty.

7.2 Limitations and Future research areas

This research has a number of limitations that offer chances for further research, despite its contributions to tourism marketing. First, non-probability sampling is used, and the sample size is comparatively small ($n = 159$). Although suitable for theoretical validation and hypothesis testing (Reynolds et al., 2003; Leary, 2001). Second, self-completion questionnaires were used for data collection. Lack of researcher control can result in respondent misinterpretation and possible validity problems. Third, only one mountainous location is included in the geographic and contextual scope. Future research should replicate this model in various regions, developing nations, and a variety of destination types, including cities, beaches, historical sites, and other service industries, in order to improve external validity. Lastly, strong causal conclusions about attitudes and behavioral relationships are limited by the cross-sectional survey design. In order to track and accurately measure consumer attitudes and behaviors over time, future research should use experimental or longitudinal designs in conjunction with destination management organizations.

Conflict of Interest

The authors showed no conflict of interest.

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