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Editors

# Advances in Tourism, Technology and Systems

Selected Papers from ICOTTS 2023,  
Volume 2

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*Editors*

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# Preface

This book—*Advances in Tourism, Technology and Systems: Selected Papers from ICOTTS 2023, Volume 2*—from the SIST Series is composed of the best-selected papers accepted for presentation and discussion at the 2023 International Conference on Tourism, Technology and Systems (ICOTTS'23). The ICOTTS is a multidisciplinary conference with a special focus on new technologies and systems in the tourism sector and was held between 2 and 4 November 2023. The ICOTTS'23 was supported by the Anáhuac University, Bacalar, Mexico, and by the International Association for Digital Transformation and Technological Innovation (IADITI).

The International Conference on Tourism, Technologies and Systems is an international forum for researchers and professionals in the tourism sector, which enables the discussion of the latest innovations, trends and concerns in several areas, in the tourism sector, associated with Information Technologies and Systems. It is an event for professionals in the sector, in search of technology solutions, where academics, IT experts and business managers meet to discuss new ideas that help them maximize the potential of tourism business through technology.

The ICOTTS'23 Scientific Committee is composed of a multidisciplinary group of 140 experts who assessed some 298 papers from 24 countries, received for each of the main topics proposed for the conference: (a) Tourism research in providing innovative solutions to social problems; (b) information and communication technologies in hospitality and tourism industry; (c) sustainable tourism; (d) tourism trends; (e) health and wellness tourism; (f) tourism management; (g) marketing strategies in hospitality and tourism industry; (h) hospitality, tourism and foodservice environment; (i) tourism in the different scientific areas; and (j) eTourism and Tourism 2.0.

The papers accepted for presentation and discussion at the conference are published by Springer and will be submitted for indexing by ISI, SCOPUS, EI-Compendex, Google Scholar and Springerlink.

We thank all those who contributed to the ICOTTS'23 conference (authors, committees, workshop organizers and sponsors). We deeply appreciate your involvement and support, which were crucial to the success of the conference.

Porto, Portugal  
November 2023

João Vidal Carvalho  
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# Chapter 30

## The Role of Sociodemographic Characteristics on the Journey from Brand Experience to Brand Love and Loyalty—Porto



**Bárbara Santos, Margarida Carvalho, Paula Emer, Ana Pinto Borges, Bruno Vieira, Amélia Brandão, and Elvira Vieira**

**Abstract** Development of an emotional attachment to the brand is a key issue in brand management, making constructs such as brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand love, and brand loyalty one of the most addressed topics in marketing research, specifically, the destinations brands, such as of city of Porto. Within this debate, special attention is given to sociodemographic characteristics and the role they have within this journey. Namely we address the impact of gender, age, educational qualifications, marital status, and residence on brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand love, and brand loyalty. Our findings indicate that these characteristics do play the role. Positive brand experience-affecting factors include being female relative to male, being older (the higher the impact), and being a tourist relative to not being a tourist. Non-tourists (those who reside in Portugal or Porto) have an advantage over tourists in terms of brand loyalty and customer satisfaction. Age and gender have also shown importance. Marriage status and level of education were important components of brand loyalty. Gender had no effect on brand love, but age (which

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rises with maturity), education level (which rises with credentials), and marital status (being married or widowed) all had favorable impacts.

### 30.1 Introduction

Currently the development of an emotional attachment to the brand is a key issue in brand management [9]. Brand love is a construct that describes the affective feelings of a group of satisfied consumers [20]. In this context, destination brand love addresses tourists' long-term relationships with destination brands, as it leads to favorable behaviors, such as raising loyalty to the destination, forgiveness for negative experiences, and willingness to invest [5, 33].

Increasingly, consumers do not opt for the brand solely on the basis of its quality and durability [24]. In contrast to utilitarian characteristics related to the specific product or service, brand personality tends to serve a symbolic function [9]. The consumer develops a love for the brand on the basis of a strong brand personality, attributing to them and imbuing them with different personality characteristics [9].

To achieve destination's brand love and loyalty there is journey that is a subject of active investigation [24, 33] that this research intends to contribute. In specific, within this journey to brand love and loyalty there is a call for further research over the influence of sociodemographic variables on it [26, 32, 35, 14]. There are contradicting findings in the literature, on the one hand their influence is considered relevant, for instance especially in relation to gender [35], and on the other hand showing that their impact is insignificant [25, 28]. In this regard, the question arises do sociodemographic characteristics play the role in the evaluation of brand experience, satisfaction, love, and loyalty? Thus, the objective of this study is to analyze the journey to brand love and loyalty and the role of sociodemographic characteristics on it.

As a scenery the case study of the city of Porto is chosen. It is the 2nd largest city of Portugal that have evidenced touristic growth in the last decade, especially due to the awards given to the city as "Best European Destination" in 2012, 2014, 2017 and 2022. This recognition contributed to the growing popularity of the city that became one of the most desired destinations to visit [36]. On September 29, 2017, the brand "Porto" was created, which was conceived by designer Eduardo Aires [2] and recognized internationally in a short time. The factor of great importance of this recognition is the level of expansion and visibility in which the brand places the city to the world bringing recognition to the local culture and tourism.

## 30.2 Brand Experience, Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Love

A destination or location brand can be defined as a way to communicate the unique identity of a destination that contains a number of intangible and tangible elements and distinguish it from competitors [7, 21]. In this regard, a brand of a destination has two important functions: differentiation and identification. The brand image of a tourist destination is one of those intangible elements, to which tourism marketing has given monetary importance [31].

According to Alloza [4], the brand experience can be defined as the perception of consumers, at each moment of the contact they have with the brand, whether in the brand images projected in advertising, during the first personal contact, or the level of quality in relation to the personal treatment they receive. Brand experience is created when customers use the brand; talk to other people about the brand; and look for more information, promotions, and events [6, 22]. Brand-related stimuli appear as part of a brand's design and identity (e.g., name, logo, sign), packaging, and marketing communications (e.g., advertisements, brochures, websites), and in environments in which the brand is marketed or sold (e.g., stores, events). These brand-related stimuli constitute the main source of subjective and internal consumer responses, which is referred to as the "brand experience" [12]. Thus, a brand experience is defined as subjective, with internal responses of the consumer through feelings and sensations, as well as behavioral responses through stimuli that relate to the brand and its entire design.

Brand satisfaction is a desired outcome of brand experience. Satisfaction is defined as a positive affective reaction to a result of a previous experience further impacting subsequent purchases, completing a cyclical pattern and forming a long-term relationship of loyalty [3, 11, 16, 24]. According to Sadeque et al. [33] satisfaction with the various points of the city is a fundamental pillar in the development of the city's brand love.

Consumers perceive the objects they love as being integrated into their identity [1]. Brand love is a type of relationship that consumers establish with brands, encompassing multiple cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements revealing the degree of emotional passion and attachment that a satisfied consumer has for a particular brand [9, 10, 19, 20, 24, 33].

One of the lines of research affirm that satisfaction is an antecedent of loyalty, as increase in satisfaction leads to increases in brand loyalty [11, 18, 34]. Loyalty represents a deeply held commitment to product/service preference consistently in the future [13].

Brand loyalty is seen as an outcome of brand love [20], reflected in positive word-of-mouth, active commitment, and willingness to pay a higher price for the chosen brand [24], ultimately leading to enhanced economic, competitive, and strategic advantages and increased brand profitability [29, 30].

## 30.3 Methodology

### 30.3.1 Questionnaire Description

The questionnaire consists of two main parts: sociodemographic characteristics (gender, age, nationality, education, and marital status) and the four dimensions of the brand (brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand loyalty, and brand love). It was also asked if the respondents were a tourist in the city of Porto.

To measure brand experience, 6 items extracted from Brakus et al. [12], adapted to the study context, were used. Brand loyalty was measured using six items adapted to the study context by Morrison and Crane [29]. Brand satisfaction was measured using five items from scales developed by Garbarino and Johnson [17], Martensen and Grønholdt [27], Devaraj et al. [15], and Jamal and Goode Mark [23]. To assess brand love, we used six items from the reduced scale by Bagozzi et al. [8]. A 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) was used on all scales.

The data was collected through a face-to-face survey carried out during the month of April 2023 in the reference areas of Porto (São Bento, Aliados, Trindade, Boavista, and Bolhão); the anonymity of the participants was guaranteed, obtaining 212 valid responses.

### 30.3.2 Data Analysis

The sample profile and the descriptions of the scale items were determined using descriptive statistics. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was employed to calculate internal consistency reliability. When is at least 0.70, an instrument is regarded as having adequate reliability. We used principal component analysis with varimax rotation to evaluate the 24 scales' statements. In order to verify the factorability and sufficiency of the analysis, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test of sample adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were applied. In order to explain how sociodemographic factors affect the four categories, we additionally employ a linear multiple regression analysis. We make use of SPSS (version 29) for the analysis.

## 30.4 Results

### 30.4.1 Sample Description and Constructs

The details of the sample are shown in Table 30.1. From the sample of respondents, the majority were female (60.4%), with higher education (75.5%), single (78.3%), Portuguese nationality (97.2%), and with an average age of 30.6. It was also found that 39.6% of respondents were doing tourism in the city of Porto.

**Table 30.1** Sociodemographic characteristics

Variable	Description	%
Gender	1-Female	60.4%
	2-Male	39.6%
Age	Age	30.6*
Nationality	1-Portuguese	97.2%
	2-Other	2.8%
Educational qualifications	1-Elementary studies	1.9%
	2-Secondary studies	22.6%
	3-Degree or master's/PhD degree	75.5%
Marital status	1-Married/non-marital partnership	19.3%
	2-Divorced	2.4%
	3-Single	78.3%
Tourist in the city of Porto?	1-Yes	39.6%
	0-No	60.4%

\* *Note* the value corresponds to the average age of the sample

In relation to the analysis of the psychometric properties of the constructs, it is possible to observe that all measures used in this research had adequate internal consistency (see Table 30.2). On a 5-point scale from low to high, these mean scores suggest that it was relatively high and slightly above the neutral midpoint of 3.00.

Table 30.3 specifically described the items, mean, and standard deviation of the brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand loyalty, and brand love constructs. As it is possible to observe, in brand experience construct, the item “Transport is important in the destination-brand experience” stands out with the highest mean value of 4.69. This construct is also the one with the highest average and it is important as well to emphasize the items “Attractions are important in the destination-brand experience”, “Customer service is important in the destination-brand experience”, and “My stay/visit to the city of Porto is or was positive” featuring mean values of 4.58, 4.57, and 4.56, respectively. Looking at the brand satisfaction construct, the affirmation “I will recommend (friends, family, ...) To visit Porto” is highlighted by the sample with an average of 4.70. Furthermore, in terms of the brand loyalty also with a mean value of 4.70 the item “I will revisit the city in the future” is highly emphasized by the sample. Finally, in the construct brand love, the items “The destination brand makes

**Table 30.2** Descriptive statistics for study variables

Variables	Mean (SD)	Cronbach's alpha
Brand experience	4.52 (0.15)	0.793
Brand satisfaction	4.23 (0.32)	0.862
Brand loyalty	4.32 (0.31)	0.743
Brand love	4.03 (0.46)	0.943

me feel good” and “I feel a deep affection for the destination brand” are the most cited with mean values of 4.16 and 4.15, respectively.

The exploratory factor analyses were performed for each scale, through a principal component analysis and a varimax rotation. All constructs have shown eigenvalues over Kaiser’s criterion of 1 and explain above 48%. A loading of 0.40 was applied as the cut-off for inclusion. All items were included in the constructs.

The sociodemographic factors that have an impact on the four constructs are shown in Table 30.4. Being a female relative to a male, being older (the higher the impact), and being a tourist relative to not being a tourist are all factors that positively affect brand experience. Non-tourists (those who live in Portugal or Porto) have a positive influence on tourists in terms of brand satisfaction and brand loyalty. Age and gender also demonstrated significance. The degree of qualifications and marital status were also significant factors in brand loyalty. According to this model, gender had no bearing on brand love, but age (which increases with adulthood), degree of education (which increases with qualifications), and marital status (being married or widowed) all had positive effects.

## 30.5 Discussion and Conclusion

Following the suggestion of Christino [14], Loureiro et al. [26], Rahman et al. [32], and Verma [35] we have explored the impact of sociodemographic characteristics on the constructs of brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand love, and brand loyalty. To begin with, based on the results we see that city of Porto provides positive experiences with high levels of satisfaction; therefore the intentions to recommend the city and repeat the visit received the highest scores. But the positive experience has the highest average, that is reflected in the brand loyalty that is the second highly evaluated item; meanwhile satisfaction received less average value than the brand loyalty. These findings are in line with the literature highlighting the importance of brand experience for brand loyalty [3, 6, 11, 16, 22, 24]. However, from our study we cannot conclude that loyalty is seen as an outcome of brand love [20], as interestingly, the average for brand love is lower than the other constructs.

On the other hand, we confirm that sociodemographic characteristics play the role on the evaluation of brand experience, satisfaction, love, and loyalty corresponding to Verma [35] and contradicting indicated by Mishra and Prasad [28], Kumar et al. [25]. Curiously, being a female has an impact on brand experience, satisfaction, and loyalty, but not brand love. Older age has shown impact on all constructs, reflecting a more effective relationship with the destination image. Higher degree of qualifications and being married brought more brand love and loyalty. Non-tourist respondents revealed a more emotional connection with a city’s brand, as long as tourist evidenced positive experience.

From a marketing perspective, the core fans of the city’s brand are older, married, and higher educated segments of residents, as they reveal more affective relationship

**Table 30.3** Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and factorial analysis of Porto brand

Item	Mean	Std. dev	Loading* (factorial analysis)
<i>Brand experience</i>			
My stay/visit to the city of Porto is or was positive	4.56	0.68	0.706
Attractions are important in the destination-brand experience	4.58	0.65	0.796
Accommodation is important in the destination-brand experience	4.47	0.69	0.714
Transport is important in the destination-brand experience	4.69	0.58	0.692
Customer service is important in the destination-brand experience	4.57	0.64	0.672
I am satisfied with the various elements (attractions, accommodation, transport, and customer service) in the destination-brand experience	4.23	0.73	0.625
<i>Brand satisfaction</i>			
Overall, I'm satisfied with the destination brand	4.37	0.70	0.829
When I compare the brand with other destination brands, I'm very satisfied with the Porto brand	4.25	0.74	0.845
The quality of the destination brand is always excellent	4.06	0.78	0.858
The brand's value for money exceeds my expectations	3.74	0.89	0.652
My decision to choose this destination brand is the right one	4.25	0.80	0.783
I will recommend (friends, family, ...) to visit Porto	4.70	0.60	0.666
<i>Brand loyalty</i>			
I will revisit the city in the future	4.70	0.60	0.827
I feel emotionally attached to the destination brand	4.45	0.89	0.847
Satisfaction influences my loyalty to the destination brand	4.45	0.74	0.911
If my satisfaction decreases on future visits, so does my loyalty to the destination brand	3.86	1.12	0.924
I feel confident in the destination brand	4.33	0.76	0.941

(continued)

**Table 30.3** (continued)

Item	Mean	Std. dev	Loading* (factorial analysis)	
I feel committed to the destination brand	4.08	0.91	0.880	
<i>Brand love</i>				
I feel a deep affection for the destination brand	4.15	1.04	0.827	
I miss the destination brand if I don't visit for a long time	3.85	1.08	0.847	
The destination brand is a marvelous brand	4.11	0.92	0.911	
The destination brand makes me feel good	4.16	0.90	0.924	
The destination brand makes me very happy	4.05	0.94	0.941	
I love the destination brand	3.85	1.14	0.880	
<i>The identification of the latent constructs: factorial analysis</i>				
	Loading*			
<i>Statements</i>	Brand experience	Brand satisfaction	Brand loyalty	Brand love
Eigenvalues/rotation sums squared loadings	2.962	3.619	2.932	4.748
Variance (%)	49.36	60.32	48.86	79.13
KMO test	0.779	0.853	0.761	0.906
Bartlett test (sig)	316.836 (0.000)	522.077 (0.000)	341.261 (0.000)	1093.225 (0.000)

*Note* \* Extraction method: principal component analysis. Rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalization; \*\* The results of KMO and Bartlett tests confirm the factorability and the adequacy of the analysis

Brand Experience, Brand Satisfaction, Brand Loyalty, and Brand Love

indicating the need on improving satisfaction, love, and loyalty dimension for tourist participants.

Therefore, we provide a contribution to the marketing theory on an ongoing debate of the journey to brand love and loyalty and the role of sociodemographic characteristics on it demonstrating that they do play the role. From the managerial perspective, these findings confirm the necessity for destination managers to adapt communication and provided offer depending on different segments visitors accounting for sociodemographic characteristics.

Further research should explore that the impact of the impact of experience and satisfaction is significant on brand love and subsequent brand loyalty, accounting for sociodemographic characteristics.

**Table 30.4** Econometric model—sociodemographic variables as predictors of brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand loyalty, and brand love

Variables	Brand experience	Brand satisfaction	Brand loyalty	Brand love
Gender	0.300*	0.180**	-0.023*	0.351
Age	0.020**	0.109**	-0.210**	0.006**
Educational qualifications	0.198	0.136	0.260**	0.069*
Marital status	0.021	0.215	0.205**	0.177**
Tourist	0.225*	-0.149**	-0.167*	-0.291**
Constant	0.566***	0.185***	0.279***	0.299***
R <sup>2</sup>	0.343	0.411	0.390	
ANOVA test	12.304***	14.760***	13.682***	

Notes The beta value is for the step at which the variables were entered. Significant at: \*  $p < 0.10$  level; \*\*  $p < 0.05$  level; \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

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