Exploring the role of personal values in shaping residents' engagement in tourism recovery: A value-attitude-behavior perspective

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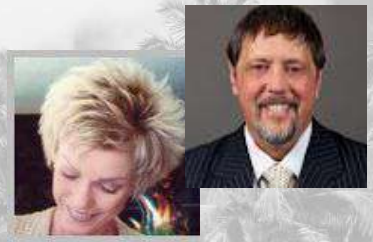
GSTC Academic Symposium 2025

Background

- While Tourism Fiji (2024) reports that 2023 visitor arrivals exceeded 2019 levels, the Pacific Asia Travel Association (2024) warns that Fiji's tourism economy remains vulnerable.
  - It ranks 83rd in Euromonitor International's Sustainable Travel Index and 19th in the Global Climate Risk Index by Germanwatch
    - This highlights a concerning irony: a lack of sustainable planning may damage the very natural attractions—coral reefs, beaches, mangroves—that draw tourists to Fiji.
- Tourism recovery post-disruption should consider residents and their perspectives
  - Who knows industry better than indigenous populations who are dependent upon resources?
- Personal values at core of individuals' perceptions and what drives individuals to act (Woosnam et al., 2024)
  - Can be volatile, especially in times of trials, struggles, and anxiety (Daniel et al., 2022)
- Need to figure out how values can contribute to residents' perspectives of industry, their support for tourism recovery, and ultimately, degree of involvement in such recovery

Purpose of research



- Values-attitudes-behavior (VAB) theory may hold the answers
  - Homer and Kahle (1988) purported that personal values, which are individual conceptions of desirable outcomes, guide behavior
    - Useful for understanding predictors of environmentally conscious behavior and their interrelationships in collectivistic societies (Govaerts & Olsen, 2023)
  - Focusing on tourism-dependent cities throughout Fiji, our primary aim of this research was to gauge residents' involvement in tourism recovery throughout the country and determine how personal values, perceptions of tourism impacts, and support for tourism recovery may contribute to said behavior

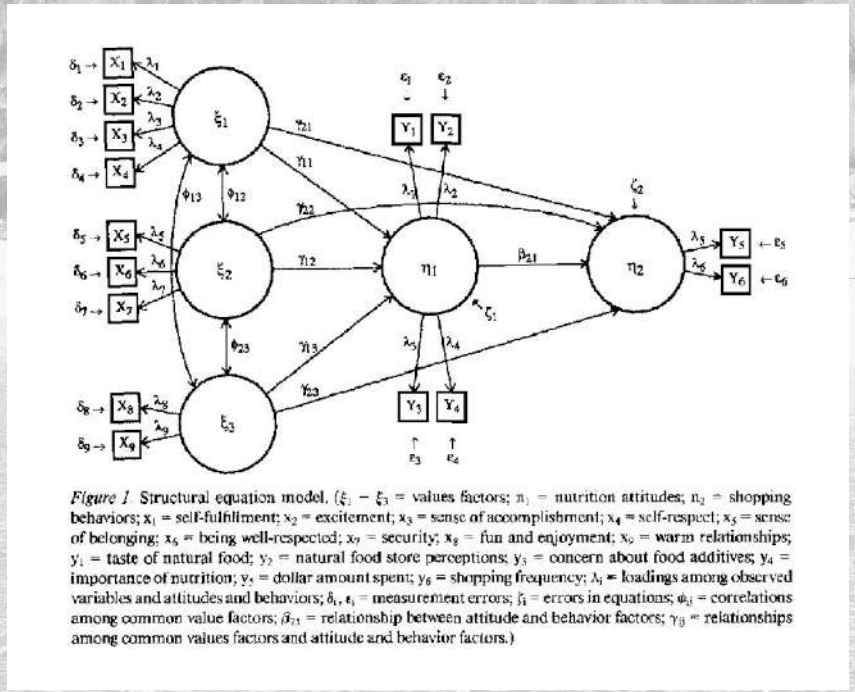
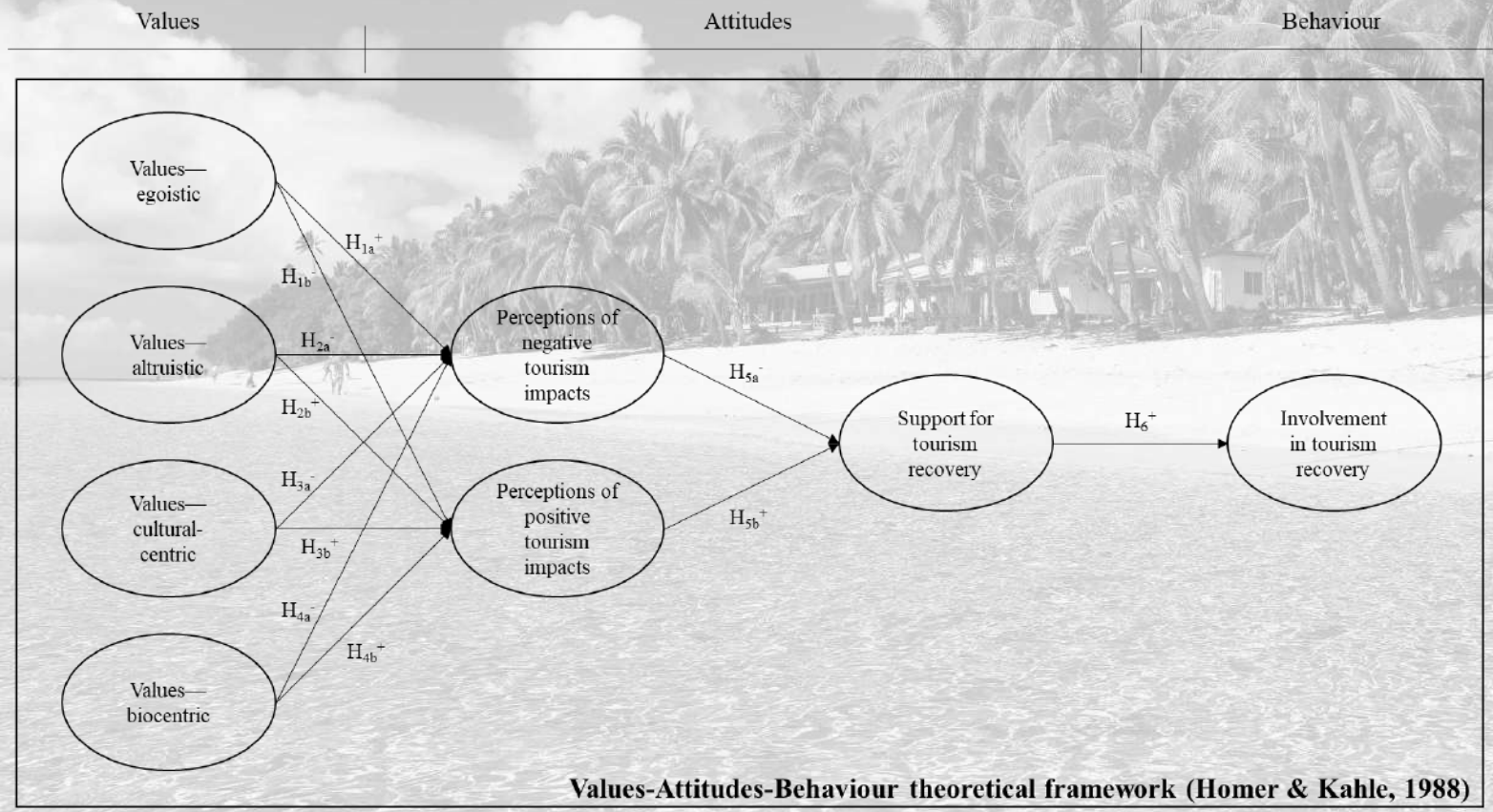


Figure 1 Structural equation model. ($\xi_1 - \xi_3$ = values factors; η_1 = nutrition attitudes; η_2 = shopping behaviors; x_1 = self-fulfillment; x_2 = excitement; x_3 = sense of accomplishment; x_4 = self-respect; x_5 = sense of belonging; x_6 = being well-respected; x_7 = security; x_8 = fun and enjoyment; x_9 = warm relationships; y_1 = taste of natural food; y_2 = natural food store perceptions; y_3 = concern about food additives; y_4 = importance of nutrition; y_5 = dollar amount spent; y_6 = shopping frequency; λ_i = loadings among observed variables and attitudes and behaviors; δ_i, ε_i = measurement errors; ζ_i = errors in equations; ϕ_{ij} = correlations among common value factors; β_{21} = relationship between attitude and behavior factors; γ_{ij} = relationships among common values factors and attitude and behavior factors.)

Conceptual model



Values-Attitudes-Behaviour theoretical framework (Homer & Kahle, 1988)

Methods

- Study population: residents of Fiji
- Mall intercept method for responses in natural settings (Almeida & Santos, 2021) in six demographically diverse locations in Fiji
  - Labasa, Lautoka, Nadi, Savusavu, Sigatoka, and Suva
- Pilot test of instrument to 25 representative residents
- 419 total responses collected between October and November 2023 from physical questionnaires
  - The final sample size was 407

Methods

- **Personal values** encompassed a 12-item scale across four categories—egoistic, altruistic, cultural-centric, and biospheric (Megeirhi et al., 2020; Landon et al., 2018)
  - 1-7 (1 = not at all important; 7 = very important)
- **Perceptions of tourism impact** were evaluated using an 11-item scale that captured both negative and positive attitudes (Munanura, Parada, et al., 2023)
  - 1-7 (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)
- **Recovery support for tourism** in the post-pandemic context was quantified using a 7-item scale (Wong and Lai, 2021)
  - 1-7 (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)
- **Local involvement in tourism** measured by a 6-item scale to ascertain levels of active participation and promotion (Aleshinloye et al., 2021; Erul et al., 2023; Jia et al., 2023)
  - 1-7 (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)
- Data were analyzed using covariance-based structural equation modelling in PLS-SEM.

Findings—respondent profile

Characteristics	N	%
Gender		
Female	199	48.9
Male	208	51.1
Age		
18 - 24 years	87	21.4
25 - 34 years	92	22.6
35 - 44 years	76	18.7
45 - 54 years	62	15.2
55 - 64 years	47	11.6
65 and above	43	10.6
Education level		
Secondary school	88	21.6
Diploma/Certificate	82	20.1
Bachelor's degree	79	19.4
Postgraduate education	36	8.8
Others	122	30.0
Income level		
I do not earn an income	22	5.4
Under $15,000	86	21.1
$15,000-29,999	82	20.1
$30,000-44,999	78	19.2
$45,000-59,999	70	17.2
$60,000-74,999	47	11.5
$75,000-89,999	20	4.9
$90,000 or more	2	0.5

Findings—normality assessment

Construct	Skewness	Kurtosis
VEG	-0.32	0.27
VAT	0.15	-0.45
VCC	-1.05	0.89
VBC	0.67	-0.30
NTI	-0.21	0.12
PTI	0.08	-0.19
STR	-0.50	0.60
ITR	0.34	-0.24

Note: VEG = values—egoistic; VAT = values—altruistic; VCC = values—cultural-centric; VBC = values—biocentric; NTI = perceptions of negative tourism impacts; PTI = perceptions of positive tourism impacts; STR = support for tourism recovery; ITR = involvement in tourism recovery

Findings—factor loadings for CFA/SEM

Construct-item	CFA	SEM
VEG-1	0.62	0.62
VEG-2	0.67	0.67
VEG-3	0.71	0.71
VAT-1	0.76	0.76
VAT-2	0.64	0.63
VAT-3	0.78	0.78
VCC-1	0.83	0.83
VCC-2	0.65	0.65
VCC-3	0.69	0.69
VBC-1	0.74	0.74
VBC-2	0.79	0.77
VBC-3	0.68	0.69
NTI-1	0.81	0.81
NTI-2	0.84	0.83
NTI-3	0.62	0.62
NTI-4	0.76	0.76
NTI-5	0.71	0.72
NTI-6	0.67	0.68
PTI-1	0.72	0.71
PTI-2	0.65	0.64
PTI-3	0.88	0.87
PTI-4	0.71	0.71
PTI-5	0.63	0.63
STR-1	0.66	0.66
STR-2	0.61	0.62
STR-3	0.75	0.75
STR-4	0.82	0.82
STR-5	0.60	0.61
ITR-1	0.77	0.77
ITR-2	0.73	0.73
ITR-3	0.79	0.79
ITR-4	0.66	0.65
ITR-5	0.64	0.64
ITR-6	0.68	0.68

Findings—reliability and validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	VEG	VAT	VCC	VBC	NTI	PTI	STR	ITR
VEG	0.71	0.45	0.35	0.31	**0.67**							
VAT	0.77	0.53	0.41	0.33	0.47	**0.73**						
VCC	0.77	0.53	0.38	0.35	0.12	0.44	**0.73**					
VBC	0.78	0.55	0.39	0.42	0.51	0.57	0.51	**0.74**				
NTI	0.88	0.55	0.49	0.3	0.44	0.54	0.28	0.24	**0.74**			
PTI	0.84	0.52	0.43	0.32	0.18	0.41	0.43	0.44	0.19	**0.72**		
STR	0.82	0.48	0.37	0.37	0.11	0.38	0.35	0.31	0.24	0.49	**0.69**	
ITR	0.86	0.51	0.31	0.22	0.19	0.23	0.49	0.38	0.51	0.26	0.31	**0.71**

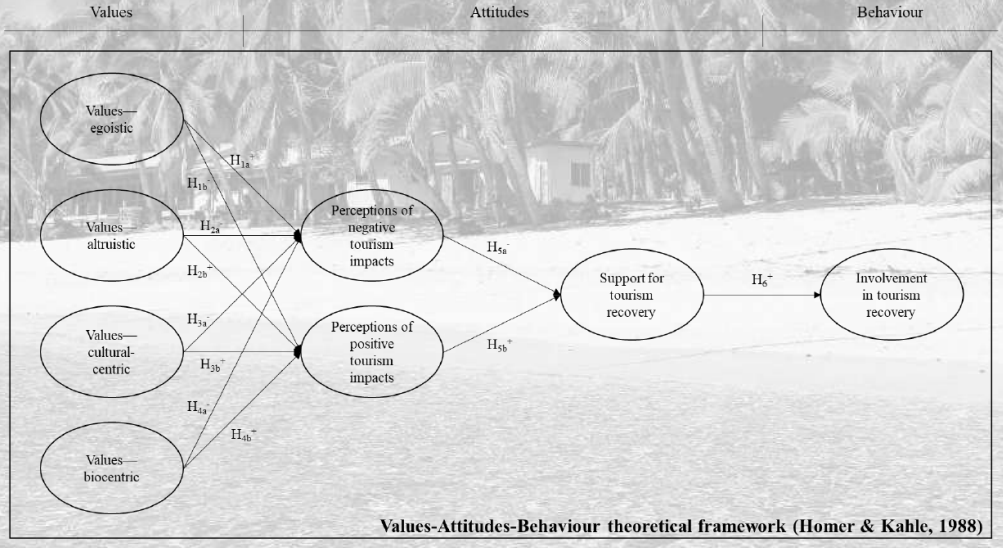
Findings—hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Path	β	Significance	Support?
H_{1a}	VEG→NTI	0.31	$p < 0.05$	Yes
H_{1b}	VEG→PTI	-0.27	$p < 0.05$	Yes
H_{2a}	VAT→NTI	0.01	$p < 0.001$	No
H_{2b}	VAT→PTI	0.42	$p < 0.001$	Yes
H_{3a}	VCC→NTI	-0.24	$p < 0.05$	Yes
H_{3b}	VCC→PTI	0.40	$p < 0.01$	Yes
H_{4a}	VBC→NTI	-0.39	$p < 0.05$	Yes
H_{4b}	VBC→PTI	0.44	$p < 0.001$	Yes
H_{5a}	NTI→STR	-0.46	$p < 0.01$	Yes
H_{5b}	PTI→STR	0.45	$p < 0.001$	Yes
H_{6}	STR→ITR	0.41	$p < 0.001$	Yes

Note: R^2 = Negative tourism impacts = 48%; R^2 = Positive tourism impacts = 53%; R^2 = Support for tourism recovery = 32%; R^2 = Involvement in tourism recovery = 27%

Conclusion/discussion

- Support for H_{1a} aligns with previous studies, except the negative association of egoistic values with positive tourism impacts (H_{1b}) imply ***those with egoistic values may view tourism as an outgroup, thereby focusing on its negative personal impacts***
- Lack of support for H_{2a} might be due to the context of Fiji, where residents, ***despite altruistic intentions, may still recognize the unavoidable negative impacts of tourism*** on their community and environment
- Support for H_{3a} and H_{3b} indicate that residents high with these values tend to ***approach tourism as celebration of cultural legacy, customs and traditions,*** an opportunity for cultural revitalization and enrichment
- Support for H_{4a} and H_{4b} implies that residents with biocentric values are ***sensitive to tourism's environmental impacts but appreciate the positive aspects***
- Support for H_{5a} and H_{5b} implies that ***support for tourism recovery in Fiji is significantly influenced by their cost-benefit analysis of tourism impacts***



Values-Attitudes-Behaviour theoretical framework (Homer & Kahle, 1988)

Theoretical implications

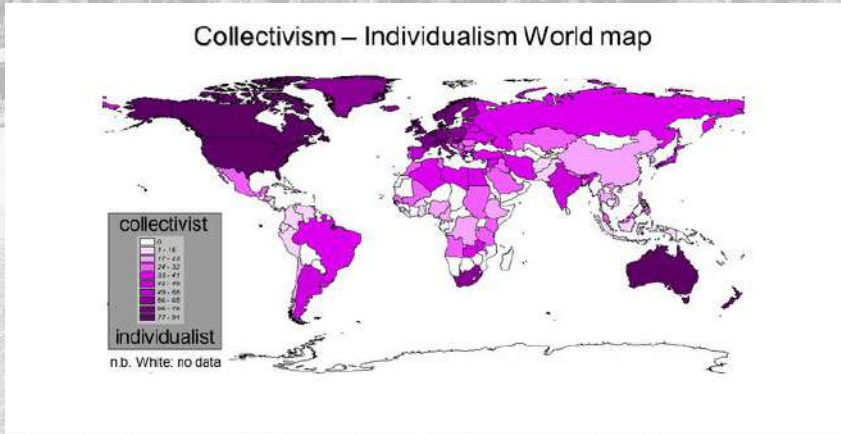
- One of the few studies of its kind expanding our knowledge of the mechanisms determining resident behavioral involvement in tourism recovery efforts
- VAB framework is suitable to explain residents' responses to tourism, thereby **offering theoretical alternatives beyond SET** that has dominated the field
- The four personal values have distinct effects on the perceived impacts of tourism, offering **new insights into residents' attitudes toward tourism**
- Findings provide understanding of how the *egoistic, altruistic, cultural-centric, and biocentric values* help to **explain attitudinal support** and **behavioral support for tourism recovery**

Practical implications

- The **prioritization of environmental conservation** should be key for policymakers, considering the influence of biocentric values on perceptions of negative tourism impacts
- Tourism promoters' and marketers' strategies should **emphasize the personal benefits of tourism**, such as economic improvements and job opportunities.
- the industry should be focused on **creating opportunities for residents to participate in tourism activities and decision-making**
- Advocating for **inclusive policies** and encourage **community involvement**, these strategies resonate with global efforts towards sustainable and responsible tourism development (SDGs 10, 11, 13, and 15)

Limitations/future research

- The **focus on Fiji** limits the generalizability of the findings to other contexts with different cultural, economic, and environmental settings (replication needed)
- Survey-based approach relies on **self-reported data**, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability
- **Cross-sectional data** prevents observing changes over time, which is crucial in understanding the dynamic nature of residents' perceptions and the tourism industry
- **Future studies may consider involving multiple countries** to determine how and to what degree culture-level value priorities may impact perspectives of tourism.



Thanks! Questions?

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