

From Mindfulness to Sustainability: Exploring the Mediating Role of Sense of Human Place in Slow Tourism

Yi-Ju Lee

National Dong Hwa University, Department of Tourism, Recreation and Leisure Studies

Abstract

In the post-pandemic era, it is essential to reshape tourists' attitudes and behaviors toward overtourism. Slow tourism has emerged as the most ideal travel model, allowing tourists to seek safety, sustainability, slowness, and more responsible experiences. Furthermore, mobility restrictions during the pandemic have heightened consumer self-awareness. Tourists with a higher level of mindfulness tend to prioritize well-being, self-discernment, and the ability to critically assess the authenticity of tourism marketing strategies. This study examines the relationships among tourists' mindfulness, sense of human place, and pro-environmental behavioral intention in Hualien, Taiwan. A total of 400 valid questionnaires were collected from tourists, who traveled from outside Hualien County and used bicycles or walking as their primary modes of transportation. The results indicate a positive relationship among tourists' mindfulness, sense of human place, and pro-environmental behavioral intention. Structural equation modeling further verified that a sense of human place mediates the effect of mindfulness on pro-environmental behavioral intention in slow tourism. This study offers valuable insights and practical implications for the development of slow tourism, contributing to a deeper understanding of how mindfulness and place attachment influence sustainable tourist behavior.

Keywords: embodied experience, cognitive experience, bonding, atmosphere, rural tourism