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ABSTRACT

Given the framework of emotional solidarity has never been considered in the context of festivals concerning the relationship between community residents and visitors, the purpose of this paper is twofold: 1) to confirm the factor structure of the emotional solidarity scale—ESS (while examining psychometric properties of the scale) and 2) to examine whether length of residency significantly predicts the degree of emotional solidarity (as measured by the resulting three factors of the ESS) residents experience with visitors to a festival.

Keywords: *Caldwell, Texas, kolache, confirmatory factor analysis*

INTRODUCTION

Festivals not only serve to improve local community image (Getz 1991) providing opportunities for residents to gather and celebrate, but also serve as unique travel attractions for visitors to an area (Gursoy, Kim, and Uysal 2004). This is especially true for those visitors in search of experiencing culture-heritage unique to a particular region that is highlighted through special events and festivals.

All too often the focus of festivals and special events within the tourism literature is centered on impact from an economic perspective (Gursoy et al. 2004). Social-cultural impacts residents perceive as a result of a festival is discussed only peripherally (Rollins and Delamere 2007; Small 2007). Even less is mentioned examining the relationship between residents and festival visitors. A framework that can shed light on such a relationship is the theory of emotional solidarity put forth by Durkheim (1995[1915]) and utilized most recently by (Woosnam and Norman 2010; Woosnam 2011).

The framework of emotional solidarity has never been utilized in the context of festivals, however has been shown to explain the relationship between hosts/guests through utilizing predictor variables such as degree of interaction, shared beliefs, and shared behavior (Woosnam 2011). The relationship can potentially be explained from a host of other variables such as cultural background, religious background, and length of residency—to name a few indicators. The purpose of this paper is twofold: 1) to confirm the factor structure of the emotional solidarity scale—ESS (while examining psychometric properties of the scale) and 2) to examine whether length of residency significantly predicts the degree of emotional solidarity (as measured by the resulting three factors of the ESS) residents experience with visitors to a festival.

METHODS

Caldwell, Texas, located approximately 80 miles from Austin and 100 miles from Houston, has been home to a large Czech community, which for the last 26 years, has hosted the Kolache Festival highlighting local and cultural heritage. The town is home to 3,719 residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2011), and according to the Burleson County Chamber of Commerce (BCCC), hosts approximately 20,000 visitors at the festival each year. As of late, BCCC officials have indicated that visitors are becoming a disruption to community residents (personal communication, April 15, 2010), calling into question the relationship that exists between residents and festival visitors.

During five weekends (starting with the weekend following the festival) in September and October 2010, an onsite self-administered survey instrument was distributed door-to-door throughout the town to residents using a multi-stage cluster sampling scheme (Babbie 2011). According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2009 American Community Survey, there are 1,503 occupied housing units (or households) in Caldwell, Texas (U.S. Census Bureau 2011). Overall, 986 households were visited. At approximately 51.6% of those homes (n = 509), there was no answer. To alleviate non-response bias for no-answer households, researchers went to the next immediate household to distribute the survey instrument. At the remaining 477 homes, the head of household (or spouse) was contacted and asked to participate, of whom 61 declined (an 87.2% acceptance rate). Of the 416 survey instruments that were distributed, 348 were completed by residents (an 83.7% completion rate). The overall response rate (i.e., 348 completed survey instruments from the 477 individuals that were contacted) was 73.0%.

The instrument that was used included sections on residents' perceptions of the festival, quality of life, sense of community, length of residency, socio-economic and –demographic information and the 10-item Emotional Solidarity Scale (ESS) developed by Woosnam and Norman (2010), with each item asked on a 7-pt. scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). To address the first purpose of this paper, a confirmatory factor analysis of the ESS was conducted. Length of residency was measured by number of years lived in the community. To determine if number of years lived in the community would significantly predict the dimension(s) of emotional solidarity, simple linear regression analyses were used.

FINDINGS

Previous research has found the ESS to be multi-dimensional with a three-factor structure: *welcoming nature* (four items), *emotional closeness* (two items), and *sympathetic understanding* (four items) (Woosnam & Norman 2010). Following Kline (2011), each factor and its corresponding items were added to the model (using LM tests) to formulate an "ideal model." However, 12 error parameters (i.e., two cross-loading items and 10 error covariances) resulted. At that point, each error parameter was removed (through Wald tests) in such a way that the integrity of the model was not compromised and $\Delta\chi^2$/degree of freedom was less than the 3.84 critical value as indicated by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). Ultimately all 12 error parameters were removed yielding a final ESS measurement model composed of all 10 items, loading on the appropriate three factors as indicated by Woosnam and Norman (2010): Satorra-Bentler scaled $\chi^2(32, N = 348) = 52.55$, $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.04. Such absolute and increment fit indices indicate close approximate fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999). Additionally, standardized factor loadings all exceeded 0.70, which, according to Fornell and Larcker (1981), is ideal. The resulting factor structure of the ESS is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Confirmatory Factor Analysis of ESS Items

Factor and Corresponding Item	Factor Mean[a]	Standardized Factor Loading (*t* value[b])	Reliabilities: Maximal Weighted	Reliabilities: Composite
Welcoming Nature	6.48		.93	.93
I am proud to have festival visitors come to Caldwell		.898 (10.47)		
I feel the community benefits from having festival visitors in Caldwell		.897 (8.99)		
I appreciate visitors for the contribution they make to the local economy		.849 (9.73)		
I treat festival visitors fairly		.792 (8.03)		
Emotional Closeness	4.71		.99	.93
I feel close to some visitors I have met at the festival		.949 (17.42)		
I have made friends with some visitors I have met at the festival		.912 (17.03)		
Sympathetic Understanding	5.65		.92	.91
I have a lot in common with festival visitors		.888 (16.67)		
I identify with festival visitors		.873 (14.43)		
I understand festival visitors		.835 (13.58)		
I feel affection toward festival visitors		.783 (12.75)		

[a] Items were rated on a 7-point scale, where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*.
[b] All *t* tests were significant at $p < 0.001$.

Various forms of reliabilities and validities were assessed to examine psychometric properties of ESS.As shown in Table 1, all maximal weighted alpha and composite reliabilities exceeded the critical value of 0.60 as suggested by Tseng, Dornyei, and Schmitt (2006). Construct validity was examined through convergent and discriminant validity per Churchill's (1979) recommendation. All *t* values associated with each loading on corresponding factors were significant ($p < 0.001$) as they exceeded the critical value of 3.29, established by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). Such findings indicate convergent validity for the scale and its resulting factors. Discriminant validity was also demonstrated as the variance extracted estimate for each factor was at least 0.50 and was greater than any of the factor intercorrelations as Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest.

To address the second purpose of the paper, mean composite scores for each of the three factors of emotional solidarity were calculated by summing item scores within each factor and dividing by the number of items within each factor (see Table 1).Three separate linear regression analyses were then conducted to determine if number of years residents lived in the community could predict each factor of emotional solidarity. Length of residency significantly predicted *sympathetic understanding* ($F = 4.60$, $p < 0.05$; $R^2 = 0.013$) and *emotional closeness* ($F = 7.47$, $p < 0.05$; $R^2 = 0.021$) but not *welcoming nature* ($F = 3.25$, $p = 0.07$; $R^2 = 0.19$).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Results from this work further support those findings made by Woosnam and Norman (2010) and Woosnam (2011), in that the factor structure of ESS is confirmed; yielding a three-factor solution with sound psychometric measures of reliability and validity. Additionally, this study further demonstrates the utilization of ESS in a new context—one concerning the relationship between residents and festival visitors. Arguably to date, the festival and events literature is robust

with studies concerning impacts of festivals on communities. Hopefully this study will be a springboard for research critically examining relationships between festival participants and community residents. This study also expands Durkheim's (1995[1915]) model highlighting how emotional solidarity can be explained through residents' length of residency. From this work, we can deduce that the longer someone lives in a particular community, the higher degree of emotional solidarity they experience with festival visitors increases, at least through the factors of *sympathetic understanding* and *emotional closeness*. Interestingly, degree of *welcoming nature* (with a marginally acceptable *p* value of 0.07) is not impacted by length of residence.

Results of this work have implications for festival planners and managers. DMOs should consider utilizing special events/festivals as a way to attract potential visitors to the area. Festivals provide one of the best opportunities for residents and tourists to interact with each other (Derrett 2003), potentially fostering a sense of emotional solidarity (Woosnam 2011). Limitations exist for this work as well. If every Caldwell resident attended the festival, then 18.6% of the total number of visitors could have been residents. This could be perceived as a limitation to the study given such individuals were not necessarily area visitors. Additionally, we did not determine if residents' participation in the festival had any impact on their degree of emotional solidarity with festival visitors. Such a relationship should be examined in future work. Furthermore, we did not collect data on whether residents perceived visitors to be from a similar cultural background. Cultural similarity may potentially explain degree of emotional solidarity.

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