

Place Attachment in a Post-Earthquake Scenario: Some Preliminary Findings: An Abstract



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Abstract Previous research has focused on place attachment in regular structural contexts and conditions. However, little attention has been paid to exploring place attachment and post-disaster scenarios. In particular, whether place attachment is maintained in the aftermath of an environmental jolt which destroys or damages the built and natural environment that individuals might have developed an attachment to is an understudied area. The city of Christchurch in New Zealand suffered two major earthquakes in September 2010 and February 2011 causing significant damage to large parts of the city's retail, commercial and residential precincts as well as to residents' dwellings. This post-earthquake scenario provides a suitable environment to study the research question whether citizen-consumers show signs of place attachment whilst or despite the fact that they have been dealing with a natural disaster. Analysis of a random sample of post-earthquake video interviews from the years 2011 and 2012 with citizen-consumers was undertaken. Preliminary results indicate that despite the fact that the impact of the earthquakes is at the forefront of citizen-consumers' narrative, interwoven with this, an attachment to place is visible in respondents' stories. Relating to six place attachment dimensions put forward in literature, citizen-consumers' stories resonate with all six of them. The findings have implications for city councils, city managers and business owners in regard to maintaining attraction to the city as well as attracting new residents.

References Available Upon Request

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