

Article

Study on the Relationship between Urban Youth's Perceived Value, Place Attachment, and Community Participation Behavior — Taking Chaoyang Youth Community in Beijing as an Example

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Abstract: This study explores the relationships between urban youth's perceived value, place attachment, and community participation behavior, using Beijing's Chaoyang Youth Community as a case study. Perceived value encompasses both benefit perception and cost perception, which respectively represent the positive and negative evaluations of community attributes. Place attachment consists of place dependence and place identity, reflecting functional and emotional connections to the community. Structural equation modeling reveals that benefit perception positively influences community participation and place attachment, while cost perception has negative effects. Place attachment mediates the relationship between perceived value and community participation, with place identity playing a core role. The findings highlight the importance of enhancing community environmental quality and reducing living costs to boost youth participation and foster a sense of belonging. The study offers theoretical insights and practical recommendations for community management and service innovation, aiming to promote sustainable community development.

Keywords: urban youth; perceived value; place attachment; community participation behavior; Chaoyang Youth Community

1. Introduction

With the acceleration of urbanization and the transformation of young people's lifestyles, urban youth have gradually become important participants in community development. Urban youth refer to individuals aged 18-45 who live in urban environments and possess high educational levels and innovative capabilities. Their perception and emotional connection to urban communities directly influence their enthusiasm and initiative in participating in community affairs. Chaoyang Youth Community in Beijing, as a typical modern urban community, has attracted a large number of young people, making it an ideal case for studying the interaction between urban youth and communities [1].

Existing literature mainly focuses on the group characteristics, lifestyles, and influencing factors of community development among urban youth, but research on the relationship between urban youth's perceived value, place attachment, and community participation behavior in communities remains insufficient [2]. Perceived value is an individual's subjective evaluation of the benefits and costs of their environment [3]. Place attachment is the emotional bond between an individual and a specific place, while community participation behavior refers to an individual's proactive involvement in community af-

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fairs [4,5]. Exploring the relationship among these three concepts helps deepen the understanding of urban youth's community behavior logic and provides theoretical support and practical guidance for community management and service innovation [6].

2. Literature Review and Research Hypotheses

2.1. *Perceived Value and Community Participation Behavior*

Perceived value is the trade-off between the benefits and costs of a product or service perceived by consumers [7]. In the community context, perceived value includes benefit perception (such as community environment and social resources) and cost perception (such as living pressure and commuting costs) [8]. Existing studies show that positive benefit perception can significantly promote an individual's willingness to participate in the community, while high-cost perception inhibits participation behavior [9]. For urban youth, their benefit perception of the community (such as cultural activity richness and public facility convenience) and cost perception (such as housing costs and work pressure) will directly affect their community participation behavior. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₁: Urban youth's perceived community benefits have a positive impact on community participation behavior.

H₂: Urban youth's perceived community costs have a negative impact on community participation behavior.

2.2. *Perceived Value and Place Attachment*

Place attachment includes place dependence (functional dependence) and place identity (spiritual dependence) [10]. As an individual's subjective evaluation of a place, perceived value directly influences the formation of emotional connections. Positive benefit perception enhances place identity and place dependence, while negative cost perception weakens these emotional bonds. Studies have shown that the more positive an individual's benefit perception of a place, the higher their level of place attachment; the stronger their cost perception, the lower their place attachment [11]. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H_{3a}: Urban youth's benefit perception has a positive impact on place identity.

H_{3b}: Urban youth's benefit perception has a positive impact on place dependence.

H_{4a}: Urban youth's cost perception has a negative impact on place identity.

H_{4b}: Urban youth's cost perception has a negative impact on place dependence.

2.3. *Place Attachment and Community Participation Behavior*

Place dependence is the foundation of place identity; an individual's functional satisfaction with a place gradually transforms into spiritual identity. The higher the level of place attachment, the more willing an individual is to invest resources in community affairs. Studies have shown that both place identity and place dependence can significantly promote community participation behavior [12]. For urban youth, deeper emotional attachment to the community makes them more likely to actively engage in community activities and contribute. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₅: Place dependence has a positive impact on place identity.

H₆: Urban youth's place identity has a positive impact on community participation behavior.

H₇: Urban youth's place dependence has a positive impact on community participation behavior.

2.4. *The Mediating Role of Place Attachment*

Perceived value indirectly influences community participation behavior through place attachment, which acts as a mediating variable. Benefit perception promotes community participation by enhancing place dependence and place identity; cost perception

inhibits participation by weakening place attachment. Additionally, place dependence may influence place identity, forming a chain mediating effect. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H_{8a}: Place identity mediates the relationship between benefit perception and community participation behavior.

H_{8b}: Place dependence mediates the relationship between benefit perception and community participation behavior.

H_{8c}: Benefit perception influences community participation behavior through place dependence and place identity.

H_{9a}: Place identity mediates the relationship between cost perception and community participation behavior.

H_{9b}: Place dependence mediates the relationship between cost perception and community participation behavior.

H_{9c}: Cost perception influences community participation behavior through place dependence and place identity.

3. Research Design

3.1. Case Study Selection

Chaoyang Youth Community in Beijing is located in the core area of Chaoyang District, a comprehensive community designed for urban youth that integrates living, working, and socializing. The community is equipped with shared office spaces, youth apartments, cultural activity centers, and other facilities, attracting young people from various industries. Its modern operation model and active youth community provide a typical scenario for studying urban youth's community behavior.

3.2. Data Collection

A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed in this survey, and 382 valid questionnaires were recovered, with a validity rate of 95.5%. The sample characteristics are as follows: the gender ratio is 48% male and 52% female; 52% are aged 18-30; 78% have a university degree or above; and 42% have a monthly income of 5001-8000 yuan.

3.3. Scale Design

The questionnaire uses a Likert 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree), including the following dimensions:

Benefit Perception (4 items): e.g., "Rich community cultural activities promote personal growth."

Cost Perception (3 items): e.g., "High living costs in the community create financial pressure."

Place Identity (3 items): e.g., "I have a strong sense of belonging to this community."

Place Dependence (3 items): e.g., "Perfect community facilities meet daily needs."

Community Participation Behavior (6 items): including "Participating in community volunteer activities" and "Sharing community resource information".

The scale is adapted from existing research and adjusted according to community characteristics, with good content validity.

4. Empirical Result Analysis

4.1. Measurement Model Analysis

Reliability Test: The Cronbach's α coefficient for each dimension is greater than 0.7 (Benefit Perception: 0.83, Cost Perception: 0.79, Place Identity: 0.81, Place Dependence: 0.82, Community Participation Behavior: 0.85), indicating good internal consistency of the scale.

Validity Test: The KMO value is 0.86, and the Bartlett test is significant ($p < 0.001$). Factor analysis extracts 5 common factors, explaining 72.5% of the cumulative variance, indicating good structural validity.

Common Method Bias: Harman's single-factor test shows that the first factor explains 32.7% of the variance (<40%), indicating no significant bias.

4.2. Structural Equation Modeling Analysis

The model fit indices are good ($\chi^2/df = 1.52$, RMSEA = 0.038, GFI = 0.93, CFI = 0.98). Path analysis results show:

Benefit perception significantly and positively influences community participation behavior ($\beta = 0.21$, $p < 0.001$) and place attachment ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.01$; $\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.001$).

Cost perception significantly and negatively influences community participation behavior ($\beta = -0.20$, $p < 0.01$) and place attachment ($\beta = -0.24$, $p < 0.001$; $\beta = -0.33$, $p < 0.001$).

Place dependence positively influences place identity ($\beta = 0.23$, $p < 0.001$), and both significantly promote community participation behavior ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.001$; $\beta = 0.22$, $p < 0.001$).

Hypotheses H₁-H₇ are all supported (see Table 1).

Table 1. Hypothesis Test Results.

Hypothesized Path	Path Coefficient	t-Value	Conclusion
H ₁ : Benefit Perception → Community Participation	0.21***	3.82	Supported
H ₂ : Cost Perception → Community Participation	-0.20**	-3.15	Supported
H _{3a} : Benefit Perception → Place Identity	0.18**	2.74	Supported
H _{3b} : Benefit Perception → Place Dependence	0.25***	4.12	Supported
H _{4a} : Cost Perception → Place Identity	-0.24***	-3.91	Supported
H _{4b} : Cost Perception → Place Dependence	-0.33***	-5.02	Supported
H ₅ : Place Dependence → Place Identity	0.23***	4.01	Supported
H ₆ : Place Identity → Community Participation	0.29***	4.58	Supported
H ₇ : Place Dependence → Community Participation	0.22***	3.99	Supported

Note: *** and ** respectively indicate that p is significant at the 0.001 and 0.01 levels.

4.3. Mediation Effect Test

Bootstrap test results show:

The mediating effect of place identity between benefit perception and community participation is significant (95% CI: 0.042-0.125), and the mediating effect of place dependence is significant (95% CI: 0.055-0.148).

The mediating effect of place identity between cost perception and community participation is significant (95% CI: -0.112 — 0.038), and the mediating effect of place dependence is significant (95% CI: -0.135 — 0.051).

The chain mediating paths "Benefit Perception → Place Dependence → Place Identity → Community Participation" and "Cost Perception → Place Dependence → Place Identity → Community Participation" are both valid ($p < 0.05$).

Hypotheses H_{8a}-H_{9c} are all supported (see Table 2).

Table 2. Mediation Effect Test.

Path	Mediating Variable	Effect Size	95% CI
Benefit Perception → Community Participation	Place Identity	0.052	(0.042, 0.125)
	Place Dependence	0.063	(0.055, 0.148)
	Chain Mediation	0.031	(0.018, 0.065)
Cost Perception → Community Participation	Place Identity	-0.074	(-0.112, -0.038)

Place Dependence	-0.092	(-0.135, -0.051)
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5. Conclusions and Prospects

5.1. Research Conclusions

Perceived Value Drives Community Participation: Benefit perception significantly promotes community participation among urban youth, while cost perception inhibits it. Improving community environmental quality and reducing living costs are key to stimulating youth participation.

Positive Role of Place Attachment: Both place identity and place dependence directly promote community participation, and place dependence serves as the foundation for place identity, forming a virtuous cycle of "dependence-identity-participation".

Significant Mediation Effect: Place attachment fully or partially mediates the relationship between perceived value and community participation, with spiritual identity (place identity) as the core bridge.

5.2. Research Prospects

This study uses Chaoyang Youth Community in Beijing as a sample. Future research can expand to different urban types to enhance the generalizability of conclusions. Additionally, longitudinal studies can be introduced to track the dynamic changes in youth perception and behavior, providing more precise recommendations for sustainable community development.

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