

Being Away, Fascination, and Perceived Restorativeness of Places

Seiji Shibata

Sagami Women's University, Kanagawa, Japan

Introduction

Attention restoration theory (ART: Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989) asserts that restorativeness of an environment consists of four key components: Being Away, Fascination, Extent, and Compatibility. Shibata (2009) reported that Being Away was critically important, whereas Fascination was not necessarily important for an environment to be perceived as restorative. This study also focused on the importance of Being Away and Fascination on perceived restorativeness.

Method

Free response of university students to the question, “what environment do you think would be the most/least restorative,” as well as the respondents’ evaluations regarding each of the environments that they considered to be restorative were assessed using the Perceived Restorativeness Scale (PRS) and the identical method in Shibata (2009). Questionnaires ($n = 204$) were collected and combined with the dataset used in Shibata’s (2009) study.

Results

The combined dataset consisted of a total of 810 responses (410 about a restorative place and 400 about an unrestorative place). To examine the relationship of Being Away and Fascination to perceived restorativeness, a multiple logistic regression analysis was conducted with restorative (1) or unrestorative (0) as the target variable and Being Away and Fascination scores, as well as the interaction between them as explanation variables. Results of the logistic regression analysis showed that all explanation variables were statistically significant ($p < .05$).

According to the odds ratios, Being Away (8.23, 95% CI 5.55-12.22) had a much stronger impact on perceived restorativeness compared to Fascination (0.82, 95% CI 0.69-0.98). Moreover, the odds ratio of 0.82 indicated that Fascination had a mild negative impact on perceived restorativeness of places.

Free responses regarding an (un) restorative place were grouped into twelve categories by

content and mean subscale scores of Being Away and Fascination were then calculated for each category. Table 1 shows the mean scores of Being Away and Fascination and the expected restorativeness from the logistic regression formula for each place. As can be seen in Table 1, every restorative place (expected restorativeness > 0.5) had a high mean score for Being Away, whereas some places had a low mean score for Fascination.

*Table 1: Being Away, Fascination, and Expected Restorativeness of Restorative Places**

Place Category	Being Away (range: 0-10)	Fascination (range: 0-10)	Expected Restorativeness
bath	8.27	** 2.43	0.999
nature	8.71	5.95	0.996
park	7.60	5.46	0.979
café	7.29	4.89	0.967
outdoor	7.11	5.30	0.936
home	6.52	** 3.89	0.891

**Unrestorative places were omitted from the table*

***Below the overall mean of fascination (4.52).*

Discussion

Results indicated that Being Away is far more important than Fascination for perceived restorativeness of places. Furthermore, it is suggested that Fascination has a negative effect on perceived restorativeness. The findings of this study, especially the second finding differs from those of previous studies that have indicated that Fascination is the main component of a restorative environment.

References

- Kaplan, R., & Kaplan, S. (1989). *The experience of nature: A psychological perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Shibata, S. (2009, September). *Difference between restorative and non-restorative environments*. Paper presented at 8th Biennial Conference on Environmental Psychology, Zurich, Switzerland.