

Image, Attachment, Perceived Value and Tourist Behavior in Heritage Tourism: A Study of Wuyishan, China

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Abstract

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Purpose of the study: China is the second holder of world natural as well as cultural heritage sites. Wuyishan is a natural and cultural World Heritage Site among them. While many factors influencing tourist behavior have been explored in the context of destination marketing in the past, few of them focused on domestic travel programs.

Methodology: This study administered the survey to 457 valid local visitors who visited Wuyishan on the spot. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed to examine the relationships among destination image (DI), destination attachment (DA), perceived value (PV), destination satisfaction (DS), and destination loyalty (DL).

Main findings: Empirical findings highlighted two critical roles of heritage tourism, PV and DS. The former acts as a complete mediator in the relationship between DI and DS, whereas the latter does the same in the relationship between PV and DL.

Implications: Managers of tourism and hospitality should offer and shape those unique self-characteristics and attributes first to create an impressive PV that will strongly link the DI of these tourists to their DS. By contrast, DA is not a determinant factor in heritage tourism.

Originality/Novelty: This study is exploring tourist behavior in the context of destination marketing with special reference to Wuyishan City in China. This study has immense value in understanding and promoting heritage tourism.

INTRODUCTION

“Heritage refers to our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations.” (UNESCO¹, 2020)

Tourism includes not only tangible products but also intangible services (Carvalho & Costa, 2011). Because all tourism involves the consumption of experience, products, and resources, cultural/heritage tourism is included (Mckercher & du Cros, 2002). Heritage tourism is a rapidly growing niche market that aims to experience local customs, traditions, art, history, sites, and culture that truly represent a specific place (Speno, 2010). Of course, tourists mostly prefer rare and specialized local cultural resources (Oppermann, 1993). In addition, the transformation of these cultural resources into the cultural space is good for the protection and utilization of these unique resources as well as the sustainability of the destination (Guo et al., 2019). Most importantly, cultural/heritage tourism has become a determinant part of tourism not only for its great values in offering cultural, historic, and nostalgia interests (du Cros, 2001; Ballantyne et al., 2014) with its site-specific value in nature and are derived from the unique characteristics of the site (Brooks, 2011), but also for its importance in reviving local economy and employment rates (Poria et al., 2003; Weng et al., 2019).

World Heritage Sites (WHS) are not just the world’s most significant natural and cultural heritage sites but also the most popular tourist attractions (UNWTO, 2009). By mid-September 2020, 1125 sites were listed in WHS, including 873 cultural sites, 213 natural sites, and 39 mixed properties². Now, China is the second-largest owner of world natural and cultural heritage with 14 natural sites, 37 cultural sites, and 4 mixed properties, accounting for 5.12% of the total. China has more than five thousand year history making it one of the world’s oldest civilizations (Jebbouri et al., 2021). In 2019, China’s domestic tourism sector has risen rapidly, and the outbound tourism market has remained stable. Thailand, Japan, and South Korea have become the biggest beneficiaries of China’s outbound tourism, while the top 5 inbound arrivals to China in 2018 were from South Korea, Japan, the United States, Russia, and Mongolia (Zhao & Liu, 2020).

Cultural heritage is an asset and the attractions of the territories as having interesting assets for tourism development (Prezioso et al., 2020, p.5). Moreover, China’s domestic travel/tourism during the last decades is significant with an average of 10% annually³. Chinese people have high destination preferences for WHS (Nyiri, 2006) due to cultural traditions, whereas Wu et al. (2002) concluded that the development of tourism in WHS ultimately become an inevitable and reasonable choice in China. Fujian Province currently has 4 sites on the UNESCO list (i.e., Wuyishan, Fujian Tulou,

¹UNESCO World heritage list – Croatia. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/hr>, Accessed 30 Jan. 2020.

²UNESCO World heritage list. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>, Accessed 18 Sep. 2020.

³http://ccilc.pt/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/eusme_centre_report_-_tourism_market_in_china_update_-_sept_2015.pdf

Kulangsu, and Danxia)⁴. Wuyishan is known for its oolong tea culture and neo-Confucianism⁵. Wuyishan is also the most important biodiversity conservation zone, having year-round constant, moderate, and humid temperatures that are attractive for tourists in all seasons (Xue et al., 2019).

Previous research has explored tourist behaviors in terms of their attitude/preference towards WHS. In the last three years, the most influential constructs/variables of tourist behaviors are motivation (e.g., Luo & Ren, 2020; Su et al., 2020), authenticity (e.g., Yi et al., 2018; Park et al., 2019; Gao et al., 2020), involvement/engagement (e.g., Gao et al., 2020; Su et al., 2020), destination image (DI) (e.g., Saeedi & Hanzae, 2018; Su et al., 2020), destination attachment (DA) (e.g., Sing'ambi & Lwoga, 2018; Hoang et al., 2020), destination satisfaction (DS) (e.g., Lopez-Guzman et al., 2018; Sharma & Nayak, 2020), perceived value (PV)/tourism experiences (e.g., Seyfi et al., 2019; Sharma & Nayak, 2020; Zhang et al., 2020; Damanik & Yusuf, 2021), destination loyalty (DL) (e.g., Chami, 2018; Sharma & Nayak, 2020), experiential quality (e.g., Naqvi et al., 2018; Domínguez-Quintero et al., 2020), behavioral intentions (e.g., Naqvi et al., 2018; Sharma & Nayak, 2020; Damanik & Yusuf, 2021) and sustainability/environmental concerns (e.g., Asmelash & Kumar, 2019; Zhang et al., 2020). However, past research has rarely combined these factors in a measurement model and has also heavily preferred focusing on inbound tourists over domestic visitors.

This study intends to investigate the link among DI, PV, DA, DS, and DL with local tourist behavior in the context of cultural heritage tourism, given the country's rich heritage and rapid growth in domestic tourism (i.e., Wuyishan). Specifically, this study incorporates these elements into the "Stimulus-Organism-Response" (SOR) model. For example, motivation/DI refers to "S", "DS/DA/PV refers to "O", and DL/behavioral intention refers to "R". Tourism management of cultural heritage can facilitate the transformation of tourist resources (Álvarez-García et al., 2019). As a result, this study concludes with discussions, suggestions, and empirical findings that can serve as a useful guide to heritage management authority.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Destination image (DI)

Image is the result of a customer's perception of an object (del Bosque et al., 2006). DI is the mental image that tourists have of the locations (Uslu & Inanir, 2020) and is also a factor in making the place more appealing to visitors (Le et al., 2020). The keywords mostly seen in the definition of DI are 'impression', 'perception', 'belief', and 'idea' (Lai & Li, 2016). DI has been found to play an important role in tourists' decision-making processes and subsequent travel behavior (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Roberto & Raffaele, 2017). The dimensionality of DI has been studied by several authors. According to Baloglu and McCleary (1999), the components of DI are determined by two types of evaluations: perceptual/cognitive and affective. Echtner and Ritchie (1991, 1993, 2003) suggested that DI has three dimensions: attributes/holistic, functional/psychological, and common/unique. Hernández-Lobato et al. (2006) further identified four dimensions of DI: natural resources, service quality, entertainment, and effective image. Buhalis (2000) expanded DI to six dimensions, which included attractions, accessibility, amenities, activities, ancillary services, and available packages.

Perceived value (PV)

PV has been regarded as an effective predictor of tourist behavior in many tourism studies (e.g., Ranjbarian and Pool, 2015; Ali Abbasi et al., 2019). PV is defined as a comparison of the overall utility that consumer experiences from the goods/or services sacrificed in exchange (Zeithaml, 1988) or a consumer's appraisal of the cost-benefits trade-off represented by a consuming experience (Oliver, 1999). Three major elements of PV outlined by Holbrook (1996) are extrinsic versus intrinsic, self-oriented versus other-oriented, and active versus reactive. According to Sheth et al. (1991), PV has five dimensions: functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional. Sweeney and Soutar (2001) further suggested that PV comprises three parts: functional, social, and emotional. Overall, according to existing literature, the aspects of PV in tourism can be examined in terms of functional value and emotional value (e.g., Sabote-Ortiz et al., 2016; Prebensen & Xie, 2017; Su et al., 2021).

Destination Satisfaction (DS)

Understanding a tourist's total experience is critical for a destination to succeed in a highly competitive tourism industry (Kim & Ritchie, 2014), as well as for understanding the factors that influence tourist satisfaction (Erkmen, 2019). Satisfaction can be defined as the evaluation of a consumer after consuming a product or service (Chen et al., 2016), while it is closely related to the choice or decision-making toward a destination (Al-Kwafi, 2015). In the context of tourism, DS is the tourist's emotional state following a vacation (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Bigne et al., 2001). DS can also be used to evaluate the quality of the destination's products and services (e.g., Bramwell, 1998; Schofield, 2000). DS is a multi-faceted construct (Tsiros et al., 2004). Lee and Chen (2005) categorized DS into four dimensions: facility/service, convenience/dining environment, climate/space, and landscape/environment. Kozak (2003) measured DS using multiple destination attributes and the intention to return and to recommend to others.

Destination attachment (DA)

⁴Fujian home to 4 world heritage sites, ranking 5th in China. http://english.scio.gov.cn/pressroom/2021-07/05/content_77607300.htm (accessed on 15 September 2021)

⁵Mount Wuyi-UNESCO World Heritage Centre. Available online: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/911> (accessed on 28 June 2019).

Essentially, the term “destination” and “place” are interchangeable. The term DA was conceptualized to describe the connections, relationships, and bonds that exist between a place and a person ([Lee & Shen, 2013](#); [Suntikul & Jachna, 2016](#)). DA is, in essence, a multidimensional construct. [Kyle et al. \(2004a\)](#) argued that DA is an attitudinal construct with affective, cognitive, and conative dimensions. According to [Brown and Raymond \(2007\)](#), DA has two dimensions: place identity which represents a functional dimension, and place dependence, which is an emotional or symbolic component ([Kyle et al., 2004a](#), [Kyle et al., 2004b](#); [Yuksel et al., 2010](#)). Recently, place dependence, place identity, place social bonding, and place effects have all been used to describe DA (e.g., [Halpenny, 2010](#); [Li et al., 2020](#); [Ramkissoon et al., 2013](#)).

Destination loyalty (DL)

The term “loyalty” is commonly used as DL in tourism research ([Nasir et al., 2020](#)). [Hsu et al. \(2008\)](#) defined DL as a tourist’s positive feelings and attitudes that lead them to return to a particular destination. As a result, it has the most immediate and significant impact on a destination’s success. According to [Chen and Gursoy \(2001\)](#), the operational definition of DL is the level of tourists’ perception of a destination as a good place that they would recommend to others. [Backman and Crompton \(1991\)](#) argued that loyalty is a committed behavior defined by a desire to participate in a particular leisure facility. In many studies, revisit intention, and positive word-of-mouth are also noted as indicators of loyalty ([Chi & Qu, 2008](#)). According to [Bobalca \(2013\)](#), loyalty can be measured from three different perspectives: a uni-dimensional perspective (based solely on re-patronage behavior); a bi-dimensional perspective (based on attitudes and behavior), and a multi-dimensional perspective (composed of behavior, attitudinal and composite/cognitive, affective and conative).

Hypotheses development

DI and DS

Individuals’ connections regarding a destination are referred to as DI ([Avraham, 2004](#)). [Endah et al. \(2017\)](#) stated that DS is a traveler’s overall evaluation of a tourist destination. DI was found to have an impact on DS, for example, [Chiu et al. \(2016\)](#) defined DI as having an indirect impact on behavioral intentions through DS. [Khuong and Phuong \(2017\)](#) claimed that both DI and PV would significantly impact WOM through DS. Prior research has suggested that a favorable DI leads to higher DS in the tourism industry (e.g., [Chiu et al., 2016](#); [Su et al., 2017](#); [Kanwel et al., 2019](#); [Santoso, 2019](#)). Therefore, this study proposes:

H1: DI has a positive impact on DS

DI and PV

The subjective sense of local environmental resources and supporting site facilities shape a tourist’s perception of DI ([Gallarza et al., 2002](#)). PV plays an important role in consumers’ purchasing decisions and the establishment of behavioral intentions ([Zeithaml, 1988](#)). According to [Zhang and Niyomsilp \(2020\)](#), PV played a partial mediating role in the influence of tourist DI and his/her behavioral intention. The majority of studies have found a positive relationship between DI and PV, as well as DI also affects PV (e.g., [Jin et al., 2013](#); [Ilban et al., 2015](#); [Lin, 2018](#)). Therefore, this study proposes:

H2: DI has a positive impact on PV

PV and DS

PV is measured by the differences between the overall value of a customer’s benefits and the total sacrifices (in terms of expenditures, time, and effort) of taking the trip ([Khuong & Phuong, 2017, p. 217](#)). As indicated earlier, PV and quality are important to DS ([Campo-Martínez & Garau-Vadell, 2010](#)). In general, a tourist with a higher PV will be more satisfied with trip tourism since the money invested is not wasted; tourists receive an exciting experience in exchange for their money ([Lestari et al., 2019](#)). Among extant studies, PV is an important antecedent of DS and has a direct positive relationship with it in the tourism industry ([Bajs, 2015](#); [Khuong & Phuong, 2017](#)). [Waheed and Hassan \(2016\)](#), on the other hand, believe that PV only has a partial impact on DS. Therefore, this study proposes:

H3: PV has a positive impact on DS

DI and DA

Many scholars supported that DI is positively related to DA (e.g., [Song et al., 2017](#); [Jiang et al., 2017](#)). [Stylidis et al. \(2020, p.11\)](#) stated that DI comes before DA because the latter is an emotional response to a location, whereas the image conveys peoples’ impressions of that destination. [Bricker and Kerstetter \(2000\)](#) suggested that DA entails emotion attribution and represents an individual’s perceived relationship with and functional dependence on a given destination. [Jiang et al. \(2017\)](#) argued that DI can influence DA through existential authenticity, whereas DA works as a mediator between DI and revisit intention ([Song et al., 2017](#)). [Jin et al. \(2020\)](#) discovered that DI had a direct influence on DA in the setting of ecotourism in China, and [Rohyati and Willson \(2017\)](#) also supported this point of view in a car-free event. Therefore, this study proposes:

H4: DI has a positive impact on DA

DS and DL

DS is an important factor since it may influence tourists’ tendency to return to the same tourist destination ([Miragaia et al., 2016](#)). [Yuliana \(2018\)](#) argued that satisfaction is an important predictor of loyalty because it affects a tourist’s intention to return to a destination as well as to spread positive word of mouth. Some studies have found that DS is positively

associated with DL (e.g., [Cronin et al., 2000](#); [Shirazi & Mat Som, 2013](#); [Kanwel et al., 2019](#)). Though there are still some conflicts on their causality, most studies have supported that DS has a positive influence on DL (e.g., [Kim & Thapa, 2018](#); [Nasir et al., 2020](#); [Ispas et al., 2021](#)). Several tourism-related studies have discovered that DS has an impact on tourists' future behavior intentions ([Jeong et al., 2019](#); [Seetanah et al., 2020](#); [Stumpf et al., 2020](#)). [Mahasuweerachai and Qu \(2011\)](#) further suggested that DL can be formed using DS, DI, and PV. Therefore, this study proposes:

H5: DS has a positive impact on DL

DA and DS

Tourists who have a positive perception of their travel experience have higher levels of DS, whereas those who have a negative perception of their travel experience have lower levels of DS ([Xu & Li, 2016](#)). There are still inconsistencies in the causation between DS and DA. Among the extant literature, the majority suggests that DA has a positive influence on DS (e.g., [Yuksel et al., 2010](#); [Ramkissoon et al., 2013](#)). Recent studies, on the other hand, have proposed that DS has a positive impact on DA (e.g., [Ramkissoon & Mavondo, 2015](#); [Hosany et al., 2017](#); [Jeong et al., 2019](#)). Therefore, this study proposes:

H6: DA has a positive impact on DS

DA and DL

Regarding the relationship between DA and DL, [Ispas et al. \(2021\)](#) demonstrated that both place dependence and place identity have a significant influence on tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. [Nasir et al. \(2020\)](#) discovered that DS and DA fully mediated in the DL relationship model. The results reveal that both destination identity and dependence are significant antecedents of overall satisfaction with, and loyalty to a destination ([Campón-Cerro et al., 2015](#)). According to [Patwardhan et al. \(2019\)](#), place attachment has a direct impact on loyalty. Therefore, this study proposes:

H7: DA has a positive impact on DL

PV and DL

According to Sanchez et al. (2006), the PV of a tourist destination is created during the tourism acquisition process. Positive PV has an impact not just on the tourism experience, but also on the postpurchase behaviors. [Sato et al. \(2018\)](#) categorized sport tourists into four groups: novice, short-active, long-inactive, and expert, and found that PV is a significant antecedent of DL in each segment. [Bajs \(2015\)](#) found that tourists' PV directly affects their DS, and DS has a direct impact on their future behavior intentions toward the destination. Therefore, this study proposes:

H8: PV has a positive impact on DL

METHODOLOGY

Research framework

This study aims to explore the relationships among DI, DA, PV, and tourist behavior. The research framework depicting all hypotheses is shown in Figure 1. This paper adopted the random sampling method and we sent several graduate students on the spot to deliver 500 questionnaires to local travelers who visit Wuyishan during the "golden weeks/the National Day holiday in 2018. The SOR model has been widely used to examine the links among inputs (S), processes (O), and outputs (R) ([Kim et al., 2020](#)). The SOR model is not only famous as a measurement tool for consumer behavior but suitable to elucidate consumer behaviors, considering the environmental effects (e.g., [Chang et al., 2014](#); [Cho et al., 2020](#)). In this study, DI refers to "S", DA, PV, and DS can be seen as "O", while DL is the element "R".

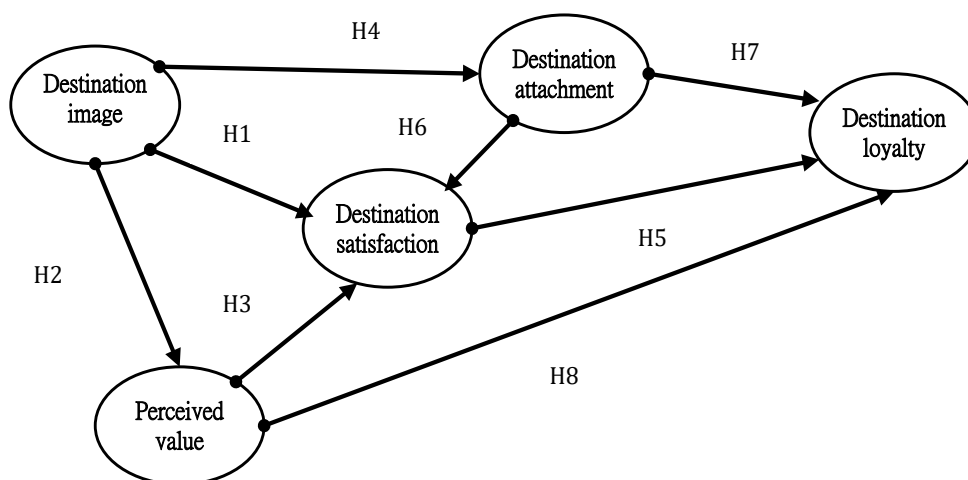


Figure 1: A research framework

Operational definitions and measurement

The definition for DI is defined as the sum of a person's beliefs, ideas, and impressions about a destination (Crompton, 1979). Its measurement is modified from Kim and Kim (2005) and it is a single-dimension construct with 8 items. PV is a single construct with 11 items and its measurement is modified from Sweeney and Soutar (2001) and Wang and Leou (2015). PV is based on Zeithaml (1988) and Oliver (1999) and refers to a comparison of the overall utility that a consumer experiences from the goods/or services sacrificed in exchange or a consumer's appraisal of the cost-benefits trade-off represented by a consuming experience. Based on the concept of Sunkul and Jachna (2016), DA is described as connections, relationships, and bonds that exist between a place and a person. DA is a 3-dimension construct with 11 items and its measurement is adapted from Kyle et al. (2005). Adopting the concept of Chen et al. (2016), satisfaction is the evaluation of a consumer after consuming a product or service. The measurement of DS is modified from Lee et al. (2012) and Oliver (1980) and it is a single construct with 8 items. Finally, the measurement of DL is modified from Yoo and Donthu (2001) and Jang and Feng (2007). According to Chen and Gursoy (2001), the operational definition of DL is the level of tourists' perception of a destination as a good place that they would recommend to others.

Structural analysis

In the formal test stage, we sent questionnaires to 500 visitors, and 457 valid ones were returned. The results showed that (1) gender- the ratio of the male/female is about 62:38; (2) age- about 85% of total visitors had ages ranging from 30 years old to 49 years old; (3) educational background- about 62% of the respondents had high school degree and 24% of the total had university/college degree; (4) travel way- about 80% of the sample visited here with family members. As to the sample-mean analysis, the means of these variables here are PV (4.01), DI (3.80), DA (3.91), DL (3.94), and DS (3.76), respectively. It shows that there still have rooms for these tourists to be more concerned with their satisfaction on this trip. In terms of the dimensions of DA, the mean of PDP (3.94) was relatively greater than the other two dimensions, while the mean of SB (3.84) is the lowest. This would indicate that tourists cannot have strong social bonding with specific settings during this trip.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

After the CFA stage, the indexes of the model fit are GFI=.90, CFI=.94, NNFI=.94, SRMR=.053, RMSEA=.068, Normed Chi-Square=3.1, respectively indicating that the model fit is acceptable.

RESULTS AND ANALYSES

Reliability, validity, and correlation

Though the coefficient for DS (.552), PV (.618), and BL (.649) were questionable, we concluded that in light of the concept of Hair et al. (1992) and Nunnally (1967), posting the range between .5 and .7 is reasonably acceptable. Therefore, the internal consistency of each variable/dimension in this study is acceptable. Next, we further verified the convergent validity of our constructs to ensure construct validity. As to validity analysis, all of the measurement t-values are between 5.97 and 19.38 (all greater than 1.96), which indicates that the convergent validity of this model is acceptable. Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations of variables, and their correlations. The results indicate that all the correlations between factors are significant.

Table 1: Correlation analysis

	Mean	Standard deviation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
DI (1)	3.7932	.54074	1				
DA (2)	3.8858	.52858	.609**	1			
DS(3)	3.7341	.44166	.435**	.517**	1		
PV(4)	3.9923	.46529	.507**	.473**	.413**	1	
DL(5)	3.9154	.59082	.477**	.436**	.509**	.473**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Model analysis

In Figure 2, we show that three of our hypotheses were not significantly supported (i.e., H1, H6 & H8). Among the others, a tourist's perceived image of the specific heritage sites would have a positive influence on his/her perceived PV ($\gamma_{21}=.70$, $P<.001$) as well as DA ($\gamma_{31}=.80$, $P<.001$) on specific heritage sites; tourist's perceived PV would have a positive influence on his/her satisfaction of the specific heritage sites ($\beta_{12}=.61$, $P<.001$); tourist's satisfaction of the specific heritage sites would have a positive influence on his/her loyalty to the specific heritage sites ($\beta_{41}=.56$, $P<.001$); tourist's attachment on the specific heritage sites would have a positive influence on his/her loyalty to the specific heritage sites ($\beta_{43}=.87$, $P<.001$).

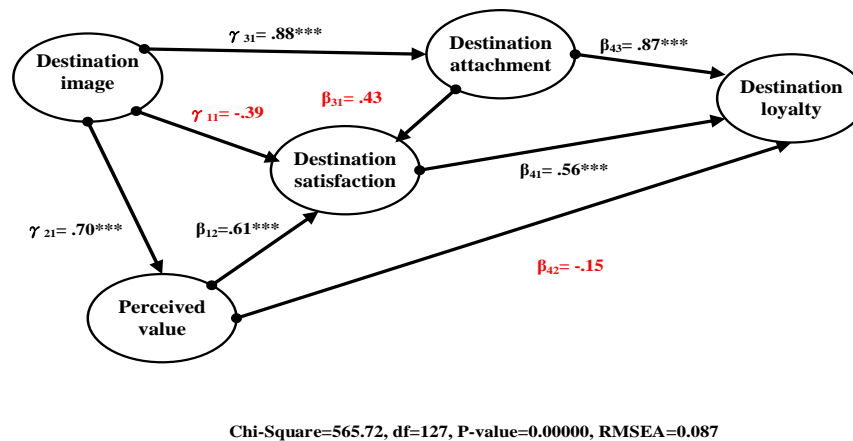


Figure 2: A path analysis

DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Discussions

Here, we focus on three mediating roles (i.e., DA, PV & DS) for this particular heritage site. First, empirical results show that the relationships among DI, PV, and DS are partially supported. This would seem to indicate that the only way for domestic travelers who have a strong perception of the image of Wuyishan to achieve a higher level of DS is to have high values of PV. This is not consistent with the concepts of [Lestari et al. \(2019\)](#) and [Santoso \(2019\)](#) who indicate that tourists who develop a positive DI get better satisfaction from their experience. It reasonably seems that there might exist a missing link between DI and DS. According to [Wu and Li \(2017\)](#), the experiential quality that tourists have in their minds can be identified as a better impression of the cultural heritage site. The more experiential quality they have perceived in this tour, the more satisfied they are. The overall experiential quality of domestic travel in China is heavily influenced by crowded people and the resulting biophysical environment.

Second, the findings indicate that the relationships among DI, DA, and DS are partially supported. It means that neither DI nor DA can significantly influence DS, whereas DI can directly impact DA. The former statements are not consistent with several studies (e.g., [Campón-Cerro et al., 2015](#); [Chiu et al., 2016](#)) stating that domestic travelers' better image and attachment would be related to their satisfaction on this tour, while the latter statement is consistent with [Fan et al. \(2014\)](#) and [Chiang \(2016\)](#) who suggested that domestic travelers who have better perceptions of the image toward Wuyishan would lead to strong attachment to it. The factors leading to such conclusions may come from the new addition of DA (social bonding). Based on the concepts of [Clemes et al. \(2009\)](#) and [Wan and Cheng \(2011\)](#), most Asian tourists are not accustomed to socializing with other tourists during their visits to cultural heritage sites. Therefore, the social factor in heritage tourism seems to be a superfluous, or redundant one.

As to the mediating role of DS, it only plays a complete mediator in the PV-DL relationship, whereas DS and DA both direct impact DL (i.e., H5 and H7 are supported). The results of PV-DS and DS-DL are consistent with most past studies (e.g., [Khuong & Phuong, 2017](#); [Kim & Thapa, 2018](#)), meaning that if those domestic travelers having a strongly positive PV need to revisit Wuyishan in the future, they should be totally satisfied with this tour experiences first. On the other hand, the results of DA-DL and DS-DL are consistent with [Chi and Qu \(2008\)](#), [Campón-Cerro et al. \(2015\)](#), and [Patwardhan et al. \(2020\)](#), meaning that the driving force for those domestic travelers to revisit Wuyishan depends on the strength of attachment and satisfaction on the heritage sites they have.

Management implications

Like all tourism, heritage/cultural tourism involves the consumption of experiences, products, and resources. Here, we highlight two key antecedents of DL in heritage tourism, PV and DS. The former acts as a complete mediator in the relationship between destination image (DI) and DS, while the latter plays the same role in the PV-DL relationship. While important for all service industries in today's era of the experience economy, it is especially true for tourism and hospitality. Offerings first need to shape those unique self-characteristics and attributes to create impressive PV to strongly link these tourists' DI to their DS. The findings here also indicate that DA here is not a determinant factor in heritage tourism.

Suggestions and future works

- Moderated effect—In fact, substantial empirical results have shown that many influences except for those existing in our model can be used to predict tourist behavior, including expectation (e.g., [Ye et al., 2019](#)), familiarity (e.g., [Li et al., 2018](#)), environmental attitude (e.g., [Leonidou et al., 2014](#)), involvement (e.g., [Rodriguez-Molina et al., 2015](#)) and novelty (e.g., [Toyama & Yamada, 2012](#)). Therefore, new moderated effects introduced in this model are needed.
- Comparative analysis—According to [Su and Wall \(2011\)](#), World Heritage tourism in China is a relatively recent phenomenon when compared with many developed countries and is still quite new in China. Based on Wuyishan, China, this study aims to explore the relationships among DI, DA, DS, and DL. Considering the effects of

cross-culture and different destination attributes, future works are expected to make a comparative analysis between two or more famous heritage sites in China (e.g., Guang Xi) or other countries (e.g., Indonesia).

CONCLUSIONS

By contrast, few studies incorporate all factors possibly influencing tourist behavior and also rarely introduce a theoretical framework. Adopting the concept of the SOR model, 457 valid Chinese tourists at Wuyishan, China were collected and we found two key factors impacting heritage tourism (i.e., PV and DS). The former acts as a complete mediator in the relationship between DI and DS, while the latter plays the same role in the PV-DL relationship. This is important to all of these service industries in the era of the experience economy today. Especially for tourism and hospitality, they first need to offer and shape those unique self-characteristics and attributes to create impressive PV to strongly link these tourists' DI to their DS. By contrast, DA here is not a determinant factor in heritage tourism.

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