

## **Exploring the Effects of Heritage Site Image on Souvenir Shopping Attitudes: The Moderating Role of Perceived Cultural Difference**

### **Abstract**

Although tourism image and souvenir shopping play critical roles in travel decisions and tourist behaviors, little is known about the relationship between them. This article seeks to address two deficits in the literature by presenting (1) the linkage between tourism image and souvenir shopping, and (2) the direct and moderating effects of perceived cultural difference. Using the data drawn from the UNESCO heritage sites, the authors first validated a second-order construct of heritage site image, then tested the effects of this construct as well as perceived cultural difference on tourists' attitudes toward souvenir shopping in two structural models. The uncovered direct and moderated results offer important implications for tourism and hospitality theories and practice.

**Keywords:** tourism image, souvenir, shopping, cultural heritage, cultural difference

## **INTRODUCTION**

Destination image has occupied center stage in tourism research because of its importance for destination management and marketing as well as its implications in tourism-related sectors that depend on tourists (Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010). Tourism research has consistently acknowledged the pivotal role of the destination image on tourists' travel choices and behaviors (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993; Qu, Kim, & Im, 2011). Favorable perceived image of a destination and its tourism products (e.g., heritage sites) not only helps lure an influx of tourists to places (such as Bangkok and the Grand Palace, or Beijing and the Forbidden City), they also present business opportunities for local merchants (Heung & Qu, 1998; Li & Cai, 2008; Swanson, 2004) as tourists often enjoy shopping for souvenirs that remind them of their experience at the site or the hosting destination (Yu & Littrell, 2003). Hence, souvenirs not only act as representations of a specific site/destination and its historical significance, they also possess symbolic value (Littrell et al., 1994). Furthermore, souvenirs serve as a means to legitimize and commemorate a trip experience, and to make the experience last through tangible evidence (Swanson, 2004). Since souvenirs have cultural and historical significance, they also serve as a means to transmit the culture and history of a destination and to attract potential tourists, which in turn helps to sustain tourism development (Tosun, Temizkan, Timothy, & Fyall, 2007).

Although tourism image and souvenir shopping play critical roles in travel decisions and tourist behaviors, little is known about the relationship between them. Some studies suggest that tourists prefer to outshop at destinations that have favorable image; for example, Hong Kong, Paris, and Bangkok (Choi, Chan, & Wu, 1999; Wong & Wan, 2013). However, the direct relationship between tourism image at heritage sites and attitudes toward souvenir shopping has

not been explicitly examined empirically. Furthermore, tourism scholars are beginning to understand the cross-cultural differences in destination image (Kozak, Bigné, González, & Andreu, 2003; Sahin & Baloglu, 2011) and tourist shopping (Rosenbaum & Spears, 2005); yet, the impact of cultural difference and its moderating effect on the relationship between tourism image and souvenir shopping has not been systematically explored. These limitations present a clear chasm in the literature.

The objective of this study is to bridge the literature gap by empirically testing the influence of heritage site image on tourists' attitudes toward souvenir shopping at heritage sites. Because shopping attitudes have been reported to have a direct impact on shopping intentions and behaviors (Yu & Littrell, 2003), it follows that souvenir shopping attitudes are a key antecedent of actual souvenir shopping. Hence, understanding tourists' attitudes toward souvenir shopping represents a necessary step in understanding their actual shopping behaviors. This study also investigates the direct and moderating effects of perceived cultural difference on souvenir shopping attitudes, in order to shed light on cross-cultural tourism research. This article concludes with a discussion of theoretical and managerial implications in cross-cultural tourism image and souvenir shopping, as well as suggestions for future research.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **Research Background**

Located in the central region of Vietnam, Hue is the former capital city. It has great historical significance as the city was also the imperial capital of unified Vietnam and home of the Nguyen dynasty between the 1802 and 1945. Under the regime of the Nguyen emperors, the city served as a cultural and religious center. In 1993, the Complex of Hue Monuments was inscribed on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list (UESCO, 2012). The 14 inscribed

tangible heritage assets include the royal citadel, scattered imperial tombs, temples, and the Tran Hai Fortress. The city is primarily subsumed within the royal citadel's four defended enclosures which are designed based on oriental philosophy and Vietnamese tradition as well as to protect the city from the four sides.

The architectural wonders and the religious and cultural significance of the heritage sites in Hue have attracted millions of tourists to the city. Currently, Hue welcomes about twelve thousands of tourists a day during peak seasons. Research shows that the record is on the rise: the city has experienced an 18% to 20% increase in tourist arrivals per year (AsiaRooms, 2012). However, the increase of tourists has imposed tremendous pressure on the maintenance of Hue's heritage sites. Although UNESCO has engaged in heritage preservation, and resortation in Hue started as early as the 1980s, only 20 out of 148 palaces and buidlings are left standing due to damage from human and natural disasters. The city urgently needs capital to finance protection and restoration of its heritiage assets.

Souvenir shopping represents a major stream of income to the local residents and to the local economy of destinations. Hue is no exception. There are numerous souvenir shops located around the heritage sites at Hue (Anonymous, 2013). These shops offer traditional handicrafts, postcards, and more as souvenirs to provide tourists a reminder of their experience at the heritage sites. The heritage sites at Hue are particularly significant for residents and tourists as they reflect the legacy and relics of the royal emperors of the Nguyen dynasty and the glory of the former Vietnamese capital city (Logan, 2005). Hence, the perceived heritage site image plays a key role in attracting tourists and shaping their travel experience.

### **Destination and Heritage Site Image**

Theory pertaining to destination image holds that destinations can embrace certain

positions in the minds of tourists in the targeted markets (Pike, 2010). The process of positioning involves creating the appropriate image based on the tourism products offered by specific places (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). Having the right destination position and, hence, image could have profound impact on the host destinations and tourist decisions and behaviors, particularly in this increasingly competitive global marketplace (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Hunt, 1975; Pearce, 1982). The literature often notes that a destination image is formed by tourists' cognitive and affective assessments (Ekinici & Hosany, 2006; Qu et al., 2011; Tasci, Gartner, & Cavusgil, 2007), which can be driven by sources such as the media, tourist demographics, personal experience, and travel motivations (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999).

Although destination image has been a widely studied research field, its conceptual definition remains diverse and inconsistent (Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Lopes, 2011). While some scholars define an image of a destination as a set of attributes tourists perceive (Gartner, 1989), others take a more holistic and gestalt view (Um & Crompton, 1990) and conceptualize it to include other image aspects from three continuums: functional-psychological, attribute-holistic, common-unique (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993). Although a holistic assessment of a destination's image is ideal, it faces a limitation in assessing the scale property of the attribute-holistic and common-unique dimensions as they are based on results from destination-specific, open-ended questions. As a result, most scholars use the attribute-based definition (e.g., Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Bigne, Sanchez, & Sanchez, 2001; Qu et al., 2011). In this study, we adopt the attribute-based definition of destination image from the literature and apply it to the conceptualization of *heritage site image*. In particular, our definition of heritage site image encompasses tourist perceptions of heritage site attributes. This definition focuses on the cognitive aspect of the site attributes, which are based on tourists' subjective assessment. We argue that these specific

attributes jointly form a coherent and total image of the heritage site offerings, which is consistent with prior research in heritage site image (MacKay & Couldwell, 2004). The image of heritage offerings serves as a powerful means to understand tourists' perceptions of these offerings, while empirical evidence suggests that tourists' perceptions of the heritage sites or other attributes influence their travel experience and behaviors (MacKay & Couldwell, 2004).

### **Souvenir Shopping and Attitude**

Shopping has been consistently reported in the literature as a major travel motive (Heung & Cheng, 2000; Hsieh & Chang, 2006; Som, Mohammad, & Ibrahim, 2010). Research findings show that shopping is a popular travel itinerary because it is a major leisure activity that offers tourists hedonic values (Doong, Wang, & Law, 2012; Rosenbaum, 2006). In fact, the literature has revealed that some tourists, such as the Japanese and Chinese, have developed an affinity for shopping (Choi, Liu, Pang, & Chow, 2008; Rosenbaum & Spears, 2005; Sangpikul, 2008). Even if tourists' primary motive is not for shopping, most of them would end up buying something, such as small gifts and souvenirs for their family and friends (Li & Cai, 2008). Souvenirs are especially important for tourists as they legitimize their visit and help to enhance social relationships. They also serve as a means to commemorate their travel experience (Rosenbaum & Spears, 2005; Swanson, 2004).

Much research, however, focuses on tourists' actual souvenir shopping behaviors, satisfaction, preference of product categories, and authenticity. For example, Rosenbaum and Spears's (2005) study shows that tourists in Hawaii have a strong appetite to consume locally made products such as Hawaiian macadamia nuts and coffee as well as Hawaiian-made clothing and souvenirs. Wong (2013) adds that souvenir products are the most popular product category among tourists in Macau. The work of Lehto et al. (2004) also suggests that arts and handicrafts

are among some of the popular souvenir items that outbound Taiwan tourists prefer. The preference and propensity of souvenir shopping may be attributed to the perceived authenticity of the souvenirs, of which five facets are germane: uniqueness, workmanship, aesthetic and use, cultural and historical integrity, and genuineness (Littrell, Anderson, & Brown, 1993). Littrell and Baizerman (1994) further identify four types of craft souvenir shopping tourists – ethnic-/arts-/people-oriented, history-/park-oriented, urban entertainment, and active outdoor tourists – to refer to different preference and meaning of souvenirs to them. Swanson (2004) provides an elaborative study on souvenir shopping by exploring tourist perceptions of this activity in regard to three major aspects: souvenir products (e.g., local products and collectibles, souvenir markers and toys, aesthetic clothing and jewellery), specific product attributes (e.g., care and travel, aesthetic, and uniqueness), and store attributes (e.g., location and promotion, image and sales associates, and price and selection). Li and Cai (2008) further compare the importance and satisfaction levels of various souvenir attributes to suggest gaps between what is desirable (e.g., fashion, packaging, store atmosphere, and store location) and the actual performance (e.g., uniqueness, workmanship, and in-store service).

Although these studies are important as they build a necessary foundation in understanding tourist souvenir shopping, research on souvenir shopping attitudes is still in its infancy. In fact, though a few scholars have explored such attitudes in their studies, the construct has not been systematically approached with a proper conceptual and operational definition (Kim & Littrell, 2001; Li & Cai, 2008; Liou, 2011). An attitude is a learned predisposition to behave with respect to a certain object (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Schiffman & Lazar, 2006). Accordingly, this study defines souvenir shopping attitude as a learned predisposition to shop for souvenirs. Because shopping experience involves tourist evaluation of both the merchandise and

store services (Tosun et al., 2007; Yu & Littrell, 2005), our definition of souvenir shopping attitudes also includes these two aspects. Based on prior tourism research, we believe that this predisposition is learned from tourist interactions with destination offerings and exposure to other stimuli (Yu & Littrell, 2003), such as experience with heritage sites.

Marketing literature often points to the role of attitude on consumer behaviors; in that attitudes toward an object or brand, for example, have direct connotative or behavioral consequences such as intention to shop, actual shopping, and repurchase behaviors (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The reasoning behind this line of empirical findings is that attitudes have a motivational quality, which propels consumers to act and behave in certain ways (Schiffman & Lazar, 2006). Tourism research, however, focuses more on the specific attributes that form tourist attitudes toward souvenir shopping. In general, shopping attitude has been linked to shopping intentions and behaviors (Yu & Littrell, 2003), while factors such as product value, authenticity, quality and variety, as well as store location and convenience, are some of the belief attributes tourists hold which ultimately form their attitudes toward shopping (Li & Cai, 2008; Liou, 2011; Piron, 2002; Yu & Littrell, 2003). In this study, we argue that these beliefs are drawn from tourists' perceived image of tourist activities and attractions (i.e., visiting heritage sites, in the current research context), which is in line with the tourism shopping model proposed by Yu and Littrell (2003). We further develop the hypotheses in the two sections that follow.

In summary, this section provides an overview of the literature pertaining to souvenir shopping and attitudes toward shopping as well as the behavioral outcomes of shopping attitudes. Although this study does not test the relationship between attitudes and shopping behavior, as this has been well confirmed in the literature, we present the related literature here in order to justify the importance of shopping attitudes and their behavioral consequences. We will integrate

the findings of this study with the extant literature to present both theoretical and practical implications.

### **Hypotheses Development: The Role of Heritage Site Image and Souvenir Shopping Attitudes**

The extant literature has acknowledged that a tourist who holds a positive or favorable image of a destination is more likely to choose and eventually visit the place (Tasci & Gartner, 2007; Um & Crompton, 1990). Many authors stress the importance of understanding tourist image perceptions and how it impacts upon the marketing and management of a place and its products (Choi et al., 1999). A favorable image of a place creates a positive attitude toward the place and its tourism products. Research evidence also confirms that such an image can lead to higher perceived trip quality and satisfaction, which in turn leads to high propensity to revisit a destination and to recommend others (Bigne et al., 2001; Ekinici & Hosany, 2006; Qu et al., 2011). Hence, tourism image is the ultimate driver of tourist attitudes and behavioral outcomes; and the relationship between heritage site image and souvenir shopping attitudes becomes fairly straightforward.

Because an attitude is a learned predisposition, tourists' attitudes toward souvenir shopping (e.g., arts and crafts) are formed as a result of direct experience with the tourism products and of their positive or negative evaluation of these products. Since souvenirs serve as a reminder of their travel experience (Swanson, 2004), a positive image of heritage sites, for example, acts as a stimulus which promotes favorable attitudes toward souvenirs that remind visitors of their experience at the sites. Several authors also allude to the implicit role of destination image on tourist shopping and suggest why certain destinations are popular shopping outlets for tourists (Choi et al., 2008; Qu & Lam, 1997; Wong & Wan, 2013). Although most research does not explicitly test the role of site/attraction image on tourist shopping attitudes and

behaviors, scholars often suggest tourists are more inclined to shop at certain areas within a destination due to the prevailing or favorable image that these sites/attractions hold in the mind of the tourists (Murphy, Moscardo, Benckendorff, & Pearce, 2011; Westwood, 2006). For example, in their souvenir shopping study at the Forbidden City and the Summer Palace heritage sites in Beijing, Li and Cai (2008) argue that “tourist destinations provide people with a unique environment in which shopping activities are stimulated and encouraged” (p. 191). In addition, the marketing literature also stresses on the effect of store and shopping event images as a powerful means to improve consumers’ attitudes toward a store and, in turn, their intention to shop at the store (Berry, 1969; Leischnig, Schwertfeger, & Geigenmüller, 2011). These studies may also help to explain the linkage between travel activities (e.g., cultural events and heritage site visits) and tourist attitudes toward shopping experience, as Yu and Littrell (2003) assert. The work of Yu and Littrell further shows empirical evidence of the role of tourists' cultural heritage perceptions on their beliefs on and attitudes toward craft souvenir shopping.

The theory of reasoned action provides further support to this line of argument, in that consumers’ beliefs and evaluations of the outcomes have direct consequences on their attitude toward an object or a behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). From a broader theoretical perspective, this line of research is based on the expectancy-value theory which posits that people are goal-oriented and their expectations (or attitudes) are based on their beliefs and perceived value of an object (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In line with this theoretical underpinning, because destination image refers to tourists' "beliefs or knowledge about a destination's attributes" (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999, p. 870), it follows that tourists' attitudes toward a destination's tourism product is a direct consequence of their perceptual evaluations of the image of the place. Baloglu and McCleary further suggest an intertwined relationship between destination image, tourism product,

and benefit sought. Their argument is consistent with Sparks (2007) who adopts the expectancy-value theory and confirms a relationship between tourists beliefs (e.g., through past destination experience) and attitudes toward wine tourism. In regard to tourist shopping, shopping attitudes are often formed as a result of tourists' evaluation of a place or tourism product, as discussed above, because souvenirs give tourists tangible evidence that reminds them of their travel experience (Swanson & Horridge, 2004). Thus it is reasonable to expect that tourists' experience of a site would alter their perceptual evaluations of the site image (i.e., change in belief), which should change their shopping attitudes for souvenirs that can remind them of such an experience. In other words, based on the aforementioned theoretical foundations, we expect that tourists' attitude toward souvenirs is a consequence of their site experience, as it leads to different image perceptions (or beliefs) about the site.

The work of Edell and Burke (1987) on brand management also concurs that exposure to certain objects (e.g., advertisements) has a direct influence on tourists' evaluation of that object, which essentially changes consumers' beliefs and attitudes toward a certain brand. The theory of planned behavior further concerns the relationship between affective response and attitude formation. For example, Shen, Schuttemeyer, and Braun (2009) study cultural heritage sites in China and show a significant correlation between heritage tour involvement and attitudes toward heritage. Ramkissoon, Uysal, and Brown (2011) show how destination image can impact tourist intention to patronize cultural attractions. Empirical findings from Swanson and Horridge (2004) also warrant the impact of travel activities (e.g., visiting museums and similar attractions) on tourist souvenir shopping perceptions.

From a cognitive perspective, Laskey and Seaton (1994) contend that imagery provides tourists with visual stimuli which influence their attitudes toward tourism products. MacKay and

Couldwell's (2004) study of photographs suggests that tourists' perceived image of a heritage site has profound impact on their attitudes toward and perceptions of the site, as it "signified a reminder of personal memories, and linked historical and personal significance" (p. 393). The shopping and retail literature also stresses the intricate linkage between store perceptions and attitudes. For example, Yoo, Park, and MacInnis (1998) report that store characteristics have an effect on consumers' store attitudes. More recent studies also show how destination attributes and tourism products influence tourists' shopping evaluations (Wong & Wan, 2013). In summary, the image perceived by tourists influences their attitudes toward a place or a specific activity, as "image itself represents the [tourists'] tendency to choose or reject a given destination [and its products]" (Lopes, 2011, p. 311).

Based on the aforementioned studies, we argue that tourists' souvenir shopping attitudes are formed in respect to their direct exposure and evaluation of heritage sites. A positive evaluation would, therefore, help develop positive attitudes and propel tourists to shop for souvenirs in order to commemorate their travel experience. It follows that a favorable heritage site image should lead to favorable attitudes toward the site and souvenirs. Hence, this image would intrigue tourists to buy the souvenirs through positive attitudes toward souvenir shopping.

**Hypothesis 1:** Tourists' perceived heritage site image is positively related to their souvenir shopping attitudes.

### ***The Moderating Effect of Cultural Difference***

Tourism scholars are beginning to understand the cultural differences in travel perceptions and behaviors. In the realm of destination image, Sahin and Baloglu (2011) compare the destination images of Istanbul between tourists from the US, UK, Europe, and East Asia and find some differences between U.S. and East Asian tourists in regard to perceptions of

friendliness and local transportation, safety, and cleanliness. Using a perceptual map, Kozak et al. (2003) show destination image discrepancies among tourists from the UK, Spain, France, and Germany. In the realm of tourist shopping, much research points to cultural differences in respect to the shopping categories and behaviors based on tourists' origin. Some authors have studied the shopping behaviors of Japanese and Chinese in a cross-cultural setting. For example, Rosenbaum and Spears (2005) report that Japanese have significant higher shopping interest in a wide variety of product categories, from souvenirs to designer handbags, than other tourists in Hawaii. Heung and Qu (1998) compare shopping spending to total trip spending among tourists in Hong Kong and find that Chinese, followed by Japanese, have the highest ratio. In the realm of hospitality services, Kim, Li, and Kyungrok (2010) compare the differences between Americans and Chinese in perceived crowdedness and show that Chinese are generally less tolerant of crowding environments. These authors also investigated the moderating effect of cultural difference and find significant variance in the relationship between tourists' perceived crowdedness and food quality; in that Chinese are likely to attribute crowdedness of a restaurant to extrinsic cues such as price and brand names due to their collectivistic belief, whereas Americans are less likely to do so. Unfortunately, this country-by-country comparison method does not yield a systematic and generalized framework showing the effect of cultural difference.

A recent study from Ng, Lee, and Soutar (2007), however, takes a more systematic approach by exploring the relationship between perceived cultural distance and travel intention. Their findings indicate that cultural distance negatively influences tourists' travel propensity. In line with these findings, the literature often notes the positive effect of cultural similarity on destination choice and preference (Basala & Klenosky, 2001). In summary, these findings commonly focus on tourists' perceived risk associated with political, economic, cultural, and

social factors such as language barriers and personal safety (Helmig et al., 2007; Lepp & Gibson, 2003).

Contrary to this point of view, tourism research acknowledges the role of novelty seeking on tourist behaviors. The body of the literature consistently shows tourists are motivated to seek novel experiences (Bello & Etzel, 1985; Jeong & Park, 1997). Hence, tourists' desire to seek novelty would compel them to travel and shop for goods that are unique or possess better value than those from their origin countries (Hsieh & Chang, 2006; Li & Cai, 2008). Qu et al. (2011) also find that a unique destination image leads to tourists' intention to recommend and revisit the destination. In addition, Li and Cai (2008) reveal that heritage tourists will shop for a souvenir for its cultural expression, appropriateness as a gift, symbolic appeal representing specific attractions, memory from the trip, and uniqueness. Among these attributes, uniqueness ranks the highest in importance. It follows that the greater the cultural difference between the host and origin destinations, the greater the novelty and uniqueness pertain to the host destination and its tourism products (i.e., attractions and heritage sites). This conclusion is further supported by the empirical study of Kim and Littrell (2001) who find that experienced tourists have lower propensity to purchase souvenirs.

In fact, the shopping literature often suggests product uniqueness and authenticity as key attributes for shopping satisfaction (Lin & Lin, 2006) including souvenir shopping (Littrell et al., 1993). The tourism shopping model proposed by Yu and Littrell (2003) further acknowledges the impact of authenticity and uniqueness of craft souvenirs on tourist shopping attitudes. Heritage tourism literature also echoes this point of view; scholars often contend that tourists crave an authentic version of heritage sites (Halewood & Hannam, 2001; McIntosh & Prentice, 1999). Empirical evidence from McKercher (2002) further suggests that tourists from dissimilar

cultures are more likely to seek a deep understanding of the culture in Hong Kong. Accordingly, tourists from a similar culture (e.g., domestic tourists) should be less interested in souvenir shopping because they can buy these products easily from their home town. It follows that tourists from culturally similar origins should have lower attitudes toward souvenir shopping because they perceived these products as less novel than those who come from culturally distant origins. As a result, the effect of heritage site image on souvenir shopping attitudes should be more salient for tourists who come from more culturally different locales. In other words, we expect that better heritage site image should generate more favorable souvenir shopping attitudes; but this relationship is conditional upon tourists' perceived cultural distance from the host culture. Hence, we propose the second hypothesis as follows.

**Hypothesis 2:** The relationship between perceived heritage site image and souvenir shopping attitudes is moderated by perceived cultural difference in that the relationship should be stronger for tourists with high cultural difference from the host destination.

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## **METHODS**

### **Sample**

We collected the sample by means of self-administered face-to-face interviews at the exit of major UNESCO heritage sites at Hue, Vietnam. The sites were selected for two reasons: (1) they were popular travel attractions among domestic and international tourists; and (2) they had many souvenir stores located inside and around the heritage sites. The interviews were conducted by a group of students from Hue University of Science who had prior training in survey administration. The questionnaire was available in both English and Vietnamese, and the Vietnamese version was subjected to a double-translation method by a group of bilinguals. A

pilot test was conducted prior to data collection of the main study to ensure proper wording and understanding of the questionnaire items. A total of 400 questionnaires were administered, and we received 304 completed ones, which corresponds to a 76% response rate.

The sample contains 50.3% female and 59.7% male respondents. More than half (51.6%) of the respondents were between the ages of 21 and 30, while 25.7% were between the ages of 31 and 40; and 63.8% were bachelor's degree holders. Most (61.5%) respondents were single and the rest were married. About half (51.0%) of the respondents were domestic tourists and the rest were international tourists from Europe (24.7%), the US or Canada (10.2%), and other countries.

## **Measures**

*Heritage Site Image.* This study adopts the attribute-based measure of perceived image. In particular, we used a 19-item image scale from Echtner and Ritchie (1993) to assess six dimensions of tourists' image perceptions of heritage sites. All scale items used in this study were evaluated by a 9-point Likert scale anchored by 1 (strongly disagree) and 9 (strongly agree). Because the scale was developed by Echtner and Ritchie, we validated the proposed dimensionality of the scale using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in LISREL. One item was removed due to low factor loading. The results support a six-factor solution: interest/adventure, natural state, comfort/security, tourist facilitation, inexpensiveness, and communication/hospitality (see also Hudson, Wang, & Gil, 2011), as Table 1 shows. Validity and reliability are warranted as all standardized factor loadings are greater than .60 and are significant at the .001 level ( $t \geq 8.71$ ), indicating convergent validity. We demonstrate discriminant validity by comparing the  $\Delta\chi^2$  between an unconstrained model and a model that constrained each pair of correlations among the six factors to be 1.00; the result is significant

( $\Delta\chi^2_{(15)} = 182.46, p < .001$ ), in support of discriminant validity. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are both higher than the minimum recommend threshold of .60 (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006). In addition, the results reveal adequate fit between the data and the measurement model: CFI = .96, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .05. The findings support the appropriateness of the operational definition of heritage site image.

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*Souvenir shopping attitudes.* We define the construct as tourists' learned predisposition for souvenir shopping at or around heritage sites. It measures tourists' evaluation of their attitudes toward souvenir shopping in terms of souvenir and shop variety, shopping convenience, and product quality. The scale was operationalized by four items adopted from the literature (Choi et al., 1999; Li & Cai, 2008). Each item was referred to the statement "Based on your experience at or around the heritage site, please express your opinion on tourist souvenirs for the following statements." Because the scale items were adopted from multiple studies, we validated the scale through both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and CFA. The results in Table 2 show that the scale is adequately valid and reliable with factor loadings  $\geq .69$ , average variance extracted = .61, reliability measures  $\geq .85$ , and excellent fit indexes (CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .01).

*Perceived cultural difference.* We defined the construct as the difference between the host and the origin cultures perceived by the tourists. Although some research takes a macro or aggregated approach by assessing cultural difference at the country level (e.g., Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2007), such an approach raises concern over ecology fallacy in that national/cultural-level data are used to infer to individual behaviors (van de Vijver, van Hemert, & Poortinga, 2008). In this

study, we take a micro approach by assessing cultural difference at the individual level in accordance with prior studies (Choi et al., 1999; Hudson et al., 2011). In particular, we adopted a 3-item scale from Choi et al. (1999). Because the original wordings of the three items refer to cultural similarity rather than difference, we modified the wordings so that they refer to cultural difference. We performed both EFA and CFA to validate the scale. The results indicate that the scale is adequately valid and reliable with factor loadings  $\geq .65$ , average variance extracted = .50, reliability measures  $\geq .73$ , and fit indexes above the recommended thresholds (CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .00, SRMR = .00).

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## **FINDINGS**

Table 3 summarizes the nomological network of the variables of interest. The results show that all the variables are significantly correlated at the .001 level, which provides preliminary support to the hypotheses and the framework presented in Figure 1. As illustrated in Table 3, the correlations are particularly strong among three pairs of relationships: natural state ( $r = .42$ ), comfort/security ( $r = .45$ ), and perceived cultural difference–souvenir shopping attitudes ( $r = .54$ ). We further tested the proposed framework in structural equation modeling (SEM). It is important to note that we controlled for tourists’ demographics such as gender, age, and education. Since our sample includes both domestic and international tourists, we also controlled for tourists’ place of origin (domestic vs. international). We diagnosed common method bias using the Harman one-factor analysis (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). The results indicate that it is not a concern in the study ( $\chi^2/df > 2.0$ ).

We also diagnosed multicollinearity using the variance inflation factor (VIF). However,

the results indicate signs of multicollinearity as some VIFs reach the 3.0 level, a problem that has been reported in the destination image literature (Lopes, 2011). One solution is to use a second-order construct as the independent variable that encapsulates the first-order factors. Hence, we explored whether the six-factor heritage site image scale can be parsimoniously operationalized as a second-order construct. The results support our proposition in that the standardized factor loadings on each dimension is greater than .65 ( $t \geq 6.94, p < .001$ ), average variance extracted = .59. Exploratory factor analysis using the six factors' summated scores as indicators further supports that a higher order factor solution is valid (factor loadings  $\geq .68$ , variance extracted 52.30%) and reliable (Cronbach's alpha = .81). Finally, due to the relatively small sample size, we used a bootstrapping method to resample the data and reproduced a sample with size of 400. Bootstrapping is a commonly used technique in SEM that addresses issues pertaining to small sample size and provides more reliable fit statistics (Bollen & Stine, 1992).

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Hypothesis 1 proposes a direct relationship between heritage site image and souvenir shopping attitudes. Results from Model 1 (presented in Table 4) show a significant relationship between the two variables ( $\beta = .90, p < .001$ ) as expected, in support of Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 2 postulates a moderating effect of cultural difference on the relationship between heritage site image and souvenir shopping attitudes. Results from Model 2 reveal that the heritage site image  $\times$  cultural difference interaction is significant ( $\beta = .10, p < .05$ ), in support of Hypothesis 2. In addition, the relationship between cultural difference and souvenir shopping attitudes is also significant ( $\beta = .12, p < .05$ ). To illustrate the moderating effect graphically, we followed Aiken and West (1991) and defined the moderator as high and low cultural difference by plus and

minus one standard deviation from the mean (see Figure 2). The results suggest that the heritage site image effect is more salient for tourists with high cultural difference from the host community. In summary, the structural model fits the data reasonably well with  $\chi^2/df = 2.04$ , CFI = .95, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .07. Although RMSEA and SRMR are slightly above the recommended value, they are still within the acceptable threshold (Kline, 2005). None of the control variables are significant, while the model is able to explain 84% of the variance in souvenir shopping attitudes.

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## **DISCUSSION**

This article seeks to address two deficits in the literature by presenting (1) the linkage between tourism image and souvenir shopping and (2) the direct and moderating effects of perceived cultural difference. In this article, we first validated three scales used in the current study: heritage site image, souvenir shopping attitudes, and cultural difference. We then diagnosed multicollinearity and decided to operationalize the heritage site image scale as a second-order construct. We performed two structural equation models and tested the framework presented in Figure 1. The findings largely support the postulated hypotheses and show no effect on the control variables. These findings present implications for theory and practitioners, which are discussed in the sections that follow.

### **Theoretical Implications**

This study bridges the chasm in the literature by linking tourism image, heritage tourism, tourist shopping, and cross-cultural research in a single study. Several theoretical implications can be drawn from the findings. First, whereas prior research commonly applies tourism image at

the destination level, this study applies it to cultural heritage. Hence, the current study is able to enrich the understanding of heritage tourism in light of heritage site image and souvenir shopping. Our findings show that the perceived image of heritage sites can be presented by six attributes: interest/adventure, natural state, comfort/security, tourist facilitation, inexpensiveness, and communication/hospitality. Such an image has a positive and direct influence on tourists' attitudes toward souvenir shopping.

With respect to the heritage tourism research stream, this study demonstrates how perceived heritage site image could be assessed. Being able to measure site image offers an avenue to advance the tourism literature, as it provides scholars a means to investigate the role of heritage site (or attraction in general) image on tourist attitudes and behaviors in relation with other tourism products or activities. With respect to shopping tourism theory, prior research has overlooked the importance of site image on tourist shopping outcomes. This study hence advances the literature by portraying a path leading from site image to tourist souvenir shopping attitudes. From a theoretical standpoint, these findings are insightful for both research streams, as the collated evidence confirms that tourist shopping depends on the performance of tourism products (i.e., tourist perceptions of heritage sites). That is, heritage sites that are perceived as safe and comfortable, for example, could ultimately influence tourists' souvenir shopping attitudes and behavior eventually.

This study also contributes to cross-cultural tourism research by examining the joint impact of the direct and moderating effects of perceived cultural difference. Unlike prior studies that examine the cultural difference/similarity effect on destination choice, the evidence collated from this study shows that cultural difference has a direct and positive impact on tourist souvenir shopping attitudes. In fact to the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to examine the

cultural difference effect on tourist shopping. Furthermore, our findings suggest that the heritage site image effect on souvenir shopping attitude is more pronounced for tourists who perceived a high degree of cultural discrepancy between the origin and the host destination. This contingency effect helps to enrich the literature by shedding new light on the moderating role of perceived cultural difference. In light with this theoretical implication, this study also addresses a limitation in the literature. Prior research often takes a macro or aggregated approach by assessing cultural difference at the country level. However, such an approach raises concern over ecology fallacy in that national/cultural-level data are used to infer to individual behaviors. This study addresses this issue by operationalizing the construct at the individual level and inferring the findings to individual tourists.

Finally, the current study highlights an important but under-studied research issue in the literature, namely multicollinearity. Our diagnostic tests indicate that the six image factors are highly correlated, which results in multicollinearity. We seek to resolve this problem through a higher order operationalization of the image construct. Hence, this study highlights the importance of proper operationalization of tourism image in causal analysis such as regression, path analysis, and structural equation modeling. Using a second-order construct also helps to attain better model parsimony.

### **Managerial Implications**

Image is regarded as one of the most important assets of a destination. It not only directly relates to the positioning of the destination, it also has a powerful effect on attracting and retaining tourists as well as on the success of commercial development. Prior research has largely focused on the former effect and is replete with evidence showing how a destination image can enhance tourists' desire to (re)visit a place and spread positive reputation by word of

mouth. However, the latter effect (i.e., to promote commercial success) has not received equal attention. Findings of this study, therefore, provide insights into how a favorable image of heritage sites can become a powerful means in facilitating tourist shopping desire. Specifically, our research identifies associations between heritage site image and souvenir shopping attitudes. Because shopping attitudes have been reported to have a direct impact on shopping intentions and behaviors, it follows that souvenir shopping attitudes are a key antecedent of actual souvenir shopping as prior research suggests. This knowledge is essential to both retailers and heritage site managers, as it builds a linkage between the two sectors and provides an advantage in delivering an effective marketing strategy. Our findings, therefore, present clear evidence that can assist the local economy in attracting more tourist shopping dollars.

Tourism authorities should be aware of the different heritage site attributes perceived by tourists, as each aspect of the heritage site image can improve or downgrade tourist travel experience and hence their attitudes toward souvenir shopping and shopping in general. For example, a site that offers tourists comfort and security, clear information about the heritage offerings and directions, and staff that can communicate with the tourist in a friendly manner would be essential in facilitating tourists' appetite for acquiring souvenirs, as these image attributes have the highest association with souvenir shopping attitudes. Souvenirs also help to make a trip experience last, as they serve as reminders of a specific site or a destination as a whole. Souvenirs are also an effective means of transmitting cultural heritage and promoting a destination and its heritage offerings to future tourists.

In line with the above argument, decision-makers must consider the role of cultural difference, as it also influences tourist attitudes toward souvenir shopping. Product uniqueness and authenticity could be the underlying reason for this influence. This finding could have a

profound implication to retailers, as our findings show that the effect of origin (i.e., domestic vs. international) on souvenir shopping attitudes is not significant. Hence, while international tourists certainly constitute an important target market for most retailers, domestic tourists who perceive the destination as different from their origin are also a potential target market to explore; since this group of tourists is likely to perceive the products as unique and authentic, which would increase their shopping attitudes and propensity. With respect to cultural difference, it is important to gain a better understanding of tourist segments that perceive a destination as highly different from their origin, in order to increase the effectiveness of marketing activities with a higher return on investment. In addition, souvenir products should align with the image of the destination or its tourism products (e.g., heritage sites) in order to achieve positive synergy, since these souvenirs would act as memorabilia to represent a destination and its cultural assets.

Retailers can use the findings to attract more customers with better souvenir products. Knowing that heritage site image influences tourists' shopping attitudes, tourism authorities and retailers can joint forces and leverage their expertise. For instance, they can form an alliance and develop a co-branding strategy, which can be used to develop products that link or bundle the product brands (e.g., private label brands or known brands) with the heritage sites to create more attractive and distinctive product appeals and to generate both greater sales and higher tourist satisfaction (Rittichainuwat, Qu, & Leong, 2003). For example, heritage sites can bundle their admission tickets with site-specific souvenirs to create better value for tourists while making their travel experience at the site memorable through the souvenirs. They could also form an advertising alliance (e.g., advertise both the heritage sites and souvenirs at the sites or on the product package), which should enhance the effectiveness of their marketing communication efforts by evoking more favorable attitudes toward the sites and a stronger desire to visit the sites

and buy souvenirs. This strategy could lower advertising costs, thus improving net marketing contribution (Best, 2004). In turn, revenue generated from product sales can fund the development and protection of the heritage sites.

### **Limitations and Research Directions**

The substantive findings of this study should be viewed in light of their limitations. First, given that the sample is limited to tourists visiting Hue, the findings of the empirical analysis should be interpreted with caution. Second, although we tested the proposed framework by controlling the moderating effect of perceived cultural difference and tourist demographics, it is possible that tourist souvenir shopping attitudes are driven by their travel motives, their a priori (pre-heritage site visit) shopping decisions, and souvenir store attributes (e.g., service environment, staff service quality, and product pricing). Yet, given the  $R^2$  explained by the model, we believe the current findings are reliable. Future research will be able to offer more insights for heritage site image and souvenir shopping by including these factors in the research inquiry. Another research avenue is to investigate the symbolic value of souvenirs and how it co-creates travel experience for a trip (i.e., value in the experience) and shapes perceived site image as well as the meanings and interpretations of souvenirs in relation to specific attractions or the hosting destination. Finally, it may be useful to examine the extent to which different types of shoppers and tourists have different effects on heritage site image and shopping attitudes, as prior research notes (Yu & Littrell, 2003).

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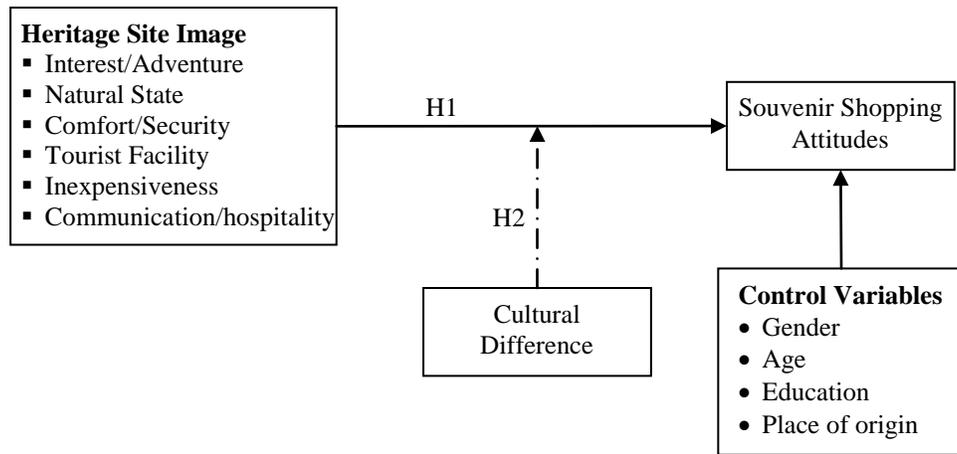
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**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework**



Note: dash lines indicate moderating effect.

**Figure 2. The Heritage Site Image × Cultural Difference Interaction Effect**

