

Influence of Chinese Tourists' Perceived Value on Purchase Intention for Intangible Cultural Heritage Souvenir: Attitude towards Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage as A Moderator

Haiying Liu^{*} Ntapat Worapongpat^{**} Ekrisi Niyomsilp^{***}

Received: March 7, 2020 Revised: April 14, 2020 Accepted: April 17, 2020

Abstract

Based on the perspective of tourist, taking an example of Chinese tourist, this study analyzed the purchase intention for intangible cultural heritage (ICH) souvenir in terms of the different dimensions of tourist perceived value. The study examined the moderating role of attitude towards safeguarding ICH. SEM was applied to a sample of 338 tourists who had travelled in the big cities where there are many kinds of ICH souvenir. The finding highlights the significant and positive effect of functional value, self-efficacy value and relationship support value on purchase intention for ICH souvenir. The tourists' attitude towards safeguarding ICH moderated the relationship between self-efficacy value and purchase intention. The study provides results that allow marketers to understand how the tourist perceive value and attitude towards safeguarding ICH contribute to tourist purchase intention for ICH souvenir.

Keywords: Intangible Cultural Heritage souvenir; Tourist Perceived Value; Attitude; Purchase Intention

Introduction

Tourism is a traditional representational behavior that exists in the contemporary era which is based on a tradition of destination, including local tangible and intangible cultural heritage (ICH). As a part of tourism resources, ICH is now attracting the attention of tourists. They participate in experience-related activities and purchase ICH souvenirs. As a kind of souvenir, ICH souvenir loads and highlights the intangible

^{*} School of Management, Shinawatra University

^{**} Faculty of Business Administration, Rajamangala University of Technology Phra Nakhon,

E-mail: Ntapat.w@rmutp.ac.th

^{***} Faculty of Management, Shinawatra University

cultural connotation, covers the multiple functions of inheriting ICH, spreading the image of tourism destinations and developing tourism characteristics. Although ICH souvenirs are rich in content and diverse in function, there are not many buyers in Chinese souvenir market, and the market response has been muted (Huang & Liu, 2015). In the academic field, earlier studies focused mainly on the design of ICH souvenir in China, to study how to integrate ICH elements into souvenir. There is a lack of research on perceived value, attitudes, and intention of tourists to purchase ICH souvenirs. Perceived value is an important antecedent of purchase intention. There is a few researches about the effect of tourist perceived value on purchase intention for souvenir. The aim of the study is to analyze whether the tourist perceived value of ICH souvenir influences tourists' purchase intention. Moreover, this study also considers the multidimensional nature of perceived value. And also the attitude of tourists towards destination is important because tourist intention is based on positive attitude. There are few studies on the relationship between tourists' attitudes towards the protection of ICH and their behavior intention. When tourists purchase ICH souvenirs, whether attitudes toward ICH protection will affect the relationship between tourists perceived value and purchase intention is a major content of this study.

Literature Review and Hypotheses

1. Intangible Cultural Heritage Souvenir

Existing research has carefully distinguished souvenirs according to different standards, such as mass production of ornaments, souvenirs depicting locally representative text and so on. Although researchers have made a very detailed classification of souvenirs, most researchers seldom mention ICH souvenir. In the past researches, Huang and Lyu (2017) stated the concept of ICH production. It is product or service that is available for use and consumption, based on ICH resources, and is designed, innovated and produced by traditional or modern techniques through the production entities such as inheritors or enterprises, which can satisfy consumers' aesthetic, spiritual pleasure and cultural experience. Sun and Liao (2016) stated ICH souvenir was a special kind of souvenirs designed by the resources of ICH. It is a kind of souvenir with the characteristics of ICH, and also a kind of "original ecology" reproduction of national personality, living habits and aesthetic attitudes.

2. Purchase Intention and Perceived Value

Intention is the subjective probability of an individual engaging in a particular behavior. Purchase intention refers to the probability that consumers are willing to take

certain purchase behaviors. Purchase intention can be regarded as the subjective tendency of consumers to choose specific products, and has been proved to be an important indicator to predict consumer behavior. Consumers' attitudes towards a product or brand, coupled with external factors, constitute consumers' purchase intention.

Tourist perceived value is the psychological result obtained after the subjective comparison between the time and money spent by tourists on the tourism and the acquired travel experience. Afterwards, the scholars analyze different dimensions of the tourist perception value scale for different research objects. Eid (2015) proposed six dimensions, including quality value, price value, emotional value, social value, material attribute value and non-material attribute value. Many scholars stated the perceived value had significant influence on purchase intention.

Functional value is derived from the possession of utilitarian, functional, physical performance of product or service. Functional value displays how practical a product is, represents the product's performance and quality aspects, and is an individuals' realistic and economic evaluation. Self-efficacy value from Bandura (2006) is defined when customer buy products, if they can bring environment or society some additional interest, customers will get self-efficacy value. Epistemic value is defined as the perceived utility and acquired from curiosity, novelty and knowledge that the product and/or service arouses, provides and satisfies. Relationship support value is an individual perceives an experience as facilitating the development and maintenance of important interpersonal relationships (Bruce, 2014). From the customer's perspective, the price is what a consumer gives up or sacrifices in order to obtain a product. Good price is reasonable money pay for the product. Zeithaml (1988) reports price including monetary and non-monetary is a dimension related to perceived value.

Many researchers stated the above perceived value had significant impacts on purchase intention. So the hypotheses are:

H1: Chinese tourists perceived functional value of ICH souvenir has a positive and significant impact on their purchase intention.

H2: Chinese tourists perceived self-efficacy value of ICH souvenir has a positive and significant impact on their purchase intention.

H3: Chinese tourists perceived epistemic value of ICH souvenir has a positive and significant impact on their purchase intention.

H4: Chinese tourists perceived relationship support value of ICH souvenir has a positive and significant impact on their purchase intention.

H5: Chinese tourists perceived price value of ICH souvenir has a positive and significant impact on their purchase intention.

3. Tourist Attitude towards Safeguarding ICH

Attitude refers to the degree to which one holds an emotional approval or disapproval of a stimulus. Kim and Littrell (2001) used the famous Fishbein model to measure the attitudes of tourists, which is so far recognized by many scholars as a suitable model for measuring attitudes. Their research proved that tourists attitudes towards the culture of the tourist destination would influence their willingness to buy souvenirs. Luo et al. (2018) put forward nation brand attitude significantly moderated the proposed set of relationships between Chinese millennial tourists perceived brand values and their destination loyalty. The perceived value included functional, monetary, emotional, epistemic, and social values. The loyalty included purchase intention and recommendation. Based on these, the following hypotheses are, thus, developed:

H6: Tourist attitude towards safeguarding ICH plays a moderating role between functional value of ICH souvenir and purchase intention.

H7: Tourist attitude towards safeguarding ICH plays a moderating role between self-efficacy value of ICH souvenir and purchase intention.

H8: Tourist attitude towards safeguarding ICH plays a moderating role between epistemic value of ICH souvenir and purchase intention.

H9: Tourist attitude towards safeguarding ICH plays a moderating role between relationship support value of ICH souvenir and purchase intention.

H10: Tourist attitude towards safeguarding ICH plays a moderating role between price value of ICH souvenir and purchase intention.

As a result of the above hypotheses, a conceptual model is constructed and illustrated in Figure 1.

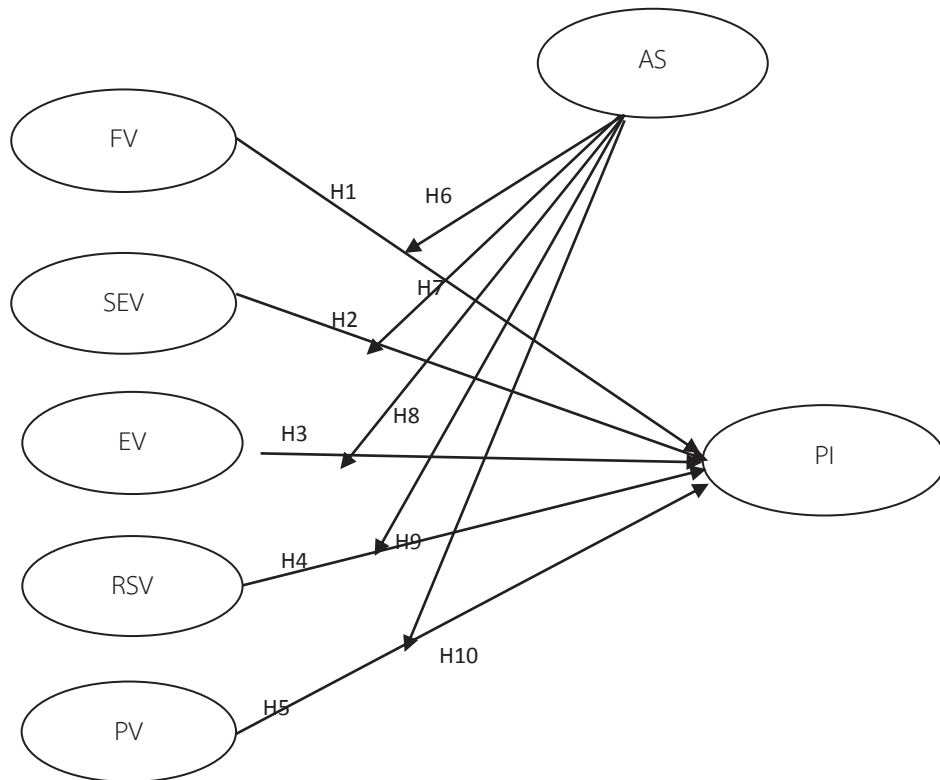


Fig. 1 Conceptual Model

Note: FV=Functional Value, SEV=Self-efficacy Value, EV=Epistemic Value, RSV=Relationship Support Value, PV=Price Value, AS= Attitude towards safeguarding ICH, PI=Purchase Intention

Research Method

The research used quantitative method to test these hypotheses. The author designed the questionnaire, then used AMOS to test these hypotheses.

1. Questionnaire Design

The research constructs were adopted from prior related research. The items are modified to make them suitable to the tourism context. Combined with the relevant characteristics of souvenirs and the research purposes of this study, and finally five dimensions are introduced for research and measurement. All instrument definitions and the related literature are listed on Table 1. These 22 items are functional value (items 3), self-efficacy value (items 3), epistemic value (items 3), relationship support value (items 4), price value (items 3), purchase intention (items 3) and attitude towards

safeguarding ICH (items 3). All these items utilizes a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

2. Data Collection and Sample

To test the appropriateness and the concision of the questionnaire and to ensure the time required to fill out the questionnaire was less than 15 minutes, pilot tests were carried out with twenty tourists who travelled in Xi'an city where many ICH souvenirs were sold. The pilot test took one weeks to finish. Feedback was received on the wording and incorporated into the final version. Several items were removed during the process based on the factor loading where the values are lower than 0.5.

The formal investigation was conducted from February to March 2019. The population for this research is 400 tourists, consisting of students, teachers, staffs, businessmen and so on. The respondents were instructed to answer the questionnaires who were travelling at the destination where ICH souvenirs were sold. The tourists were selected who were willing to participate the survey. The participants were assured of their confidentiality and anonymity. In total, 338 questionnaires can be used in the study.

Finding and Discussion

1. Hypothesis 1-5 Test

Based on the formal survey data and the conceptual model, using AMOS 24.0 to test these hypotheses, the study built a structural model (Fig. 2). The ratio of Chi-square to freedom of the model was 1.277, smaller than the 3 and significant ($p = 0.016$). PCFI was 0.685, CFI was 0.992, GFI was 0.949, RMSEA was 0.029, and SRMR was 0.027 indicating a very good fit of model.

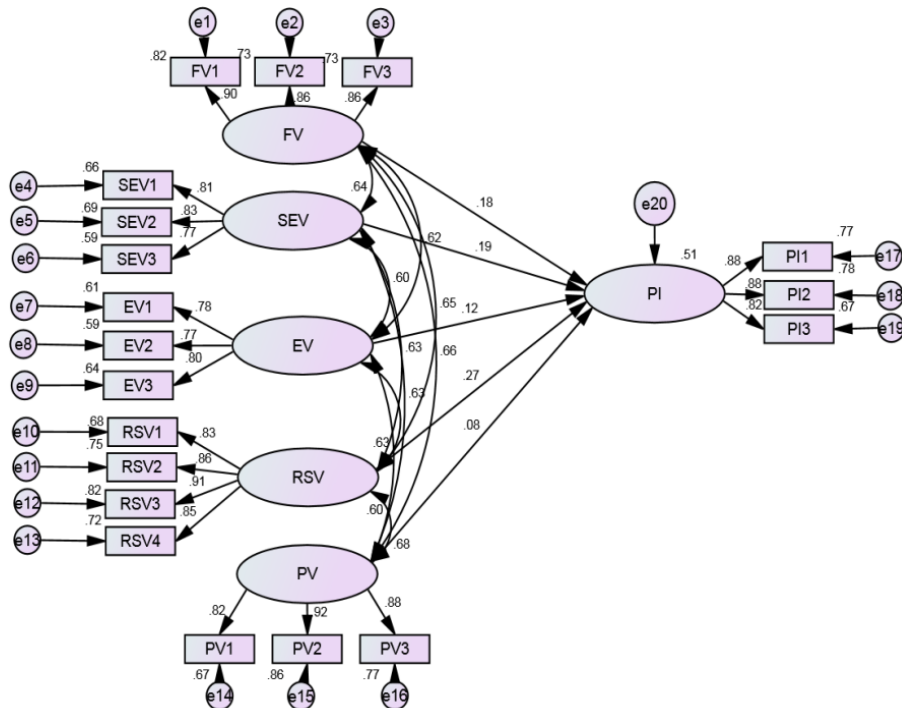


Fig. 2 Structural Model.

Note: FV=Functional Value, SEV=Self-efficacy Value, EV=Epistemic Value, RSV=Relationship Support Value, PV=Price Value, PI=Purchase Intention

The analytical results show that tourist perceived functional value of ICH souvenir has a significant positive impact on purchase intention (C.R. =2.406; P = 0.016) (C.R. > 1.96; P<0.05 is significant). Consistent with the hypothesis, tourist perceived self-efficacy value of ICH souvenir has a significant positive impact on purchase intention (C.R.=2.505; P=0.012). The hypotheses that relationship support value has significant positive influence on purchase intention is supported (C.R.=3.496; P<0.001). Among them, relationship support value has the strongest impact on purchase intention, higher than self-efficacy value and functional value (relationship support value: β =0.298 vs. self-efficacy value: β =0.250 vs. functional value: β =0.170). So, H1, H2 and H4 are all accepted.

H3 (β =0.160,P=0.108) suggests that there is not a positive relationship between epistemic value and purchase intention, so H3 is rejected. In H5, its P-value (0.299) is greater than 0.05; H5 is therefore rejected.

2. Moderation Analysis

The test of moderating effect of tourist attitude towards safeguarding ICH is analyzed through AMOS 24 software package. The moderating effect of it (negative vs positive levels) is examined by multi-group SEM analysis. From the model comparison

(Table 1), there is decrease in fit between the structural weights model and unconstrained model, and P value is significant. After comparing structural covariances and unconstrained model, structural residuals and unconstrained model there are also decrease. P value of structural weights model, structural covariances model and structural residuals model is below 0.05 which means there is a significant test. The tourist attitude towards safeguarding ICH plays a moderate role between the perceived value and purchase intention.

Table 1. Comparison between model unconstrained and constrained

Model	CMIN	P	NFI Delta-1	IFI Delta-2	RFI rho-1	TLI rho2
Structural weights	40.138	.002	.008	.009	.004	.004
Structural covariances	95.362	.000	.019	.020	.012	.013
Structural residuals	112.131	.000	.022	.024	.015	.016
Measurement residuals	134.832	.000	.027	.029	.014	.015

Table 2 shows the results of different levels of multi-group SEM analysis. If the chi-squared difference is more than 3.84, then the moderation occurs in the path. So, H7 is supported , but H6, H8, H9 and H10 are rejected.

Table 2. Structural parameter estimates and moderated effect of the model

Hypotheses	Attitude towards safeguarding ICH	
	Positive	Negative
	N=112	N=226
H1:FV → PI	0.38*	0.34*
$\Delta\chi^2$	0.019	0.015
H2: SEV → PI	0.40*	0.09

$\Delta\chi^2$	3.973*	
H3: EV \rightarrow PI	0.14	0.21*
$\Delta\chi^2$	0.166	
H4:RV \rightarrow PI	0.08	0.24*
$\Delta\chi^2$	1.334	
H5: PV \rightarrow PI	-0.05	0.19*
$\Delta\chi^2$	3.570	

Note : *P < .05; FV=Functional Value, SEV=Self-efficacy Value, EV=Epistemic Value, RSV=Relationship Support Value, PV=Price Value, PI=Purchase Intention

Finding and Conclusion

Through empirical analysis, it is found that tourist perceived value of ICH souvenir has a direct impact on purchase intention. In the five dimensions of perceived value divided in this study, the effect of functional value, self-efficacy value, relationship support value are prominent. Especially, this research confirms that relationship support value plays more important role in influencing tourist purchase intention than self-efficacy value and functional value. It can also be seen that Chinese tourists are more willing to socialize and improve their interpersonal relationships by souvenirs. The effect of epistemic value and price value on purchase intention is not significant, which is different from the previous researches. Moreover, the influence of perceived price on purchase intention is contrary to previous research results, which is related to another special attribute, the public welfare attribute of ICH souvenirs.

Furthermore, this study demonstrates tourist attitude towards safeguarding ICH moderates the relationship between self-efficacy value and purchase intention. And this study nearly introduces this attitude as a moderator in the price value-purchase intention relationship. To be specific, when tourist attitude is positive, the effects of relationship support value and price value on purchase intention are weakened. In this case, the positive promotion effect of self-efficacy value stands out. When the self-efficacy value is actually perceived by tourists, their intention to purchase will be strong. When tourists' attitudes towards ICH protection are positive, the price of souvenirs is not a key issue for them. And also, the study highlights the souvenir's function when the

attitude is positive. Tourists perceive functional value based on their life needs. Tourists buy the souvenirs, then they use them. Even if tourists actively protect intangible cultural heritage, it does not mean that ICH souvenir will arouse tourists' curiosity without novelty or knowledge.

When tourist attitude is negative, the effect of functional value, epistemic value, relationship support value and price value on purchase intention is strong. Among them, functional value plays a vital role. This suggests whatever the tourist attitude is, the ICH souvenir with function such as it can be used in daily life can lead to tourists' positive behavioral outcomes. If it can bring novelty, idea, innovation and knowledge, the ICH souvenir can also attract tourists. This result highlights, tourists who lack the cognition of significance of safeguarding ICH are still willing to purchase ICH souvenirs by considering that giving them to others as gifts or using the production together with families can support their relationship. Additionally, promoting price value permits marketers ignore the tourists attitude towards ICH protection.

Acknowledgement

Authors of the paper would like to acknowledge the support of Rajamangala University of Technology Phra Nakhon and Shinawat University

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