# National Cheng Kung University

# Institute of International Management

# Doctoral Dissertation

## The Symbolic, Experiential, and Functional Consumptions of Tourism Destination From the Perspective of Social Identity Theory

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### Tainan, Taiwan, R.O.C.

Ph.D's Dissertation

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國立成功大學
博士班博士論文

# The Symbolic, Experiential, and Functional Consumptions of Tourism Destination from the Perspective of Social Identity Theory

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本論文業經審查及口試合格特此證明

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May Buddha bless you all the best and bring you health, peace, harmony, contentment, success, compassion, and kindness.

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# DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my father, Phou Tong; my mother, Suy Nay; my elder brothers and sisters; Han Chea, Han Touch, Han Ni, Han Sy, Phou Kim, Phou Iv, Phou Leang, Phou Eav, Phou Sambo; and my brother- and sister-in-laws, especially Ang Narith and Lun Aron Chetra. Thank you for all of your love and support.

# ABSTRACT

*Keywords:* Symbolic consumption, Experiential consumption, Functional consumption, Brand identification, Tourist satisfaction, Destination loyalty, Social identity theory, Self-congruity theory.


Destination branding has become an importantly emerging research topic amongst tourism research scholars, destination marketers and even politicians over the past decade. Since functional attributes offered at tourism destinations are becoming more highly competitive, destination marketers are adopting branding techniques to focus on experiential benefits and symbolic meanings to differentiate their identities and to emphasize the uniqueness of their products—tourism destination brands. The identification of consumers with a brand activates brand loyalty and purchase intentions. However, little is known if these consumption patterns hold in tourism destination brands and which variables drive tourism destination brand identification and whether or not destination brand identification activates tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. Accordingly, the purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the effects of destination brand consumptions on tourists' destination brand identification and satisfaction, both of which are in turn predicted to affect tourists' destination loyalty. Specifically, this study integrates the symbolic, experiential, and functional consumption perspectives of tourism destination brand with social identity perspective in explaining tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. Using a sample of 512 international tourists visiting Angkor tourism destination and the structural equations modeling technique, the results reveal that the three patterns of

tourism destination consumptions—symbolic, experiential and functional—have significantly positive effects on destination identification and tourist satisfaction, both of which in turn positively affect destination loyalty and fully mediate the effects of symbolic, experiential and functional destination consumptions on destination loyalty. The findings of the current study support the application of social identity theory in tourism research, indicating that tourists express their identification with tourism destinations through the symbolic meanings, the experiential benefits, and functional attributes derived from the destination and tourists' identification with the tourism destination leads to greater satisfaction and loyalty toward the destination. This research not only provides a deeper understanding of the consumptions of tourism destination brands and social identification in tourism research, but also offers managerial implications for destination managers and some avenues for future research.

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# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Research Background and Motivation.

Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries and the driving force for many countries' development. Successful tourism can increase destination's tourist receipts, income, employment and government revenues (Chen & Chen, 2010). According to a report by the World Tourism Organization (2012), international tourist arrivals grew by 5% to reach 990 million in 2011 and are expected to reach 1 billion in 2012. However, around 70% of international travelers visit only 10 countries, leaving the other countries or destinations competing for the remaining 30% of total international tourist arrivals. Even with the growth of tourist arrivals, destinations are involved in constant battles to attract tourists and motivate them to revisit and/or recommend the destinations to others as tourism destinations are becoming highly substitutable due to the growing global competition (Pike, 2005; Pike & Ryan, 2004). Because of the growing competition and the recognition of the importance of loyal visitors, destination loyalty has become a critical part of destination marketing and management research.

Tourism consumption provides an important and meaningful part of people's lives (Desforges, 2000). For a number of years, tourism scholars argue that tourists are motivated to visit particular tourism destinations due to their physical attributes such as beautiful scenery, golden beaches, or blue seas (Murphy, Moscardo, & Benckendorff, 2007). Until recent years, tourists' consumption experience,

particularly benefit feelings (Beeho & Prentice, 1997; Otto & Ritchie, 1996) and psychological variables (e.g. attitudes, motivation and self-concept) (Sirakaya, Sonmez, & Choi, 2001) are gaining more attentions from tourism scholars and practitioners. Timothy (2005) describes tourism as an "extreme form of leisure activities", which several authors support to be good examples of consumption behavior because leisure activities are charged with meanings (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982) and are hedonic in nature and generate consumer experience (Otto & Ritchie, 1996). Destination or place brands are collective creation of stakeholders (residents, managers, and other intermediaries) and heavily charged with symbolic meanings (Cai, 2002; Niininen, Hosany, Ekinci, & Airey, 2007).

Just like other branded consumer products, a tourism destination can also be seen as a product or a brand since it consists of a bundle of tangible and intangible attributes (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Hosany, Ekinci, & Uysal, 2007). Although the concepts of formalized brand strategies of tourism products only originated in the 1990s (Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride, 2010b; Pike, 2009), tourism destination marketers have been trying to adopt branding strategies similar to those used by Coca Cola, Nike and Sony in an attempt to differentiate their identities and to emphasize the uniqueness of their products (Morgan, Pritchard, & Pride, 2010a). In recent years, tourism scholars (Blain, Levy, & Ritchie, 2005; Cai, 2002; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Morgan et al., 2010a; Pike, 2009), tourism practitioners (Konecnik, 2004; Yeoman, Durie, McMahon-Beattie, & Palmer, 2005), and even politicians from a multitude of places (Morgan et al., 2010b) are paying greater attention to destination branding and destination branding research.

Tourism destination brands can be consumed for different motives. Previous studies mainly focus on functional attributes of tourism destination as the main driver of tourists' destination brand consumption (Bajs, 2011; Murphy, Pritchard, & Smith, 2000; Pike, 2009; Sirakaya et al., 2001). However, many scholars argue that functional attributes of tourism destination alone may be insufficient to fulfill tourists' demand and satisfaction in the tourism industry (Kao, Huang, & Wu, 2008; Otto & Ritchie, 1996; Ruzzier & Ruzzier, 2009). In addition, functional attributes alone are not believed to satisfy tourists' demand and activate their destination loyalty. For example, Westbrook (1987) believe that if visitors are not satisfied with specific benefits derived from the current visit, they may not return even if overall quality of the service is consider to be good. Similar to an argument by Keller (1993) that experiential and symbolic benefits play just as important a role as functional benefits in developing a brand identity, experiential consumption (Kao et al., 2008; Ruzzier & Ruzzier, 2009) and symbolic consumption (Ekinci, Sirakaya-Turk, & Preciado, 2013; Hankinson, 2004; Sirgy & Su, 2000) of tourism destination brands are argued to play an important role in influencing tourists' motivation and branding tourism destinations. A destination brand should incorporate not only functional attributes and experiential benefits of its products (Hudson & Ritchie, 2009; Ruzzier & Ruzzier, 2009), but also symbolic characteristics (Ekinci et al., 2013; Ruzzier & Ruzzier, 2009).

Recent studies accumulate evidence on the effect of experiential consumption and symbolic consumption of tourism destination on tourist's satisfaction (Chen & Chen, 2010; Chon, 1992; Kao et al., 2008; Tian-Cole & Scott, 2004) and destination loyalty (Ekinci et al., 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011; Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010). Tourists develop loyalty towards a particular tourism destination brand based on not

only the basic of functional attributes (e.g. service quality, accommodation, sea, sun, and location) (Ekinci et al., 2013), but also experience quality (Chen & Chen, 2010; Tian-Cole & Scott, 2004) and symbolic attributes of tourism destinations, particularly destination's ability to provide a suitable venue for the enactment of self-concept, social identity, and enhancement of lifestyle (Ekinci et al., 2013). For example, the Walt Disney Company has been widely cited as a pioneer in creating, producing and delivering unforgettable experiences of its theme park tourism industry to its guests. Similarly, Las Vegas, a tourism destination city that relies mainly on the hospitality and tourism industry, is located in a barren dessert but it has sustained its competitiveness and popularity among world-class destinations by offering unique entertainment experiences to tourists (Hsu, Killion, Brown, Gross, & Huang, 2008). The choice of a holiday destination and the attractiveness of the destination brand play a vital role in satisfying a traveler's social and symbolic needs (Stokburger-Sauer, 2011). Functional brands satisfy immediate and practical needs, experiential brands satisfy emotional beings, focused on achieving pleasurable experiences (Hudson & Ritchie, 2009; Williams, 2006) such as enjoyment, learning and escape (Kang & Gretzel, 2012), whereas symbolic brands satisfy symbolic needs such as those for self-expression, prestige (Bhat & Reddy, 1998), self-identity or lifestyle (Desforges, 2000).

Sowden and Grimmer (2009) add that understanding the processes by which tourist destination brands come to symbolize social identities and consumption groups may assist destination marketers in influencing and further confirming social images and meanings via marketing communication. A nation or destination that hopes to be recognized as a strong brand should follow some basic rules of positioning—particularly the positioning should be equal for all requirement groups

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(stakeholders) and have a brand recognition, for example, the potential for identification (Eitel & Spiekermann, 2007). For a number of years, identification based on social identity theory has been examined in the sociological and psychological disciplines, organization behavior and human resource management (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Brewer, 1991), consumer product brands (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Kuenzel & Halliday, 2008, 2010) and recently tourism research context (Ekinci et al., 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011).

Social identity theory, which is believed to have a useful contribution to marketing (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003), states that in articulating their sense of self, people typically go beyond their personal identity to develop social identity (Brewer, 1991; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Customers do so by identifying with and associating themselves with brands that reflect and reinforce their self-identities (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). Identification of customers with the brands has been proven to play a central role along the path from corporate level associations to customer satisfaction as well as meaningful long-term relationship and brand loyalty (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; He & Li, 2011; Kuenzel & Halliday, 2008). People who identity with a particular brand experience a positive psychological outcome in the form of enhanced self-esteem and are more likely to engage in favorable action strategies towards the brand (Donovan, Janda, & Suh, 2006). In the same manner, tourists express their social identity and sense of belonging to social group through identification with a tourism destination brand they consumed and tourists' identification with the tourism destination has a positive influence on their destination loyalty (Ekinci et al., 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011).

Prior studies reveal that symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destination brands results in tourists' social

identification (Grappi & Montanari, 2011; Lam, Ahearne, Mullins, Hayati, & Schillevaert, 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011) and satisfaction (Bhat & Reddy, 1998), which in turn influence their behavioral outcomes, particularly destination loyalty (Ekinci et al., 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011). However, very few studies investigate how these consumption patterns of tourism destinations affect tourists' travel motivation and destination choice. In addition, there are limited studies available on integrating these consumption patterns of tourism destinations with social identity theory in explaining tourist's satisfaction and behavioral outcomes. Consequently, the main motivation of this study is to propose a conceptual model that integrates the symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destinations and investigate how these consumption patterns, using social identity theory, affect tourists' satisfaction and loyalty and empirically test it. Practically, the motivation of this study, in answering to destination marketers and country marketers, is to explore new and different paths to attract potential tourists and motivate existing ones to revisit and/or recommend their destinations to others.

**1.2 Research Purposes and Questions.**

Based on the above research background and motivation, this study has four main research purposes. The first purpose of this study is to investigate how symbolic, consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destination brand influence tourists' behavior. The second purpose of this study is to examine the central role of brand identification in the process of destination brand loyalty development in tourism research. The third purpose of this study is to explore new different paths to tourists' satisfaction and loyalty in tourism research. The final purpose of this study is to investigate and suggest that social identification perspective of brand loyalty (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982) can integrate with symbolic

perspective (identify, reputation, self-congruence and life-style congruence), experiential perspective (experiential consumption), and functional perspective (functional consumption) in explaining tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. To achieve the above four research purposes, four research questions formulated to better understand both the theoretical and practical issues are listed as follows:

1. How do symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destinations affect tourists' behavioral outcomes?

2. Do tourists develop social identification by identifying themselves with a certain group through the consumption of the tourism destination brand in tourism context, just as consumers do in a branded consumer products context?

3. How does social identification in tourism research affect tourists' destination loyalty?

4. How are social identity perspectives integrated with symbolic, experiential and functional perspectives of destination brand in explaining tourists' satisfaction and loyalty?

In order to answer these research questions, this dissertation is empirically tested in a Cambodian tourism destination. Specifically, this study collects data from international tourists visiting Angkor tourism destination.

## 1.3 Research Scope.

This dissertation initially reviews existing literatures related to symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destination, destination brand identification, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty. Furthermore, theories such as social identity theory and self-congruence theory are reviewed and presented along the relevant variables. Based on these

extensive reviews of relevant literatures and theories, this dissertation builds the interrelationships among constructs and develops the conceptual model, scope and hypotheses to be tested with data collected from international tourists visiting Angkor tourism destination of Cambodia.

Since this dissertation uses data from international tourists with different backgrounds visiting one particular tourism destination, the findings of study may not be able to generalize to other tourism destinations. The data are used to test the hypotheses and draw conclusion. Theoretical and practical implications and research limitation and future research directions are also presented at the later part of this dissertation. Table 1-1 present the dissertation scope which summarizes related issues with it.

Table 1-1

*The Scope of Study*

| Items | Scope of the Study |
|---|---|
| Type of the research | Research hypotheses and structure are built based on the reviews of existing literature.<br>Self-administered questionnaire is used to collect the data.<br>The development of data measurements is used to test the hypotheses and draw conclusion. |
| Key issues | Symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destination brands<br>Social identification to tourists' destination loyalty<br>Application of social identity theory in tourism |
| Dependent variable | Destination loyalty |
| Independent variables | Symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destination brand |
| Mediating variables | Destination brand identification<br>Tourist satisfaction |
| Underlying theory | Social identity Theory<br>Self-congruity theory |
| Location | Angkor tourism destination, Cambodia |
| Sample | International Touirsts-600 participants |
| Analyze object | Post-visit tourists' analysis |
| Time frame | Cross sectional |
| Research instruments | Theory inference, research setting, questionnaire, statistical analysis |

**1.4 Research Contribution.**

This study particularly contributes to tourism research and tourism industry in the following ways. First, this study will explain how symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destination affect tourists' behavioral outcomes. Furthermore, this study explains the central role of destination identification in the process of building tourist' destination loyalty in tourism context. Next, this study suggests that social identification of brand loyalty can integrate with symbolic perspective (e.g. identity, reputation, self-congruence and lifestyle-congruence), experiential perspective (experience quality) and functional perspective (perceived quality) in explaining tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. In addition, this study provides important evidence on other different paths to tourists' satisfaction and loyalty in tourism research. Finally, this study is the first to propose a theoretical model that attempts to investigate the effects of symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destination, using social identity theory, on tourists' satisfaction and behavioral outcomes.

**1.5 Research Structure.**

The research is conducted with five different stages of arrangements, each of which is divided into different chapters as illustrated in the flowchart in Figure 1-1. Chapter one details research background and motivation, research objectives and questions, research scope, research contributions and the process of the whole thesis.

Chapter two, entitled Literature Review, provides a detailed review of theories and relevant literatures regarding key concepts and variables used in this study. At the beginning of chapter two, key theories relevant with the study such as social identity theory (SIT) and self-congruence theory are presented along with the theoretical background. Then, the concepts of symbolic consumption (destination identity,

destination reputation, self-congruence and lifestyle-congruence), experiential consumption (experience quality), functional consumption (functional quality), destination brand identification, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty are reviewed and presented in details.

Chapter three, entitled Research Design and Methodology, presents the research conceptual model, followed by respective construct relationships and hypotheses development. The later part of chapter three explains the research design such as questionnaire design, sampling design, data collection procedure, and data analysis. Chapter four, entitled Research Results, provides the results of descriptive analyzed validity measurements, reliability test, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and the structural equations modeling (SEM). Finally, Chapter five, Discussions and Conclusion, offers discussions and conclusion of the significant findings, followed by research contributions, managerial implications, and the limitations of the study.
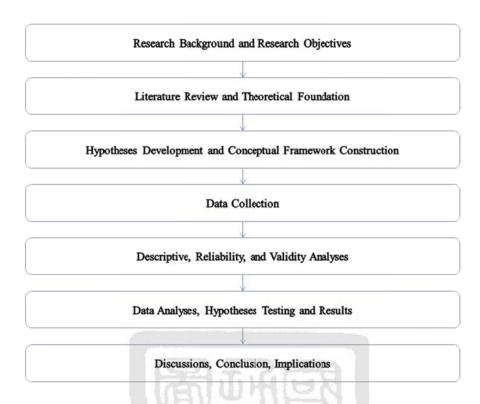
*Figure 1-1.* Research flowchart

## 1.6 Definition of Key Terms.

*Destination identity*: Brand identity refers to the distinctive, attractive and relatively enduring characteristics of a focal brand (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). Drawing on the definition of brand identity of consumer research, we define destination brand identity as the distinctive, attractive and relatively enduring characteristics of a focal tourism destination brand.

*Destination reputation*: A brand reputation refers to the opinion of others that the tourism destination brand is reputable, good and reliable (Lau & Lee, 1999).

*Self-congruence*: Self-congruence is the degree of match/mismatch between destination brand's image and the tourist's actual or ideal self-image (Ekinci et al., 2013).

*Lifestyle-congruence*:  Lifestyle-congruence is defined as the degree of match/mismatch between the destination brand experience and tourist's actual or desired lifestyle (Ekinci et al., 2013).

*Experiential consumption:*  Experience quality, referred to as experiential consumption in this study, is defined as a constant flow of thoughts and feelings during the moments of consciousness (Carlson, 1997), which occur through highly complex psychological, sociological, and cognitive interaction processes (Kang & Gretzel, 2012), which results in enjoyment, learning and memorable experience benefits after a trip or visit to a tourism destination.

*Functional consumption*:  In this study, functional consumption of tourism destination is defined as the quality of the functional attributes of a tourism destination which are under the control of a destination manager (Tian-Cole & Cromption, 2003).

*Destination brand identification*: Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) define brand identification as "…an active, selective, and volitional act motivated by the satisfaction of one or more self-definitional (i.e., "Who am I?") needs… cannot be unilaterally imposed by companies; they must be sought out by consumers in their quest for self-definitional need fulfillment." Drawing on the definitions of brand identification, Stokburger-Sauer (2011) define destination brand identification as the perception of belongingness to the destination brand, and thus experiencing the destination brand's success and failure. Based on social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1985) and organizational identification theories (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), He, Li, and Harris (2012) argue that brand identification is a distinctive construct from brand identity and brand identification meditates the effects of brand identity on customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Based on the above argument, we argue that destination brand identification is a distinctive construct from symbolic consumption

construct, particularly destination identity, destination reputation, self-congruence and lifestyle-congruence.

*Tourist satisfaction*: Tourist satisfaction is the end state of a psychological process based on tourists' overall consumption of tourism destination (Hsu et al., 2008).

*Destination loyalty*: Destination loyalty can be defined and assessed by both attitudinal and behavioral measures and the degree of destination loyalty is generally reflected in tourists' intentions to revisit the destination, their willingness to recommend it, and their willingness to tell others about their trip (Chen & Tsai, 2007; Kao et al., 2008; Oppermann, 2000).

# CHAPTER TWO

# LITERATURE REVIEW

The first part of this chapter provides the theoretical foundation applied in this study, namely social identity theory and self-congruity theory, followed by the discussions and categorization of consumption of tourism destination. Finally, this chapter describes each research construct such as (1) symbolic consumption including destination identity, destination reputation, self-congruence, lifestyle congruence; (2) experiential consumption; (3) functional consumption; (4) destination identification, (5) tourist satisfaction; and (6) destination loyalty.

## 2.1 Theoretical Foundation.

This study aims to examine the effects of symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destination brand on tourists' social identification and satisfaction, which are further proposed to affect tourists' behavioral outcomes. In order to optimize the synergistic effects of these consumptions of tourism destination brand on tourists' behavior, this study proposes the relationship links between symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destination brand and destination brand identification and tourist satisfaction, both of which are in turn proposed to positively affect tourists' destination loyalty. More specifically, this study proposes two mediators (i.e. destination brand identification and tourist satisfaction) to determine whether or not the two mediators can significantly positively influence and synergize the relationships between the symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and

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functional consumption of destination brand and tourists' behavior, based on the perspectives of social identity theory and self-congruity theory.

*2.1.1 Social Identity Theory.*

Social identity theory helps explain consumption's social aspects. Social identity theory (Brewer, 1991; Tajfel & Turner, 1985) posits that in articulating their sense of self, people typically go beyond their personal identity to develop a social identity. Personal identity consists of idiosyncratic characteristics, such as abilities and interests, whereas social identity consists of salient group classifications that, in turn, may be based on demographic categories, gender, or race, as well as membership in central organization, such as clubs or religious, educational, or cultural institutions (Bhattacharya, Rao, & Glynn, 1995). They do so by identifying with or categorizing themselves in a contextual manner as members of various social categories (e.g. gender, ethnicity, occupation, sports teams as well as other, more short-lived and transient groups). In short, social identification implies that people tend to use various factors to classify themselves as belongings to a specific group or an organization.

Social identification stems from the categorizations of individuals, the distinctiveness and prestige of the group, the salience of outgroup and the factors that traditionally are associated with group formation (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). This group includes not only a reference group which people belong to, but also a group which they aspire to belong to (Kim, Han, & Park, 2001). In addition, the social identity theory postulates that people define themselves according to their relationship with particular groups and in distinction from the members of other social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1985).

Previous studies reveal that the more an individual's identification with a social entity (e.g., a group of consumers or organizations) becomes self-defining for them, the more they attempt to forge strong links between themselves and the entity in order

to develop the desired identity (Belen del Rio, Vazquez, & Iglesias, 2001; Grappi & Montanari, 2011; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). As a result, the degree to which people identity with different social groups may affect their behaviors (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Grappi & Montanari, 2011). For example, in organizational studies, identification with an organization causes people to become psychologically attached to and care about the organization, which motivates them to commit to the achievement of its goals, expend more voluntary efforts on its behalf, and interact and cooperate with organizational members positively (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). In addition, identification of an individual with an organization or group has resulted in alumni's contribution to their Alma Mater (Mael & Ashforth, 1992), group cooperation (Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994), and willingness to contribute to collective work (Shamir, 1990). Belen del Rio et al. (2001) remake that social identification theory states that consumer identification with certain groups leads to developing an affinity towards them.

Social identity theory, which was originally investigated in the sociological and psychological disciplines for some time, has then been investigated in a number of organizational studies (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000) and later in organization behavior and human resource management (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). More recently, social identity theory was investigated in the consumer product brand research. The concept of brand identification is built on social identity theory (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010). Social identification in consumer-brand context takes place when an individual identifies with a certain group through the consumption of consumer product brands (Kuenzel & Halliday, 2008). Kuenzel and Halliday (2010) state that social identity theory is useful for understanding consumer behavior because a consumer need neither overtly act

together with other consumers nor even know them, but nevertheless sees himself or herself as part of social group.

Most recently, social identity theory has been applied to tourism destination branding research context. Ekinci et al. (2013) expand the social identity theory in tourism and reveal that tourists go beyond their personal identity to develop social identity and express sense of belonging to a social group via their self-identification with the tourism destination brand. Similarly, Stokburger-Sauer (2011) investigates the nation brand identification of German tourists visiting Ireland and claims that nation brand identified travelers are more likely to revisit and promote that particular nation as a tourism destination. In addition, Grappi and Montanari (2011) examine the role of social identification in affecting tourist re-patronizing behaviors in an Italian festival. The interesting results of their study regard the role of consumer's identification with other festival attendees, which positively affect their re-patronizing intentions. Drawing on these theoretical premises, it is particularly timely for this study to conceptualize how tourists' consumption behavior and behavioral outcomes can be understood using social identity theory.

*2.1.2 Self-Congruity Theory.*

Self-congruity theory suggests that since people often use brand meaning for self-expression, then consumers will have favorable predispositions towards the products and brands that serve to enhance perceptions of their own self-image (Sirgy, 1986). A number of scholars specify that consumers often prefer brands, products, and stores that project images similar (i.e., congruent) with how they perceived themselves to be as individuals, that is, their self-image (Belk, 1988; Graeff, 1996; Lam et al., 2013; Sirgy, 1982; Solomon, 1983). The degree of consistency between consumer's self-concept and that of brand is referred to as self-image/product-image congruity, self-image congruence, or self-congruity for short (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

The mental process of comparing self to other objects, called self-congruity, characterizes the match or mismatch between consumer self-image and a product image, brand image, or company image (Sirgy, 1986), between destination brand's image and the tourist's actual or ideal self-image (Ekinci et al., 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011) or between tourist's self-image and the image of other people visiting the same destination (Ahn, Ekinci, & Li, 2013).

Self-congruity theory postulates that consumers prefer those brands carrying symbolic value that enables them to portray or enhance their actual or desired self-image in order to derive emotional benefits, not functional benefits. Thus, this theory explains how self-congruence drives brand identification and brand loyalty through self-congruity (Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010; Lam et al., 2013).

In addition, the self-congruity theory proposes that consumer behavior is determined partially by a cognitive matching between value-expressive attributes of a product or band and consumer self-concept (Sirgy, Johar, Samli, & Claiborne, 1991). Hence, we believe that tourist behavior is determined, in part, by a cognitive matching between value-expressive attributes of a tourism destination and tourist self-concept.

## 2.2 Consumption of Tourism Destination.

Consumption is defined as the "selection, purchase, use, maintenance, repair, and disposal of any good or service" (Campbell, 1987). Consumption of an object or brand is more than a single activity associated with using a material object; the process includes pre-purchase and post-purchase activities (Ekinci et al., 2013). Leisure activities are argued to be good examples of consumption behavior because they are charged with meaning (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). In recent years, emerging attention has been paid to consumption of tourism destinations (Ahn et al., 2013; Chon, 1992; Ekinci et al., 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011).

Among many tourism research scholars, Bajs (2011) investigates the functional attributes of tourist destinations to find out which are the most important for tourists' perceptions and how tourists evaluate the destination in comparison with other visited destinations. Ahn et al. (2013) study the influences of self-congruence and functional congruence on destination choice. The findings from their study suggest that a tourist's destination choice is influenced strongly by functional attributes of tourism destinations, but not by self-congruence. However, Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) argue that consumption of leisure services such as amusement parks, upscale restaurants, theaters, resorts, recreation centers, and sporting events is driven by emotional or hedonic motives rather than functional motives.

Furthermore, Levy (1959) and Elliott (1999) argue people engage in consumption activities for both functional benefits and symbolic properties. Consumers no longer consume products solely for their utility, but because of their symbolic meanings (Jurisic & Azvedo, 2011). In addition, Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) propose that customers have both functional experiences and enjoyable experience, with the two types differing from proportion and weight. Functional customer experience arises from the consumption of a product's functions, and enjoyable experience derives from sensations generated when consumers buy products (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982), whereas symbolic consumption occurs when consumers choose, buy, and use products to assist individuals in the creation, confirmation, and communication of their identity (Belk, Bahn, & Mayor, 1982; Bhat & Reddy, 1998) and lifestyle (McCracken, 1987).

The consumption of tourism destination brands, just like that of other consumer product brands, is argued to be consumed for functional benefits (Bajs, 2011; Murphy et al., 2007), experiential benefits (Beeho & Prentice, 1997; Grappi & Montanari, 2011; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Ruzzier & Ruzzier, 2009) and symbolic meanings (Chon, 1992; Ekinci et al., 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011). Accordingly, in

this study we investigate the three different perspectives of tourism destination consumptions, namely symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption.

*2.2.1 Symbolic Consumption of Tourism Destination.*

Renewed attention has been paid to the symbolic consumption of objects during the past decades. Symbolic consumption describes the fundamental part in the creation, enhancement, maintenance, transportation, disposition, expression, association, and differentiation of the self (Ahuvia, Lacobucci, & Thompson, 2005; Bhat & Reddy, 1998). Symbolic consumption is argued to be a major component of reflexive evaluation, which in turn affects the consumer's future adoption and use of products and individual consumers are evaluated and placed in a social nexus to a significant degree by the products which surround them (Solomon, 1983). Park, Jaworski, and MacInnis (1986) note that symbolic consumptions are related to self-image and social identification.

Consumption's symbolic meaning is particularly important in the world of brands because their creation and commercialization depends on their symbolic properties. Brands are increasingly seen as symbolic resources for expressing the individual's self-concept (Bhat & Reddy, 1998; McCracken, 1987), personality, lifestyle of consumers, social distinction (McCracken, 1987; Sirgy, 1982), and prestige (Bhat & Reddy, 1998). Consuming a specific brand and associated brand image allows consumers to create, transform, and express their self-identity (Belk et al., 1982; Bhat & Reddy, 1998). The socio-cultural context suggests consumption objects represent something about the individual's social self, including status, prestige, and association or disassociation from a group (Sorensen & Thomsen, 2006). Previous studies mainly investigate self-congruence as the symbolic consumption of tourism destination (Ahn et al., 2013; Hung & Petrick, 2011). Recently, Ekinci et al. (2013) study the symbolic

consumption of a Antalya, a famous tourism destination brand of Turkish resort city with three components: self-congruence, lifestyle-congruence and destination brand identity. Bhat and Reddy (1998) remark that symbolic brands satisfy symbolic needs such as those for self-expression or prestige, namely reputation. Based on the above studies, we include four components (destination identity, destination reputation, self-congruence and lifestyle-congruence) as the symbolic consumption of tourism destinations in this study.

Destination brand identity comprises the ways that a destination or a tourism provider aims to identify or position itself or its products. An effective brand identity established the destination's character and value proposition, conveys the character in a distinctive way, and delivers emotional power beyond a mental image (Wheeler, Frost, & Weiler, 2011). A destination identity should clearly incorporate its unique characteristics. In practice, destination branding is often equated with destination brand identity and slogans, although the nature of it is much more complex. Brand identity is a necessary condition for evaluating destinations from customers' perspective (Ruzzier & Ruzzier, 2009). Brand identity relates to how brand owners want the destination to be perceived, encapsulating the features and beneficial attributes, as well as the symbolic, experiential, social and emotional values of the place which are imbued in the brand (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2005).

A brand reputation refers to the opinion of others that the brand is good and reliable. Brand reputation of a destination can be developed through advertising and public relations, but it is also likely to be influenced by product quality and performance offered by the destination (Lau & Lee, 1999). Keane (1996) applies the reputation model to destinations and concludes that high prices may be interpreted as signals of high quality and that the premium component included in prices would guarantee this quality. Consumers base their expectation of quality on the reputation

of the destination which can be identified with its quality in the past and which can determine the price. This premium can be viewed either as 'return on reputation' or as incentive payment to induce quality maintenance.

Self-congruence refers to the degree to which a consumer's actual or ideal self-concept coincides with a brand image (Nam, Ekinci, & Whyatt, 2011; Sirgy, 1982). In tourism, self-congruence is the degree of match/mismatch between destination brand's image and the tourist's actual or ideal self-image (Ekinci et al., 2013). According to a research by Sirgy (1982), consumers compare the external stimuli taken from product attributes against their self-concept. This idea then extended to suggest that the greater the degree of congruence between self-concept and a product's image, the higher the probability of symbolic consumption.

Lifestyle-congruence is defined as the degree of match/mismatch between the destination brand experience and tourist's actual or desired lifestyle (Ekinci et al., 2013). Ekinci et al. (2013) argue that lifestyle-congruence differs from self-congruence because their comparisons and antecedents are different. Tourists consciously use consumption goals, activities and interests, and opinions as tangible reference points of assessing their lifestyle-congruence. Solomon (2002) suggests that lifestyle consists of shared value, tastes in consumption pattern, and contains symbolic nuances differentiating groups.

*2.2.2 Experiential Consumption of Tourism Destination.*

The conceptualization of experiential quality (experiential consumption) seems to overlap with that of service quality and tourist satisfaction (Hsu et al., 2008). Otto and Ritchie (1996) investigate the service experience in tourism industry and discuss the difference between service quality and experience quality. They argue that experience quality is subjective in terms of measurements, while service quality is objective. In addition, while the consumption benefit of service quality is functional or utilitarian,

experience quality is consumed for experiential, hedonic or symbolic meanings. Investigating consumers of three tourism service sectors including hotels, airlines, and tours and attractions, Otto and Ritchie (1996) develop an experience quality scale with four factors: hedonics, peace of mind, involvement and recognition. Among the four factors of experience quality, hedonics accounts for not only the greatest individual variance (33.3% of the total 61.3%) but for more variance that the other three factors combined.

Tian-Cole, Cromption, and Willson (2002) develop a model in which performance quality and experience quality were conceptualized as direct antecedents of overall service quality and visitor satisfaction. In their study, performance quality (also referred to as service quality) is defined as visitors' perceptions of the attributes of a facility that are controlled by management, while experience quality is defined as the psychological outcomes which visitors derive from visiting a facility and tourist satisfaction is defined as visitors' levels of satisfaction towards their total experiences with the recreation service, i.e., it is the summation of the specific attributes. Specifically, they conceptualize performance quality, experience quality and tourist satisfaction as different constructs in their study. They measure performance quality with five domains (education and conservation, staff/volunteer, comfort amenities, cleanliness, and information), experience quality with eight domains (nature appreciation/learning, achievement, introspection/nostalgia, escape, similar people, physical fitness, family togetherness, and new people) and tourist satisfaction with four items on semantic differential scales (favorable—unfavorable, satisfied—dissatisfied, pleased—displeased, and positive—negative).

In addition, Tian-Cole and Scott (2004) examine the meditating role of experience quality between performance quality and tourists' overall satisfaction and revisit intention of visitors to The Rain Forest, an exhibit at Cleveland Metroparks

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Zoo, in Cleveland, Ohio. In their study, they define service quality as the "quality of the attributes of a tourism destination which are under the control of a supplier," and experience quality as "benefits or outcomes that people experience as a result of a trip or visit to a tourism destination." More specifically, service quality is provided and consumed at the attribute level and experience quality refers to the psychological outcome resulting from their participation in tourism activities. They measure performance quality with three dimensions (ambiance, amenities and comfort) and experience quality with three dimensions (entertainment, education and community). Accordingly, we argue that functional quality (functional consumption), experience quality (experiential consumption) and tourist satisfaction are different constructs. In our study, we define experiential consumption as a constant flow of thoughts and feelings during the moments of consciousness (Carlson, 1997), which occur through highly complex psychological, sociological, and cognitive interaction processes (Kang & Gretzel, 2012) which results in enjoyment, learning and memorable experience benefits after a trip or visit to a tourism destination.

Kao et al. (2008) measure experiential quality of tourists with a theme park with four factors such as immersion, surprise, participation and fun. Similarly, Kang and Gretzel (2012) investigate the effects of podcast tours on tourist experience in a national park with three important dimensions—learning, enjoyment and escape. They argue that these three dimensions are constantly identified in the tourism literature and used to measure important experiential dimensions. Table 2-1 summarizes the differences between experiential quality, known as experiential consumption in this study and service quality, known as functional consumption in this study. Table 2-2 summarizes the differences between experiential quality and tourist satisfaction.

Based on the above studies and conceptualization of tourist experience, in our study we measure experiential consumption with three factors: hedonism, education,

and escape. Hedonism is the aspect of consumption experience that relates to the multi-sensory, imaginative, and emotive elements perceived by consumers (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). Hedonism is an important dimension in an individual's evaluation of a consumption experience (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994). The significant part of the value of a product or service perceived by consumers depends on the level of hedonism they obtain and within the consumption experience described as amusing and pleasurable; the most important benefits consumers received is hedonic worth (Grappi & Montanari, 2011). According to previous studies, hedonic consumption perceived by a tourist is defined as the dimension reflecting the emotional value of their consumption experience and representing their satisfaction in terms of enjoyment and playfulness (Babin et al., 1994; Grappi & Montanari, 2011; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982).

A learning experience is defined as an experience by which tourists obtain information about new things and acquire novel skills (Kang & Gretzel, 2012; Ryan, 1997). Escape is defined as an experience by which tourist feel immersed in the environment at the destination and, thus, apart from the constraints of ordinary life (Pearce, 2005).

Table 2-1

*Summary of Experience Quality and Service Quality*

| Reference | Constructs | Definition | Dimensions | Context | Sample | Research Type |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Otto & Ritchie, 1996) | Experience quality | The 'experience' of leisure and tourism can be described as the subjective mental state felt by participants. | 4 factors: hedonics, peace of mind, involvement, recognition | Hotels, airline, tours & Attractions | 339 customers | Qualitative |
| | Service quality | Service quality refers to service performance at the attribute level. | Argued to be attribute-based measurement similar to those of SERVQUAL | | | |
| (Tian-Cole et al., 2002) | Experience quality | The psychological outcomes which visitors derive from visiting a facility. | 6 domains: nature appreciation/learning, achievement, introspection/Nostalgia, escape, similar people, physical fitness | National wildlife refuge | 282 visitors | Qualitative |
| | Performance/ Service quality | Visitors' perceptions of the attributes of a facility that are controlled by management. | 5 domains: education/conservation, staff/volunteer, comfort amenities, cleanliness, information | | | |
| (Tian-Cole & Scott, 2004) | Experience quality | Experience quality is defined as those benefits or outcomes that people experience as a result of a trip or visit to a tourist attraction. | 3 dimensions: entertainment, education, community | The RainForest, an exhibit at Cleverland Metroparks Zoo | 496 visitors | Qualitative |
| | Performance/ service quality | Performance quality is defined as the quality of the attributes of a service which are under the control of a supplier. | 3 dimensions: ambiance, amenities, comfort | | | |

Table 2-2

*Summary of Experience Quality and Tourist Satisfaction*

| Reference | Construct Names | Definition | Dimensions | Context | Sample | Research Type |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Tian-Cole et al., 2002) | Experience quality | The specific benefits people obtain while visiting a specific destination | 6 domains: nature appreciation/learning, achievement, introspection/Nostalgia, escape, similar people, physical fitness | National wildlife refuge | 282 visitors | Qualitative |
| | Satisfaction | Visitors' levels of satisfaction towards their total experience with the recreation service, i.e. it is the summation of the specific benefits. | 4 items: favorable-unfavorable, satisfied-dissatisfied, please-displeased, positive-negative | | | |
| (Tian-Cole & Scott, 2004) | Experience quality | Experience quality is defined as those benefits or outcomes that people experience as a result of a trip or visit to a tourist attraction. | 3 dimensions: entertainment, education, community | The RainForest, an exhibit at Cleverland Metroparks Zoo | 496 visitors | Qualitative |
| | Tourist satisfaction | Tourist satisfaction is defined as the aggregate feeling that one derives as a result of visiting a tourist attraction. | 1 item: overall satisfied with visit to the tourist attraction | | | |
| (Kao et al., 2008) | Experience quality | Experience consumption may be essentially esthetic in nature and hinge on the appreciation of the products for its own sake; apart from any function it may concern. | 4 elements: immersion, surprise, participation, fun | Ocean Theme Park | 408 visitors | Qualitative |
| | Experience satisfaction | Experience satisfaction is conceived of on the basic of the concept of service satisfaction, thought it extends beyond service satisfaction in that it focuses on consumer overall evaluation of their experience after consumption. | 4 items: the park goes beyond my expectation, today is really a nice day, I really liked this trip to the theme park, and it is worthwhile to be here. | | | |

*2.2.3 Functional Consumption of Tourism Destination.*

In tourism literature, there is a consensus that tourists' choice of a destination is influenced by psychological and functional variables (Sirakaya et al., 2001). Functional variables of tourism destinations have been investigated by many tourism scholars in the past decades. Some scholars investigate functional consumption of tourism destination based on service/performance quality of the destination. For instance, Tian-Cole et al. (2002) measure the performance quality of Aransa National Wildlife Refuge with a list of wildlife refuge attributes which are classified into 5 domains: education and conservation, staff/volunteer, comfort amenities, cleanliness, and information. To measure dimensions of performance quality perceived by visitors to The RainForest, an exhibit at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, Tian-Cole and Scott (2004) develop three multi-item scales such as ambiance (variety of animals, easy to see animals, animals in life-like surroundings, authentic like a real rain forest, variety of plants, descriptive pictures of animals, entertaining), amenities (availability of a good restaurant, availability of a gift shop) and comfort (places to sit and rest, cleanliness of restrooms, affordable admission prices, cleanliness, helpfulness of employees, convenient parking, ability to purchase tickets in advance, uncrowded).

Some other scholars refer perceived quality to be the functional attributes of a product or brand consumers consume (Keller, 1993; Lam et al., 2013; Mittal, 2006). They argue that perceived quality can be formed by a consumer's perceptions about the functional attributes of a product and also by perception of more abstract and global attributes such as brand name (Dodds, Monroe, & Greval, 1991; Lam et al., 2013). Chen and Myagmarsuren (2010) define destination perceived quality as a comparison between the perceptions of the performance and the consumers' expectation of the service. They measure destination perceived quality with three factors: amenities (great value tourism, high quality tourism amenities, employee's

attitude is good), service (high quality accommodation services, good quality local transport services, good quality food service), and place (interesting historical and cultural attractions and entertaining activities and events).

However, another school of scholars investigates functional consumption of tourism destination based on tourism destination functional congruence. Sirgy and Su (2000) define functional congruity of a tourism destination as the perceived utilitarian/functional aspects of the products (service) in reference to some ideal aspects. For example, the proximity to the resort from tourists' resident, the price range of alternative resort facilities, the quality of the services the resort carries, the variety of activities and/or the possible use of credit card are utilitarian or functional in nature of a tourism destination. Hung and Petrick (2011) investigate the functional consumption (functional congruity) of crushing service by asking participants to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with 21 items of functional attributes of cruising and cognitive images of cruising constructs which are categorized into 3 factors: services, space and activities. Bajs (2011) reveals eight factors of tourist destinations' attributes, which have strong impacts on tourist perception: quality of the accommodation, quality of food and drink, quality of entertainment, quality of tourist service and tourist infrastructure, quality of transportation, hospitality and concerns about tourists, the emotional experience of destinations and tourist attraction. Ahn et al. (2013) measure functional congruence (functional consumption) of tourism destination with 23 tourism destination functional attributes of 5 factors such as tourist facilities and comfort, quality of food, cultural heritage, tourist leisure activities, and quality of natural resources. Based on the above discussions, in this study functional consumption of tourism destination, also referred to as perceived functional quality of tourism destination, is defined as the quality of the functional attributes of a tourism

destination which are under the control of a destination manager. Table 2-3 shows the

summary of functional attributes of tourism destination from previous studies.

Table 2-3

*Functional Attributes of Tourism Destination*

| Reference | Construct | Construct Measurement | Factors/Attributes | Context |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Tian-Cole et al., 2002) | Performance/ Service quality | Quality of performance was operationalized by a list of attributes of the wildlife refuge. | 5 domains: education/conservation, staff/volunteer, comfort amenities, cleanliness, information, | National wildlife refuge |
| (Tian-Cole & Scott, 2004) | Performance/ service quality | A list of 17 attributes of service quality was created to measure performance quality. | 3 domains: ambiance (variety of animals, easy to see animals, animals in life-like surroundings, authentic like a real rain forest, variety of plants, descriptive pictures of animals, entertaining), amenities (availability of a good restaurant, availability of a gift shop) and comfort (places to sit and rest, cleanliness of restrooms, affordable admission prices, cleanliness, helpfulness of employees, convenient parking, ability to purchase tickets in advance, uncrowded) | The RainForest, an exhibit at Cleverland Metroparks Zoo |
| (Chen & Myagmarsuren, 2010) | Perceived destination quality | Eight items were used to measure destination perceived quality, a comparison between the perceptions of the performance and the consumer's expectation of the service. | 3 factors: amenities (great value tourism service, high quality tourism amenities, employees' attitude), service (accommodation service, local transportation service, food service) and place (historical and cultural attraction, entertaining activities and events) | International tourists to Mongolia destination |
| (Hung & Petrick, 2011) | Functional Congruity | Functional congruity was measured with 21 measurement items of attributes of cruising. | 3 factors: services (excellent service, higher than average service, eating options, care of my needs, an opportunity to eat good food), space (comfortable accommodations, spacious cabin, a lot of open space, a small number of passengers), activities (a variety of activities, an opportunity to engage in different activities from home, a wide range of itineraries and good entertainment. | Cruise Line Companies |
| (Ahn et al., 2013) | Functional congruence | Functional congruence was measured with 23 tourism destination functional attributes. | 5 factors: tourist facilities and comfort, quality of food, cultural heritages, tourist leisure activities, and quality of natural resources | UK residents as tourists to 8 holiday destinations |

## 2.3 Tourism Destination Identification.

The concept of identification has been extensively studied in organizational science research and has been investigated in settings where a formal relationship exists between individual and the object of identification (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). Social identification is related to the desire to be accepted by and feel members of certain groups. Status corresponds to the individual's desire to achieve prestige and recognition from others, without this necessarily meaning that the brand is representative of their social group. Hence, status even impedes the individual's identification with certain social groups (Belen del Rio et al., 2001). Social identification is understood as 'the perception of oneness with or belongingness to some human aggregate or as the perception of belongingness to a group classification' (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The individual perceives himself or herself as an actual or symbolic member of the group; he or she perceives himself or herself as psychologically intertwined with the fate of the group, as sharing a common destiny and experiencing its success and failures (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Research scholars have investigated the identification between employees and work organizations (Ahearne, Bhattacharya, & Thomas, 2005), students and their alma mater (Mael & Ashforth, 1992), consumers and brands (He & Li, 2011; He et al., 2012), and recently tourists and tourism destination brands (Ekinci et al., 2013; Grappi & Montanari, 2011; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011). Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) state that when consumers use a brand and associate themselves with that particular brand, they reinforce their social identities. In addition, some scholars argue that tourists visit a particular destination not just for the functional benefits, but also for the symbolic meanings, with which they express their social identity and sense of belonging to a social group through identification with that tourism destination brand to enhance their self-concept and lifestyles (Ekinci et al., 2013).

Some scholars argue that consumers have a greater tendency to identify with a brand if the focal brand has a strong identity in terms of being distinctive and prestigious than those of compared brands (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Dutton et al., 1994). Similarly, consumer-company identification derives mainly from corporate identity (Ahearne et al., 2005) and employee-organization identification derives from organizational identity (Dutton et al., 1994). Drawing on these findings, He et al. (2012) find that consumer-brand identification derives from brand identity and brand identification meditates the effects of brand identity on customer satisfaction and brand loyalty.

Grappi and Montanari (2011) argue that the more hedonic experience tourists receive from a visit to a festival, the more they are willing to express their social identification with other tourists at the festival. Research studies of consumer products show that customer identification with a brand leads to high brand loyalty (He et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2001) and positive word-of-mouth communication (Kim et al., 2001). Identification of an individual with an entity, for example an organization or a nation, activates important behavioral outcomes (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000). In addition, He and Li (2011) argue that the effect of brand identification on brand loyalty passes through customer satisfaction for a few reasons. For the first reason, customer satisfaction refers to the accumulated general emotional evaluation of a company's services over time and is found to have influence on customer loyalty (Anderson, Fornell, & Mazvancheryl, 2004). For another reason, brand identification has a positive effect on customer satisfaction. Based on expectation disconfirmation theory of customer satisfaction, customers are more likely to be satisfied when the actual brand performance exceeds or confirms prior expectation. Brand identification provides a more favorable context for customers to response to brand performance as against to prior expectation (Yi & La, 2004). When the actual brand performance

meets or exceeds the expectation, customers with stronger brand identification would be more satisfied because it reassures customers of their psychological attachment with the brand, which in turn helps customers to preserve its self-esteem (He & Li, 2011).

Drawing on the related definitions of social identification and brand identification, Stokburger-Sauer (2011) defines tourism destination brand identification as the perception of belongingness to the destination brand, and thus, experiencing the destination brand's success and failures. He then proposes the idea of identification of an individual tourist with a tourism destination brand and finds tourists identify themselves with the groups of travelers visiting a destination and an identification of tourists with a tourism destination can occur even in the absence of a formal linkage and activates tourists' behavioral outcomes, particularly loyalty and positive worth-of-mouth (Ekinci et al., 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011). Based on the above discussions, we argue that destination brand identification derives from the symbolic meanings such as destination identity, destination reputation, self-congruence and lifestyle-congruence; experiential benefits; and functional qualities of tourism destinations and it plays an important role in explaining a reflection of tourists' consumption behaviors and activating tourists' satisfaction and behavioral outcomes.

## 2.4 Tourist Satisfaction.

Tourist satisfaction is important to successful destination marketing because it influences the choice of destination, the consumption of the products and services and the decision to return. Yet, different approaches to the measurement of customer satisfaction have been explored and defined during the past decades (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000). Mannel and Kleiber (1997) classify satisfaction into two categories based on the level of specificity: component satisfaction and overall

satisfaction. Component satisfaction has been operationalized in terms of people's ratings of the specific features or attributes of a resource or vacation destination. Overall satisfaction is defined as the aggregate feeling that one derives as a result of visiting a tourist attraction (Tian-Cole & Scott, 2004) and is measured with a 4-item modified semantic differential scale (Tian-Cole et al., 2002). Tourist satisfaction is primarily referred to as a function of pre-travel expectation and post-travel experience and measured with a single item on a five point rating scale (Chen & Chen, 2010; Chen & Tsai, 2007). Hsu et al. (2008) define tourist satisfaction as the end state of a psychological process based on tourists' overall consumption of tourism destination. Therefore, this study measures tourists' satisfaction on their pre-travel and post-travel expectation comparison, the meaning of their trip, their travel experience, and overall satisfaction.

**2.5 Destination Loyalty.**

For decades, scholars of consumer research have investigated loyalty from two different perspectives: behavioral and attitudinal loyalty (Bandyopadhyay & Martell, 2007). Behavioral loyalty refers to the frequency of repeat purchase of brand, while attitudinal loyalty describe a consumer's favorable feeling about a destination brand (Ekinci et al., 2013). However, Chen and Gursoy (2001) criticize the use of behavioral approach to assess destination loyalty and argue that the attitudinal approach is best suited to assess tourists' destination loyalty because tourism destination experiences are different from other consumption objects. Despite having no intention to revisit the same destination, tourists are still considered loyal to a destination as they provide positive word-of-mouth. Oppermann (2000) explains that tourists' destination loyalty is reflected in their intentions to revisit the destination and their intentions to recommend it to others. In addition, he suggests that destination loyalty should be investigated longitudinally, looking at lifelong visit behavior. Based on the above

discussions, this study measures tourists' destination loyalty by their intention to revisit the destination in the future, their willingness to recommend it to others, and their intention to tell others about their trip to the destination.

# CHAPTER THREE

# RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Conceptual Model.

Figure 3-1 illustrates the proposed conceptual model. The study integrates the social identification perspective with symbolic consumption (brand identity, brand reputation, self-congruence and lifestyle-congruence), experiential consumption (experiential quality), and functional consumption (functional quality) of tourism destination in explaining tourists' satisfaction and destination loyalty.

Consumption of Tourism Destination     Mediators                    Outcomes
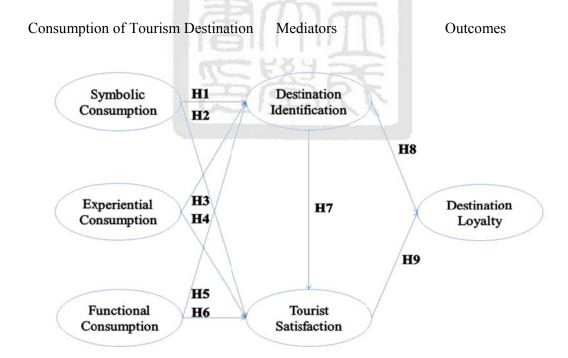


*Figure 3-1.* Conceptual framework

**3.2 Hypotheses Development.**

*Symbolic Consumption, Destination Identification, and Tourist Satisfaction*.

The social identity perspective of customer-brand relationships suggests that consumers engage in pro-brand behavior because they identify with the focal brand or company, and such brand identification arises largely due to the identity of the brand (Ahearne et al., 2005; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). Social identity perspective places brand identity as a key antecedent to brand identification (He et al., 2012). Marin, Ruiz, and Rubio (2009) have confirmed that the company identity attractiveness perceived by the consumers positively influences the consumer-company identification. Customers can develop strong relationships with a brand for its identity (Fournier, 1998). He et al. (2012) investigate the social identity perspective on brand loyalty of Taiwanese consumers' mobile phone consumption in Taipei. The results of their study show that the identity (identity prestige and distinctiveness) of mobile phone brand positively influences consumers' identification with the brand.

Consumers also identity with brands having a good reputation among their reference groups, or aspiration groups, and distance themselves from brands having no reputation in those groups (Long & Schiffman, 2000). Consumers who are interested in the social identification of the brand will positively value those brands that enjoy a good reputation among the groups with which they belong to or aspire to form part of (Belen del Rio et al., 2001; Long & Schiffman, 2000). Keh and Xie (2009) have found that the reputation of corporation positively influences customer's identification. If the reputation is perceived as successful and well-known by consumers, this may also enhance their pride in identifying with a brand that has a good reputation. Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) point out that when a person associates himself with a well-regarded brand, then positive identification is generated. Brand reputation has been found to have a positive effect on brand identification (Kuenzel & Halliday,

2010). This means that the higher the reputation of the brand, the more the customer will identify with the brand. This leads us to assume that tourists associate themselves with well-regarded destination brands to increase their self-esteem.

Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006) argue that consumers are more likely to identify themselves with a brand whose image is congruent with their self-concepts and their identification with a brand is the extent to which they see their own self-image as overlapping with the brand's image. Consumers who use their cars to consciously enact their social identity will select and purchase a car with symbolic meanings that are congruent with their self-image(s) (Sowden & Grimmer, 2009) and use their cars as symbols of identity and social status (Froud, Johal, Leaver, & Williams, 2005). The idea of brand personality was developed out of the notion of brand image in the early 1950s (Gardner & Levy, 1955); hence, brand personality is generally viewed as brand image component (Magin, Algesheimer, Huber, & Herrmann, 2003). Kuenzel and Halliday (2010) find out that the brand personality congruence has a positive effect on brand identification. Following the underlying ideas of the theories of self-concept and self-congruity, Stokburger-Sauer (2011) investigates the consumer-brand identification in a tourism branding context and finds that the congruence between national brand personality and the individual's personality fosters nation brand identification.

Brand consumption has been found to have a relationship link with lifestyle expression (Solomon, 2002). Chaney (1996) views lifestyle as the consumption of sets of goods and services in response to a perceived loss of meaning in everyday life. Consumers view brands as a representation of certain lifestyles. For example, the IKEA brand not only promotes "value for money" but also the Swedish lifestyle. O'Shaughnessy (1987) suggests consumers' purchasing patterns of brands relate to a desired lifestyle. Lifestyle congruence has been used in the study of Belen del Rio et

al. (2001) to measure personal identification with the brand and it is found that consumers' identification with lifestyle congruence may lead consumers to recommend the brand. Lifestyle traveler affords a rich conceptual tool with which to interrogate the proposition of back-packer tourism as a way of life, providing a means of both identifying this lifestyle group from within a broader social mix and understanding how backpacker consumption practices can be assembled into a meaningful personal identity (Cohen, 2011). In addition, some scholars argued that brands are increasingly consumed by consumers to express their lifestyle and social distinction (McCracken, 1987; Sirgy, 1982). Given these related findings, we advance the following hypothesis:

*H1: Symbolic consumption of tourism destination positively affects destination identification.*

A brand with strong brand identity tends to satisfy customers' symbolic needs more than their functional needs and positively influence consumers' satisfaction (He et al., 2012). When the service attributes are difficult to evaluate, reputation is assumed to have an impact on customer's choice of a brand (Andreassen & Lindestad, 1997) and stronger customer-brand relationship (Jurisic & Azvedo, 2011). Loureiro and Kastenholz (2011) investigate the reputation, satisfaction, delight, and loyalty relationships in the rural accommodation context among tourists visiting Portugal and find that the brand reputation of the lodging unit has proven to be the main antecedent of perceived quality, satisfaction, and loyalty and has an indirect effect on loyalty through satisfaction. Kuenzel and Halliday (2008) find out brand reputation of car positively influences car customers' satisfaction. Camara (2011) investigates the determinants of consumer intention to go to a tourist destination and reveals that destination reputation as an antecedent of consumer intention to go to a certain tourist destination.

Chon (1992) applies self-congruence theory in his seminal study to investigate tourists' post-consumption evaluation of a tourism destination. The findings of his study reveal that the congruence between self-image and destination image positively influences tourist's satisfaction with destinations. A study by Ekinci, Dawes, and Massey (2008) shows that service quality and ideal self-congruence are antecedents of consumer satisfaction, which is a key determinant of intention to return. In addition, Litwin and Kar (2003) find that congruity of destination image and self-image of those tourists visiting Singapore was found to be related to their satisfaction with the visit to the republic.

Lifestyle congruence has been used in the study of Belen del Rio et al. (2001) to measure personal identification with the brand and it is found that consumers' identification with lifestyle congruence may lead consumers to recommend the brand. Consumers who identify their lifestyles with a particular brand develop positive feelings of affinity towards them (Orth, McDaniel, Shellhammer, & Lopetcharat, 2004). Nam et al. (2011) claim life-style congruence has a positive effect on consumer satisfaction. Given these related findings, we propose that:

*H2: Symbolic consumption of tourism destination positively affects tourist satisfaction.*

*Experiential consumption, destination identification, and tourist satisfaction*

Hedonism is the main aspect of consumption experience that relates to the multi-sensory, imaginative and emotive elements perceived by consumers (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). Since a consumer's social identification represents the emotional and evaluative significance of their membership of a group (Babin & Dholakia, 2006), the more an individual enjoys the social experience of a tour and obtains hedonic and emotional rewards, the more he or she will be inclined to define himself or herself through affiliation with other travelers, thus increasing their level of social

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identification (Grappi & Montanari, 2011). Grappi and Montanari (2011) investigate the roles of social identification in affecting tourist re-patronizing behaviors in an Italian festival. They use hedonism consumption as the only main factor to measure tourist experience in their study and find that the hedonic consumption experience tourists received from participating the festival leads to social identification. Given these related findings, this study hypothesizes that:

*H3: Experiential consumption of tourism destination positively affects destination identification.*

Experience is becoming the best way to satisfy consumer demands (Kao et al., 2008). Chen and Chen (2010) examine the tourist experience of heritage tourism in a historical city in Taiwan and find that the experience quality tourists received from visiting the city increases the level of their satisfaction. Several other scholars also reveal that experience quality tourists received from visiting a particular destination positively influences their satisfaction (Kao et al., 2008; Tian-Cole et al., 2002; Tian-Cole & Scott, 2004). Given these related findings, we advance the following hypothesis:

*H4: Experiential consumption of tourism destination positively affects tourist satisfaction.*

*Functional consumption, destination identification, and tourist satisfaction*

According to Bolton and Drew (1991), perceived benefits are mostly based on perceived quality of product or service. In that sense, perceived functional quality represents an instrumental driver of how much consumers initially identify with a brand; that is, they identity with the brand because they believe that the brand is instrumental in achieving their functional needs (Katz, 1960). Because perceived quality is defined as a consumer's judgment about the superiority or excellence of a product, it represents an instrumental driver of customer-brand identification (Mittal,

2006). He and Li (2011) are the first to examine the relationship of service quality on brand identification in consumer research context. They find that service quality perceived by customers of mobile telecommunication services have a significantly positive effect on brand identification. Similarly, Lam et al. (2013) examine the dynamics of consumer-brand identification and its antecedents in the context of iPhone brand in Spain. They find that perceived quality is the main and stable driver of consumer-brand identification. Hence, we propose that:

*H5: Functional consumption of tourism destination positively affects destination identification.*

Perceived quality of service industry has been found to have a positive influence on tourists' satisfaction (Loureiro & Gonzalez, 2008). Rojas and Camarero (2008) reveal that the perceived functional quality that tourists received from visiting a cultural center in Spain positively influences their satisfaction with the center. Bigné, Sánchez, and Sánchez (2001) investigate the relationship between the image of two important Spanish tourism destinations (Peniscola and Torrevieja) as perceived by tourists and their behavioral intention. The findings of their study prove that functional quality provided by the destinations positively influences tourists' satisfaction with both tourist resorts. Chen and Myagmarsuren (2010) investigate the effect of Mongolian destination brand equity on tourist satisfaction and find that destination perceived quality positively affects tourist satisfaction. Accordingly, we propose that:

*H6: Functional consumption of tourism destination positively affects tourist satisfaction.*

*Destination identification, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty*

Consumer research studies show that customer identification with a brand of consumer products leads to customer satisfaction (He & Li, 2011; He et al., 2012), high brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth communication (Grappi & Montanari,

2011; Keh & Xie, 2009; Kim et al., 2001; Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010). Choo, Park, and Petrick (2011) investigate the role of residents in branding tourism destinations and find out that positive relationships between residents' identification with their destination brand result in activities to help increase visitors' satisfaction with their experience, intentions to positive word-of-mouth and participation in tourism and leisure activities.

Stokburger-Sauer (2011) is the first to develop a brand identification framework in the context of tourism destination branding and empirically test it. He confirms that strong identification with a destination brand represents a major avenue that enables such meaningful long-term relationship and thus drives country visit and loyalty intentions. Ekinci et al. (2013) examine the relationship between symbolic consumption of tourism destination brand and destination brand loyalty and reveal that destination brand identification has positive influence on destination brand loyalty. Hence, we propose that:

*H7: Destination identification positively affects tourist satisfaction.*

*H8: Destination identification positively affects destination loyalty.*

Tourist satisfaction has been extensively studied to predict tourist loyalty in the literature. Destination loyalty is found to be positively affected by tourists' satisfaction with their experience with Nothern Cyprus, a tourism destination which offers archeological and historical sites (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Wang, Wu, and Yuan (2010) explore visitors' experience and intention to revisit a heritage harbor destination in Taiwan. The findings of their study show that tourists who are satisfied with their travel experience are willing to revisit that heritage destination in the future. Similarly, a survey was carried out on tourists visiting a tourism destination in Israel and the findings of the survey reveal that the cumulative effects of World Heritage Site designations is positively related to willingness to revisit that particular destination

(Yaniv, Arie, & Raviv, 2011). Several other studies conclude that tourists' satisfaction with destination positively influence tourists' loyalty (Chen & Myagmarsuren, 2010; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Hosany & Martin, 2012; Yuksel et al., 2010). Accordingly, we propose that:

*H9: Tourist satisfaction positively affects destination loyalty.*

### 3.3 Construct Definitions and Measurements.

This study consists of six constructs: symbolic consumption including destination identity, destination reputation, self-congruence, lifestyle-congruence; experiential consumption; functional consumption; destination identification; tourist satisfaction; and destination loyalty. All constructs are measured using multiple-item scales drawn from pre-validated measures of previous related studies. The measurement scales, which are designed to be consistent to the definitions of constructs for this study, are based on the review of the literature. To measure the various research constructs, validated items used by other researchers are employed in an existing or slightly modified form.

*Destination Identity.*

Destination identity refers to the distinctive and relatively enduring characteristics of a focal destination brand. Three items used to measure brand identity of consumer product brands from Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) and He et al. (2012) were adopted and adjusted to measure destination brand identity in this study. Each item is measured on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). The questionnaire items are listed as the following:

1. For me, Angkor has a distinctive identity.

2. For me, Angkor has an attractive identity

3. For me, Angkor stands out from its competitors.

*Destination Reputation.*

Brand reputation is sometimes assessed based on personal experience with the brand. Yet, the reputation of brand could similarly be derived from word-of-mouth or reports in media (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). Four items of destination brand reputation were adopted from Mael and Ashforth (1992) and Kuenzel and Halliday (2010) because it has shown very encouraging results (Bhattacharya et al., 1995). Each item is measured on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). The questionnaire items are listed as the following:

1. For me, Angkor has a very good reputation as a tourism destination.

2. For me, Angkor is a trustworthy tourism destination.

3. I consider Angkor one of the best tourism destinations.

4. People I know think highly of Angkor.

*Self-congruence.*

Self-congruence measures the degree of match/mismatch between destination brand's image and the tourist's actual or ideal self-image (Ekinci et al., 2013). The measurement of self-congruence consists of four items adapted from Ekinci et al. (2013) and Usakli and Baloglu (2011). Each item is measured on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). The questionnaire items are listed as the following:

1. The image of a typical visitor to Angkor is similar to how I am.

2. The image of a typical visitor to Angkor is similar to how I would like to see myself.

3. The image of Angkor is consistent with how I see myself.

4. The image of Angkor is consistent with how I would like to see myself.

*Lifestyle-Congruence.*

Lifestyle marketing officers refer to person's unique lifestyle patterns as expressed by activities, interests and opinions (Brassington & Pettitt, 2003). Lifestyle-congruence measures the degree of match/mismatch between the destination brand experience and tourist's actual or desire lifestyle. Lifestyle-congruence was measured with three items adopted from Ekinci et al. (2013). Each item is measured on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). The questionnaire items are listed as the following:

1. Vacationing in Angkor reflects my personal lifestyle.

2. Vacationing in Angkor is totally in line with my lifestyle.

3. Staying in Angkor supports my lifestyle.

*Experiential Consumption.*

Tourist experience, which is also referred to as destination experience quality by Chen and Chen (2010) and termed as experiential consumption in our study, was measured by ten items for three sub-dimensions: hedonism, education and escape. Based on previous studies (Grappi & Montanari, 2011; Kang & Gretzel, 2012; Otto & Ritchie, 1996), four items were used to measure hedonism, three items for education and three items for escape. Each item is measured on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). The questionnaire items are listed as the following:

1. The experience at Angkor was truly enjoyable.

2. I had a lot of fun.

3. I derived a lot of pleasure from the trip.

4. I truly felt delighted.

5. I expanded my understanding at Angkor.

6. I gained information and knowledge about Angkor.

7.  I learned many different things about Angkor.

8.  I felt like I was in another world.

9.  I truly felt it like an escape.

10. I got so involved that I forgot everything else.

*Functional Consumption.*

Functional consumption, also referred to as destination perceived quality, is a comparison between the perceptions of the performance and the consumer's expectation of the services (Chen & Myagmarsuren, 2010; Konecnik, 2006). An extensive review of the related literatures was carried out to develop a list of items generally used to measure destination perceived quality. Based on the specific characteristics of the research site, ten items were adopted from Chen and Myagmarsuren (2010) and Konecnik (2006) and adjusted to fit the research site. Each item is measured on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). The questionnaire items are listed as the following:

1.  Angkor offers interesting historical and cultural attractions.

2.  Angkor offers entertaining activities and events.

3.  Angkor provides a variety of good foods.

4.  Angkor has great value tourism service.

5.  Angkor has high quality tourism amenities.

6.  Employees at Angkor has good attitude.

7.  Angkor offers high quality accommodation services.

8.  Angkor offers good tourism amenities.

9.  Angkor offers good quality local transport services.

10. Angkor offers good quality food services.

*Destination Brand Identification.*

Destination brand identification is defined as the perception of belongingness to the destination brand, and thus, experiencing the destination brand's successes and failure. Destination brand identification of an individual tourist with a tourism destination brand activates important behavioral outcomes (Stokburger-Sauer, 2011). Mael and Ashforth (1992) propose a widely used instrument with a six-item scale to measure identification that has been validated in adapted versions within several empirical studies (Stokburger-Sauer, 2011). However, Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) argue that this scale accounts for more than what they understand as identification, that is the cognitive perception of belonging to an organization. Furthermore, the scale items proposed by Mael and Ashforth (1992) are considered to be more tangible and more apt to reveal the underlying identification construct than solely one's cognitive perception of overlap between own identity and organizational identity as proposed by Bergami and Bagozzi (2000).

Due to the lack of suitability in the research context, Stokburger-Sauer (2011) chooses not to integrate two of the six items proposed by Mael and Ashforth (1992) and employs a reduced four-item scale to measure tourism destination brand identification with a focus on the perception of belongingness to the destination brand and experiencing the destination brand's success and failures in his study. Accordingly, the four-item scale from Stokburger-Sauer (2011), which has been similarly validated and employed in several empirical studies in consumer brand research and tourism research (Belen del Rio et al., 2001; Ekinci et al., 2013; Nam et al., 2011) was used to measure destination brand identification in our study. Each item is measured on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). The questionnaire items are listed as the following:

1.  When someone criticizes Angkor, I feel like a personal insult.

2. If a story in the media criticized Angkor, I would feel embarrassed.

3. If someone praised Angkor, I would felt like a personal compliment.

4. I am interested in what others think about Angkor.

*Tourist Satisfaction.*

Tourist satisfaction refers to the emotional state of tourists after their visiting experience to a destination. Tourist satisfaction was measured with four items adopted from Bigné et al. (2001), Kao et al. (2008) and Yoon and Uysal (2005). Each item is measured on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). The questionnaire items are listed as the following:

1. Angkor destination goes beyond my expectations.

2. My trip to Angkor is very meaningful for me.

3. I am happy with my experience at Angkor.

4. Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to Angkor.

*Destination Loyalty.*

Destination loyalty refers to tourists' intention to revisit the destination, their willingness to recommend it to others and their willingness to tell others about their trip to the destination. Destination loyalty was measured with three items adopted from Chen and Tsai (2007), Oppermann (2000) and Kao et al. (2008). Each item is measured on a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree). The questionnaire items are listed as the following:

1. It's likely that I will revisit Angkor in the future.

2. It's likely that I will recommend Angkor to my family and friends.

3. I will tell others about my trip to Angkor.

Table 3-1 shows the questionnaire items used in the study.

Table 3-1

*Questionnaire Items Used in the Study*

| Constructs | Questionnaire Items | Literature Sources |
|---|---|---|
| Symbolic Consumption/ Destination Identity | 1. For me, Angkor has a distinctive identity. <br> 2. For me, Angkor has an attractive identity. <br> 3. For me, Angkor stands out from its competitors. | (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; He et al., 2012) |
| Symbolic Consumption/ Destination reputation | 1. For me, Angkor has a very good reputation as a tourism destination. <br> 2. For me, Angkor is a trustworthy tourism destination. <br> 3. I consider Angkor one of the best tourism destinations. <br> 4. People I know think highly of Angkor. | (Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010; Mael & Ashforth, 1992) |
| Symbolic Consumption/ Self-congruence | 1. The image of the typical tourist to Angkor is similar to how I am. <br> 2. The image of the typical tourist to Angkor is similar to how I would like to see myself. <br> 3. The image of Angkor is consistent with how I see myself. <br> 4. The image of Angkor is consistent with how I would like to see myself. | (Ekinci et al., 2013; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011) |
| Symbolic Consumption/ Lifestyle-congruence | 1. Vacationing in Angkor reflects my personal lifestyle. <br> 2. Staying in Angkor supports my lifestyle. <br> 3. Vacationing in Angkor is totally in line with my lifestyle. | (Ekinci et al., 2013) |
| Experiential Consumption | 1. The experience at Angkor was truly enjoyable. <br> 2. I had a lot of fun. <br> 3. I derived a lot of pleasure from the trip. <br> 4. I truly felt delighted. <br> 5. I expanded my understanding at Angkor. <br> 6. I gained information and knowledge about Angkor. <br> 7. I learned many different things about Angkor. <br> 8. I felt like I was in another world. <br> 9. I truly felt it like an escape. <br> 10. I got so involved that I forgot everything else. | (Grappi & Montanari, 2011; Kang & Gretzel, 2012; Otto & Ritchie, 1996) |
| Functional Consumption | 1. Angkor offers interesting historical and cultural attractions. <br> 2. Angkor offers entertaining activities and events. <br> 3. Angkor provides a variety of good foods. <br> 4. Angkor has great value tourism service. <br> 5. Angkor has high quality tourism amenities. <br> 6. Employees at Angkor has good attitude. <br> 7. Angkor offers high quality accommodation services. <br> 8. Angkor offers good tourism amenities. <br> 9. Angkor offers good quality local transport services. <br> 10. Angkor offers good quality food services. | (Chen & Myagmarsuren, 2010; Konecnik, 2006) |

Table 3-1

*Questionnaire Items Used in the Study (continued)*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Destination Identification | 1. When someone criticizes Angkor, I feel like a personal insult.<br>2. If a story in the media criticized Angkor, I would feel embarrassed.<br>3. If someone praised Angkor, I would felt like a personal compliment.<br>4. I am interested in what others think about Angkor | (Stokburger-Sauer, 2011) |
| Tourist Satisfaction | 1. Angkor destination goes beyond my expectations.<br>2. My trip to Angkor is very meaningful for me.<br>3. I am happy with my experience at Angkor.<br>4. Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to Angkor. | (Kao et al., 2008; Yoon & Uysal, 2005) |
| Destination Loyalty | 1. It's likely that I will revisit Angkor in the future.<br>2. It's likely that I will recommend Angkor to my family and friends.<br>3. I will tell others about my trip to Angkor. | (Chen & Tsai, 2007; Kao et al., 2008; Oppermann, 2000) |

## 3.4 Control Variables.

Many recent studies in tourism have ignored an investigation of control variables (Prayag & Ryan, 2011; Veasna, Wu, & Huang, 2013). In order to control the structural model, we included tourist demographic variables, namely education, income, travel experience, and nationality of tourists as the control variables. These variables were designed because it is expected that tourists' level of education, income, travel experience, and nationality are key information related to how they evaluate and make destination choices in terms of destination consumption and destination identification.

## 3.5 Research Site.

Angkor tourism destination is a suitable research site for this study for a few reasons. First, Angkor tourism destination is one of the world famous destinations, offering unique identity, cultures, activities and a wide range of accommodations, and entertainments. Most importantly, Angkor Wat, appearing on the national flag, is the symbolic representative of Cambodia. Angkor Wat, in its beauty and state of preservation, is unrivaled. Its mightiness and magnificence bespeak a pomp luxury

surpassing that of a Pharaoh or a Shah Jahan, an impressiveness greater than that of Pyramids, an artistic distinctiveness as fine as that of the Taj Mahal (Rooney, 1999).

In line with previous research investigating experiential consumption of tourists in a national park (Kang & Gretzel, 2012) and historical city (Chen & Chen, 2010), Angkor tourism destination is one of the most important archaeological and historical parks in Southeast Asia. Stretching over some 400 square kilometers and including the forested area, the Angkor tourist destination contains the magnificent remains of the different capitals of the Khmer Empire from the 9th to the 15th century. The Angkor Wat of Cambodia, after its inclusion into the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) list of World Heritage Sites in late 1992, has become one of the world's most famous tourist destination and Asia's top tourist destination (Brooke, 2004). This complex, one of the most important and largest archeological parks in the world, is the site that gives Cambodia its reputation and prestige as a tourist destination worldwide (Wood & Leray, 2005).

Indeed, in the 1960s Cambodia was one of the most popular tourism destinations in south-east Asia (Lam, 1998). However, Cambodia has been isolated from the world for more than two decades because of strife and turmoil in the 1970s and 1980s until the country reopened its door to outside world again in 1991 (Sloan, 2004). Since then the number of tourists has increased dramatically from 25,012 in 1991 to 1 million for the first time in 2004 and 2 million in 2007 and 3 million in 2012 and is expected to reach 4.5 million in 2015 (Ministry of Tourism, 2012). This fast growth of foreign tourists shows a bright future for Cambodian tourism industry, which is considered a major vehicle for country's economic development. Tourism is Cambodia's one of the two important sectors which the country economy mainly depends on and the second largest revenue earner (US$ 1.1 billion in 2005) after garment manufacturing (US$ 2.3 billion), and the drive to attract more tourists would undoubtedly be welcomed by the

growing hospitality industry (Weggel, 2006). Accordingly, the research site, offering symbolic meanings, experiential benefits and functional attributes of tourism destination, is suitable for this study.

## 3.6 Questionnaire Design.

The questionnaire of this study contains six sections: (1) symbolic consumption including destination identify, destination reputation, self-congruence, and lifestyle-congruence; (2) experiential consumption; (3) functional consumption; (4) destination brand identification; (5) tourist satisfaction; and (6) destination loyalty.

Destination identity was measured with three items adopted from Bhattacharya and Sen (2003), which was also adopted by He et al. (2012). Destination reputation was measured with four items (Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Self-congruence was measured with four items and lifestyle-congruence with three items (Ekinci et al., 2013; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Experience quality was measured with ten items adopted from previous research (Grappi & Montanari, 2011; Kang & Gretzel, 2012; Otto & Ritchie, 1996). Functional quality consists of ten items adopted from Chen and Myagmarsuren (2010) and Konecnik (2006). Destination brand identification was measured with four items adopted from Stokburger-Sauer (2011). Tourist satisfaction contains four items (Bigné et al., 2001; Kao et al., 2008; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Destination loyalty was measured with three items (Chen & Tsai, 2007; Kao et al., 2008; Oppermann, 2000).

This study uses multi-item scales to measure the constructs in our conceptual model. The questionnaire was designed in English and based on previously published articles and the need for translation was ignored because English is the international language which is common among international tourists. All items in the questionnaire were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale anchored from 'strongly disagree' (1) to 'strongly agree' (5). Finally, respondents were asked to provide their

demographic information such as gender, age, education level, occupation, monthly income, nationality, and past visitation experience.

**3.7 The Pilot Study.**

Two separate pilot tests were conducted to assess how well the questionnaire gathered the intended information and provided insights used to refine the instrument. The first pilot test was an "active" pre-test. The researcher administered the questionnaire to a small group of students from different countries attending one graduate program in a university in Taiwan (n=30). Insights from active pilot test result from discussion between researcher and respondents after the questionnaire administration, rather than collected data. After completing the questionnaire, participants provided feedback in a question and answer group sessions in regards to the instrument instructions, flow, and other issues. The second pilot test was a "passive" pre-test, used after initial refinement from the first pilot test. A small group of thirty (n=30) target respondents, foreign tourists visiting Angkor tourism destination, was invited to participate in the study, no discussion occurred. The researcher simply assessed the response quality and the final construction of the instrument.

**3.8 Population and Sample.**

The population for this study consisted of international tourists, aged 18 years old or older, visiting Angkor tourism destination of Cambodia—one of the world most famous tourism destinations in South East Asia. Hence, a sampling plan is developed to ensure that the appropriate respondents are included in this study.

As SEM matures and additional research is undertaken on key research design issues, previous guidelines of required sample sizes of 300 are no longer appropriate. It is true that larger samples generally produce more stable solutions that are more likely to be replicable. However, it has been shown that sample size decision must be

made based on a set of factors such as multivariate distribution of the data, estimation technique, and model complexity. Based on multivariate distribution of data, a generally accepted ratio to minimize problems with deviations from normality is 15 respondents for each parameter estimated in the model. Estimation technique suggests sample sizes in the range of 150 to 400. It should be noted that as the sample size become larger ($>$400), the method becomes more sensitive and almost any difference is detected, making goodness-of-fit measures suggest poor fit. In the simplest sense, the model complexity in SEM leads to the needs for larger sample (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

Based on the above discussion of sample size, 600 international tourists are targeted for this study. Applying the convenience sampling technique, international English-speaking tourists visiting the Angkor tourism destination during the winter holiday in February 2013 were approached and asked to participate in the study, stating their participation was voluntary and that their identities would be kept confidential. Respondents were asked to complete the 15-minute survey on the spot, while they were waiting to see the sunset or taking a rest after visiting the Angkor Wat complex.

**3.9 Data Analysis Method.**

In order to test the hypotheses proposed in this study, SPSS 16.0 and AMOS 18.0 are employed to analyze the collected data. The data analysis methods are explained in details as the following:

*3.9.1 Descriptive Statistic Analysis.*

We analyze the descriptive statistics to explain the main characteristics of a collection of data in quantitative terms. To gain a deep understanding of the features of each variable, descriptive statistics analysis is used to illustrate the means, standard

deviation, and rank of the characteristics of respondents such as gender, age, marital status, education, and the construct variables including symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, functional consumption, destination brand identification, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty.

*3.9.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis and Reliability Test.*

To verify the dimensionality and reliability of the research constructs of this study, we conduct several purification processes such as exploratory factor analysis, correlation analysis, and internal consistency analysis (Cronbach's alpha). First, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is employed to identify the dimensionality of each research construct, to select questionnaire items with high factor loading, and to compare these selected items with items suggested theoretically. EFA is good for detecting "misfit" variables. Generally, an EFA prepares the variables to be used for cleaner structural equations modeling (Hair et al., 2010). In order to identify the dimensionality and reliability of the research constructs, it is necessary to conduct the measurement items' purification procedure using EFA analysis, which consists of the factor loading, eigenvalue, cumulative explained variance, and communality of the factors being extracted from the measurement items.

To identify the internal consistency and reliability of the construct measurement, we conduct item-to-total correlation and internal consistency analysis (Cronbach's $\alpha$). Factor analysis is used to identify the dimensionality of the construct and to select questionnaire items with the principle component extraction method. Any of the factor loadings which is less than 0.5 is deleted until every of the existing factor with factor loading is equal or larger than 0.5. More than two factors may be extracted and the difference between the largest factor loading and second largest factor loading in term of absolute value should be equal or larger than 0.3. In addition, the communality

should be equal or larger than 0.5. Any item which doesn't meet the above criteria is

deleted. Latent roots (Eigenvalues) and other criteria were used to determine the

number of dimensions to be extracted from the principal component factor analysis.

The selected criteria are factor loading $\geqq 0.5$, Eigenvalue $\geqq 1$, accumulatively

explained variance $\geqq 0.6$, item-to-total correlation $\geqq 5$, and coefficient alpha ($\alpha$)

$\geqq 0.7$ (Hair et al., 2010).

### 3.9.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), which is also used within the structural

equations modeling (SEM), is the most common method used to evaluate construct

validity. Construct validity is a more broadly applied form to measure validity than

content validity and criterion validity. CFA is used to test the relationship between

observed indicators and latent constructs and to assess the convergent validity of the

measurement model. CFA procedures have two other factor models such as first-order

factor model and second-order factor model. Second-order factor model was adopted

to examine all the research constructs and test the fit of the overall model. To satisfy

the criteria of CFA as suggested by Jöroskog and Sörborn (1996) and Hair et al.

(2010), generally the ratios ($\chi^2$:d.f.) of chi-square goodness-of-fit to degree of freedom

should be on the order of 3:1, root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) is

less than 0.50, comparative fit index (CFI) and non-norm fit index (NNFI) exceed

0.90, all standardized loading need to exceed 0.50, and each indicator *t*-value exceeds

1.96 (p<0.001).

### 3.9.4 Structural Equations Modeling (SEM).

Structural Equations Modeling (SEM) is a family of statistical models that seeks

to explain the relationships among multiple variables. SEM is used to combine

perspectives of multiple regressions and factor analysis to assess a series of

interrelated dependence relationships at the same time through a multivariate technique. SEM's characteristics derive from two basic components: the measurement model permits the researchers to take several variables for a single independent or dependent variables and the structural model explains the related independent to dependent variables. Compared to other statistical techniques, SEM has higher ascendancy because it has the capability to assess multiple and interrelated dependency relationships. It can also exhibit unobserved concepts or latent variables in those relationships and explain the measurement error in the business process of assessment. More specifically, SEM is the only multivariate technique that allows the simultaneous estimations of multiple equations. These equations represent the way constructs relate to measured indicator items as well as the way constructs are related to one another. Thus, when SEM techniques are used to test a structural theory, it is the equivalent of performing factor analysis and regression analysis in one step. Therefore, SEM has become an extremely popular technique to test a theory in the social sciences based on these key advantages. (Hair et al., 2010).

The correspondences of the actual or observed covariance or correlation matrix are measured through the method of goodness-of-fit. Goodness-of-fit tests can determine whether the model can be either accepted or rejected. There are three types of the goodness-of-fit measurements: absolute fit, incremental fit and parsimonious fit (Hair et al., 2010). Absolute fit measures can test the overall model fit and no need to do any adjustment for the degree of over-fitting. Incremental fit measures can compare the research model to some model which was specified by researcher. Parsimonious fit measures can offer a comparison between models that have different estimated coefficients. The purpose is to determine the amount of fit achieved by each estimated coefficient. This study followed the principles offered by Bagozzi and Yi (1988) by which to evaluate the goodness-of-fit of the research model through overall model fit.

Table 3-2 presents the goodness-of-fit indices with corresponding guidelines that are used as the criteria for SEM analysis.

By adopting SEM, this study tests the relationships between symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption with destination brand identification, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. SEM is also used to test the mediating effects of destination identification and tourist satisfaction on destination loyalty. Cheung and Lau (2008) suggest that SEM has several advantages over the hierarchical regression approach to mediational analyses. First, SEM provides a better statistical tool to investigate latent variables with multiple indicators. Second, the measurement errors in the model can be controlled for when relationships among variables are examined, thus avoiding effects. Third, SEM approach allows for the analysis of a more complicated model. For example, a model with more than one mediator and dependent variables can be considered simultaneously (Hoyle & Smith, 1994). Finally, SEM depicts a clear model that helps ensure that all relevant paths can be included and tested, without omitting any (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The AMOS 18.0 version package software is used to perform SEM in order to verify the interrelationships in the whole research concept.

Table 3-2

*Goodness-of-Fit Measures for Individual-level Overall Model Fit*

| Goodness-of-Fit Measure | Description | Criterion | Literature Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| $\chi^2$/d.f. | The most fundamental measure of overall fit. Low $\chi^2$ values indicate that the actual and predicted input matrices are not statistically different. | $\leqq 3$ | (Hair et al., 2010) |
| Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) | A non-statistical from 0 (poor fit) to 1.0 (perfect fit). | $>.90$ | |
| Adjusted Goodness-of-fit Index (AGFI) | An extension of the GFI, adjusted by the ratio of degrees of freedom for the proposed model to the degrees of freedom for the null model. | $>.90$ | |
| Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) | The discrepancy is measured in terms of the population, not just the sample used for estimation. It is found to be best suited to use in a confirmatory or competing models strategy with larger samples. | $<0.08$ | |
| Root Means Square Residual (RMSR) | It is the square root of the mean of these squared residuals: an average of the residuals between individual observed and estimated covariance and variance terms. | $< 0.08$ | |
| Comparative Fit Index (CFI) | An improved version of the normed fit index (NFI), CFI is normed so that values ranged between 0 and 1, within higher value indicating better fit. | $>.90$ | |
| Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) | The TLI predates the CFI and is conceptually similar in that it also involves a mathematical comparison of a specified theoretical measurement model and a baseline null model. Typically though, models with good fit have values that approach 1. | $>.90$ | |
| Normed Fit Index (NFI) | It is a ratio of the difference in the $\chi^2$ value for the fitted model and a null model divided by the $\chi^2$ value for the null model | $>.90$ | |

## CHAPTER FOUR

## RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of descriptive analysis, reliability test for the collected data, and the results of data analysis associated with the proposed research hypotheses. The first section describes the descriptive analysis of the characteristics of respondents. The second section provides descriptive statistics of the questionnaire items. The third section offers the exploratory factor analysis and reliability test of the collected data. The final section shows the results of the structural equations modeling (SEM), which tests the overall fits of the model and hypotheses.

### 4.1. Characteristics of Respondents.

Using a survey design questionnaire, data are collected from foreign tourists visiting Angkor tourism destination of Cambodia in the winter break from February 4-18, 2013. Applying the convenience sampling technique, a total of 600 questionnaires were distributed and 568 were returned, of which 512 were usable, yielding a response rate of 85%.

Table 4-1 summarizes the profiles of the respondents, including gender, age, marital status, education level, income level, occupation, nationality, past experience and purpose of visit. It can be seen that the number of male respondents and female respondents were almost fairly spilt (male 52%; female 48%). Almost half of the respondents are in the age category of between 18-25 years old (42%), followed by 26-35 years old (31%), 36-45 years old (14%) and 46-55 years old and 56-65 years old (6%) respectively. In the education categories, more than half of the respondents

have college or university education (68%), followed by graduate education (23%) and high school or less (9%). Regarding occupation, fifty four percent of the respondents (54%) are employed, 34% are students, 4% unemployed, 3% are retired, and 4.5% are others. With regard to monthly income, 33% of the respondents earned a monthly income of US$1,001-US$3,000, followed by US$1,000 and below (30%), US$3,001-US$5,000 (18%), US$5,001-US$7,000 (10%) and US$7,000 and above (9%).

Most respondents accounting for 81% were first-time visitors and 19% were repeated visitors to the Angkor tourism destination. Eighty four percent of respondents (84%) visited the destination for pleasure purpose, followed by business purpose (11%), and religious purpose (5%). The respondents were from 35 countries, of which 64.3% were from the European Union, 13.1% from North America, and 11.3% from Asia and other parts of the world respectively.

**4.2 Descriptive Statistics.**

Table 4-2 shows the descriptive statistics of the questionnaire items from the tourist respondents visiting Angkor tourism destination. All research variables are measured by using 5-point Likert scale. All research variables are satisfied with the level of agreements from the 512 tourists (i.e. mean scores range from 3.531 to 4.574).

Table 4-1

*Characteristics of Respondents (n=512)*

| Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Gender** | | |
| Male | 266 | 52% |
| Female | 246 | 48% |
| **Marital Status** | | |
| Single | 317 | 62% |
| Married | 195 | 38% |
| **Age** | | |
| 18-25 years old | 214 | 41.8% |
| 26-35 years old | 161 | 31.4% |
| 36-45 years old | 73 | 14.3% |
| 46-55 years old | 29 | 5.7% |
| 55-65 years old | 32 | 6.2% |
| Over 65 years old | 3 | .6% |
| **Education** | | |
| High school or Less | 45 | 8.8% |
| College or University | 347 | 67.8% |
| Graduate School | 120 | 23.4% |
| **Income** | | |
| US$1,000 and below | 154 | 30% |
| US$1,001-US$3,000 | 168 | 32.8% |
| US$3,001-US$5,000 | 91 | 17.8% |
| US$5,001-US$7,000 | 51 | 10% |
| US$7,000 and above | 48 | 9.4% |
| **Occupation** | | |
| Student | 176 | 34.4% |
| Employed | 276 | 53.9% |
| Unemployed | 21 | 4.1% |
| Retired | 16 | 3.1% |
| Others | 23 | 4.5% |
| **Past experience** | | |
| First-time visit | 416 | 81.2% |
| Repeated visit | 96 | 18.8% |
| **Purpose of Visit** | | |
| Pleasure | 431 | 84.2% |
| Business | 56 | 10.9% |
| Religion | 24 | 4.7% |
| **Region** | | |
| The European Union | 329 | 64.3% |
| North America | 67 | 13.1% |
| Asia | 58 | 11.3% |
| Others | 58 | 11.3% |

Table 4-2

*The Results of Descriptive Statistics (n=512)*

| Descriptive Statistics (N=512) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Questionnaire Items** | **Mean** | **Std. Deviation** |
| **Symbolic Consumption** | | |
| *Destination Identity* | | |
| For me, Angkor has a distinctive identity. | 4.181 | 0.710 |
| For me, Angkor has an attractive identity. | 3.986 | 0.695 |
| For me, Angkor stands out from its competitors. | 3.822 | 0.711 |
| *Destination Reputation* | | |
| For me, Angkor has a very good reputation as tourism destination. | 4.041 | 0.758 |
| For me, Angkor is a trustworthy tourism destination. | 4.002 | 0.678 |
| I consider Angkor one of the best tourism destinations. | 4.078 | 0.607 |
| People I know think highly of Angkor. | 4.019 | 0.707 |
| *Self-Congruence* | | |
| A typical tourist to Angkor has an image similar to how I see myself. | 3.531 | 0.640 |
| A typical tourist to Angkor has an image similar to how I like to see myself. | 3.560 | 0.638 |
| The image of Angkor is consistent with how I see myself. | 3.755 | 0.597 |
| The image of Angkor is consistent with how I like to see myself. | 3.871 | 0.579 |
| *Lifestyle-Congruence* | | |
| Vacationing in Angkor reflect my personal lifestyle. | 3.625 | 0.705 |
| Staying in Angkor supports my lifestyle. | 3.628 | 0.678 |
| Vacationing in Angkor is totally in line with my lifestyle. | 3.628 | 0.664 |
| **Experiential Consumption** | | |
| *Hedonism* | | |
| The experience at Angkor was truly enjoyable | 4.261 | 0.642 |
| I had a lot of fun. | 4.044 | 0.580 |
| I derived a lot of pleasure from the trip. | 3.972 | 0.572 |
| I truly felt delighted. | 4.084 | 0.568 |
| *Education* | | |
| I expanded my understanding at Angkor. | 3.794 | 0.569 |
| I gained information and knowledge about Angkor. | 3.892 | 0.557 |
| I learned many different things about Angkor. | 4.300 | 0.631 |
| *Escape* | | |
| I felt like I was in another world. | 4.255 | 0.701 |
| I truly felt it like an escape. | 4.115 | 0.713 |
| I got so involved that I forgot everything else. | 3.804 | 0.641 |
| **Functional Consumption** | | |
| Attraction | | |
| Angkor has scenic, historical and cultural attractions. | 3.839 | 0.896 |
| Angkor offers entertaining activities and events. | 3.589 | 0.917 |
| Angkor provides a variety of good foods. | 3.714 | 0.860 |
| *Service Quality* | | |
| Angkor offers good quality food services. | 3.748 | 0.748 |
| Angkor offers high quality accommodation services. | 3.722 | 0.703 |
| Angkor offers good quality local transport services. | 3.855 | 0.760 |
| Angkor has high quality tourism facilities. | 3.619 | 0.769 |

Table 4-2

*The Results of Descriptive Statistics (n=512) (continued)*

| Descriptive Statistics (N=512) | | |
|---|---|---|
| Questionnaire Items | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| *Amenities* | | |
| Angkor offers good tourism amenities. | 3.718 | 0.675 |
| Angkor has great value tourism service. | 3.853 | 0.619 |
| Tour services and employees' attitude at Angkor is good. | 3.839 | 0.651 |
| **Destination Identification** | | |
| When someone praises Angkor, I feel like a personal compliment. | 3.783 | 0.669 |
| I am very interested in what other think about Angkor. | 3.890 | 0.619 |
| When someone criticizes Angkor, I feel like a personal insult. | 3.671 | 0.620 |
| If a story in the media criticized Angkor, I would feel embarrassed. | 3.781 | 0.664 |
| **Tourist Satisfaction** | | |
| Angkor destination goes beyond my expectations. | 4.199 | 0.634 |
| I really like this trip to Angkor. | 4.220 | 0.603 |
| I am happy with my travel experience at Angkor. | 4.273 | 0.566 |
| Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to Angkor. | 4.357 | 0.596 |
| **Destination Loyalty** | | |
| It's likely for me to revisit Angkor in the future. | 4.265 | 0.612 |
| It's likely for me to recommend my family and friends to visit Angkor as soon as possible. | 4.539 | 0.561 |
| I will tell others about my trip to Angkor. | 4.574 | 0.533 |

## 4.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis and Reliability Test.

To verify the dimensionality and reliability of the research constructs in this study, several purification processes, including exploratory factors analysis (EFA), correlation analysis, and internal consistency analysis (Cronbach's alpha) are conducted. Model parameters are further estimated with the help of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS 18.0.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is a statistical approach to determine the correlation among the variables in a dataset. This type of analysis provides a factor structure (a grouping of variables based on strong correlations). Item-to-total correlation and coefficient alpha are assessed to identify the internal consistency and reliability of the construct. Latent roots (Eigenvalues), screen test, and other criteria are used to determine the number of dimensions to be extracted from the principal

components factor analysis. The selected criterions are eigenvalues $> 1$, factor loadings $> 0.50$, accumulative explained variance $> 0.60$, item-total correlation $> 0.50$, and coefficient alpha $> 0.70$ (Hair et al., 2010). The EFA was carried out using the principle component method with VARIMAX rotation to examine the dimensionality of symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of the Angkor tourism destination.

Table 4-3 presents the results of the confirmatory factor analysis for measurement of the symbolic consumption (Sym). The factor solution accounted for approximately 60% of the total variance extracted, with communities ranging from 0.526 to 0.748. All factors had eigenvalues greater than 1 and relatively high reliability coefficient (i.e. Cronbach's $\alpha$), surpassing the suggested value of 0.70. Factors were labeled based on the characteristics of the items underlying each factor, including destination reputation (4 items, $\alpha = 0.753$), lifestyle-congruence (3 items, $\alpha = 0.753$), self-congruence (4 items, $\alpha = 0.743$), and destination identity (3 items, $\alpha = 0.727$). This suggests a high degree of internal consistency for each dimension and further the reliability of the measurement.

Table 4-4 presents the results of the confirmatory factor analysis for the measurement of the experiential consumption (ExpQ). The results of exploratory factor analysis of the 10 items of experiential consumption of Angkor tourism destination yielded a three-factor solution, which accounted for 66.34% of the total variance extracted, with communities ranging from 0.511 to 0.748. The three factors are hedonism (4 items, $\alpha = 0.798$), escape (3 items, $\alpha = 0.793$), and education (3 items, $\alpha = 0.723$). This suggests a high degree of internal consistency for each dimension and further the reliability of the measurement.

In a similar manner, a three-factor solution accounting for 60.84% of the total variance extracted with communities ranging from 0.491 to 0.692 was obtained for the functional consumption (FunQ). The three factors were named attraction (3 items, α = 0.770), service quality (4 items, α = 0.695), and amenities (3 items, α = 0.723). This suggests a high degree of internal consistency for each dimension and further the reliability of the measurement. Table 4-5 presents the results of the confirmatory factor analysis for the measurement of functional consumption.

Table 4-3

*Exploratory Factor Analysis Result of Symbolic Consumption*

| Factors/items | Factors loadings | Variance explained (%) | Cumulative variance explained (%) | Cronbach α |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **DR: Destination Reputation** | | 32.86 | 32.86 | .75 |
| I consider Angkor one of the best tourism destinations. | .759 | | | |
| People I know think highly of Angkor. | .752 | | | |
| For me, Angkor has a very good reputation as a tourism destination. | .705 | | | |
| For me, Angkor is a trustworthy tourism destination. | .703 | | | |
| **LC: Lifestyle-Congruence** | | 12.00 | 44.86 | .75 |
| Staying in Angkor supports my lifestyle. | .834 | | | |
| Vacationing in Angkor reflect my personal lifestyle. | .778 | | | |
| Vacationing in Angkor is totally in line with my lifestyle. | .711 | | | |
| **SC: Self-Congruence** | | 9.49 | 54.36 | .74 |
| A typical tourist to Angkor has an image similar to how I like to see myself. | .814 | | | |
| A typical tourist to Angkor has an image similar to how I see myself. | .757 | | | |
| The image of Angkor is consistent with how I see myself. | .602 | | | |
| The image of Angkor is consistent with how I like to see myself. | .516 | | | |
| **DI: Destination Identity** | | 7.46 | 61.82 | .73 |
| For me, Angkor has an attractive identity. | .830 | | | |
| For me, Angkor has a distinctive identity. | .820 | | | |
| For me, Angkor stands out from its competitors. | .672 | | | |

Table 4-4

*Exploratory Factor Analysis Result of Experiential Consumption*

| Factors/items | Factors loadings | Variance explained (%) | Cumulative variance explained (%) | Cronbach α |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ExpQ1: Hedonism** | | 42.96 | 42.96 | .80 |
| I derived a lot of pleasure from the trip. | .790 | | | |
| I had a lot of fun. | .790 | | | |
| I truly felt delighted. | .776 | | | |
| The experience at Angkor was truly enjoyable. | .591 | | | |
| **ExpQ2: Escape** | | 12.41 | 55.37 | .79 |
| I truly felt it like an escape. | .836 | | | |
| I got so involved that I forgot everything else. | .803 | | | |
| I felt like it was in another world. | .766 | | | |
| **ExpQ3: Education** | | 10.97 | 66.34 | .72 |
| I gained information and knowledge about Angkor. | .831 | | | |
| I expanded my understanding at Angkor. | .776 | | | |
| I learned many different things about Angkor. | .680 | | | |

Table 4-5

*Exploratory Factor Analysis Result of Functional Consumption*

| Factors/items | Factors loadings | Variance explained (%) | Cumulative variance explained (%) | Cronbach α |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FunQ1: Attraction** | | 38.99 | 38.99 | .77 |
| Angkor provides a variety of good foods. | .811 | | | |
| Angkor offers entertaining activities and events. | .784 | | | |
| Angkor has scenic, historical and cultural attractions. | .757 | | | |
| **FunQ2: Service Quality** | | 11.60 | 50.59 | .70 |
| Angkor offers good tourism amenities. | .719 | | | |
| Angkor offers good quality local transportation services. | .712 | | | |
| Angkor offers high quality accommodation services. | .649 | | | |
| Angkor offers good quality food services. | .641 | | | |
| **FunQ3: Amenities** | | 10.24 | 60.84 | .71 |
| Angkor has high quality tourism facilities. | .785 | | | |
| Angkor has great value tourism service. | .766 | | | |
| Tour services and employees' attitude at Angkor is good. | .724 | | | |

## 4.4. Measurement Model.

A two-step approach proposed by Anderson and Gerbing (1998) was used to assess the proposed conceptual model in the study. First, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with maximum likelihood estimation was first conducted to analyze the validity and reliability of the constructs in our conceptual model. Then, the structural equations modeling (SEM) was used to test the predicted relationships among the constructs in the proposed conceptual model.

*4.4.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).*

In the previous section, EFA analyses were conducted to determine the correlations among the variables in a dataset and delete the misfit variables. In this

section, a preliminary CFA was conducted and the model adequacy was assessed by the fit indices, as suggested by Jöroskog and Sörborn (1996) and Hair et al. (2010): chi-square goodness-of-fit ($\chi^2$), ratio to degree of freedom ($\chi^2$/d.f.) = < 2-3, root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) < 0.50, comparative fit index (CFI) > 0.90, non-norm fit index (NNFI) > 0.90, and standardized residuals less than |2.5|. The items with low correlated item-total correlations (< 0.50), low factors loadings (< 0.50), and low communality (< 0.40) were eliminated until a clean and rigid factor structure was obtained.

Table 4-7 reports the results of the confirmatory factor analysis of the overall model. The measurement model exhibited a satisfactory level of goodness of fit (i.e. chi-square statistic was 266.734 with 231 degrees of freedom ($\chi^2$/d.f.= 266.734/231 = 1.155), comparative fit index (CFA) = 0.989, the incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.990, the normed fit index (NFI) = 0.927, the Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) = 0.986, and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.015. Furthermore, all standardized loadings were greater than .50 and all factor loadings were statistically significant (p < .005). In addition, the alpha is greater than the cutoff point of 0.70 and average extracted variance (AVE) exceeds the cutoff point of 0.50. The AVE is calculated using the formula from Diamantopoulos and Siguaw (2000), which AVE= $(\Sigma\lambda2)/ [\Sigma\lambda2+ \Sigma(\theta)]$, where $\Sigma$=summation over the indicators of the latent variable, $\lambda$= indicator loadings, $\theta$=indicator error variances.

*Convergent Validity.*

We evaluated the convergent validity of the study in three ways: by evaluating the strength and significance of the factor loadings, by examining the composite reliabilities, and by inspecting the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct. As shown in Table 4-6, the factor loading of each item was greater than 0.50 threshold, the construct reliability estimates of all the constructs exceeded the

critical value of 0.70, and the values of the average variance extracted were well above the suggested value of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). These fit indices indicate the measurement model has a good convergent validity.

Table 4-6

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis Result*

| Constructs | Standardized factor loading | Error variance | *t*-Value | AVE | Construct reliability |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Symbolic Consumption (Sym)** | | | | | |
| LC | .648 | .018 | A | 0.991 | .71 |
| SC | .706 | .009 | 12.192 | | |
| DR | .607 | .013 | 10.967 | | |
| DI | .522 | .016 | 9.697 | | |
| **Experiential Consumption (ExpQ)** | | | | | |
| ExpQ1 | .790 | .009 | 12.747 | 0.992 | .72 |
| ExpQ3 | .642 | .015 | A | | |
| ExpD2 | .630 | .010 | 11.263 | | |
| **Functional Consumption (FunQ)** | | | | | |
| FunQ2 | .743 | .014 | 11.043 | 0.987 | 71 |
| FunQ1 | .681 | .026 | 10.769 | | |
| FunQ3 | .615 | .013 | A | | |
| **Destination Identification (DIdent)** | | | | | |
| DId2 | .669 | .017 | 10.771 | 0.987 | .71 |
| DId1 | .641 | .020 | 10.513 | | |
| DId4 | .582 | .021 | A | | |
| DId3 | .582 | .018 | 9.871 | | |
| **Tourist Satisfaction (Satt)** | | | | | |
| Sat2 | .688 | .014 | 13.115 | 0.992 | .77 |
| Sat3 | .688 | .013 | 13.098 | | |
| Sat1 | .673 | .016 | 12.867 | | |
| Satt4 | .671 | .014 | A | | |
| **Destination Loyalty (Loyalty)** | | | | | |
| DL3 | .741 | .011 | A | 0.989 | .70 |
| DL2 | .705 | .013 | 14.090 | | |
| DL1 | .552 | .018 | 11.208 | | |

Model fit statistics: $\chi^2$/d.f. = 266.734/231 = 1.155, p-value = 0.05, CFI = 0.98, IFI = 0.99, NFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.015

AVE = $(\Sigma\lambda2)/$ [$\Sigma\lambda2+ \Sigma(\theta)$], where $\Sigma$ = summation over the indicators of the latent variable, $\lambda$ = indicator loadings, $\theta$ = indicator error variances

Note: AVE = average variance explained, CR = construct reliability, df = degree of freedom, CFI = Comparative Fit Index, IFI = Incremental Fit Index, NFI = Normed Fit Index, TLI = Tucker Lewis Index, A regression weight was fixed at 1.

*Discriminant Validity.*

In addition to convergent validity, discriminant validity was assessed. The dataset is confirmed if the AVEs are larger than the squared correlation coefficients between constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). From Table 4-7, it is clear that the AVEs of all variables are higher than the squared correlations of any pair of variables, which supports the discriminant validity of all measures. The AVE is calculated using the formula from Diamantopoulos and Siguaw (2000), which AVE= $(\Sigma\lambda2)/ [\Sigma\lambda2+ \Sigma(\theta)]$, where $\Sigma$=summation over the indicators of the latent variable, $\lambda$= indicator loadings, $\theta$=indicator error variances.

Table 4-7

*Discriminant Validity*

| Constructs | Mean | S.D | Sym | ExpQ | FunQ | DIdent | Satt | Loyalty | Edu | TExp | Income | Region |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sym | 3.835 | 0.385 | **0.991** | | | | | | | | | |
| ExpQ | 4.046 | 0.394 | .511** | **0.992** | | | | | | | | |
| FunQ | 3.737 | 0.474 | .300** | .364** | **0.987** | | | | | | | |
| DIdent | 3.783 | 0.459 | .473** | .460** | .420** | **0.987** | | | | | | |
| Satt | 4.263 | 0.461 | .538** | .480** | .404** | .522** | **0.992** | | | | | |
| Loyalty | 4.458 | 0.450 | .487** | .499** | .384** | .533** | .613** | **0.989** | | | | |
| Edu | 2.146 | 0.549 | .023 | .056 | -.050 | -.029 | -.058 | -.103* | NA | | | |
| TExp | 1.187 | 0.390 | -.120** | -.110* | -.033 | -.065 | -.074 | .056 | .118** | NA | | |
| Income | 2.357 | 1.263 | -.016 | -.021 | .026 | -.029 | -.034 | -.002 | .0367** | .161** | NA | |
| Region | 11.125 | 10.799 | .051 | 0.064 | .164** | .140** | .051 | .032 | -.080 | -.103* | -.060 | NA |

Note: The bold numbers in the diagonal row are square roots of the average variance extracted (AVE); inter-construct correlation is shown off the diagonal; **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05.

AVE = (Σλ2)/ [Σλ2+ Σ(θ)], where Σ = summation over the indicators of the latent variable, λ = indicator loadings, θ = indicator error variances

Sym = Symbolic consumption; ExpQ = Experiential quality; FunQ = Functional quality; DIdent = Destination identification; Satt = Satisfaction; Edu = Education; TExp = Travel experience.

*Common Method Variance.*

Common method variance (CMV) is "variance that is attribute to the measurement method rather than to the construct the measures represent" (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). CMV creates a false internal consistency, that is, an apparent correlation among variables generated by their common source. In such cases (in our case the questionnaire), self-report data can create false correlations if the respondents have a propensity to provide consistent answers to survey questions that are otherwise not related. Since this study collected data for the research variables from the same source, international tourists visiting Angkor tourism destination, there is a possibility that common method variance may cause systematic measurement errors that either inflate or deflate the observed relationships among the research constructs (Chang, Witteloostuijn, & Eden, 2010).

In order to control possible biases arising from variance in the common method, we conducted three different tests in this study (Lee & Sukoco, 2010). First, we conducted Harman's single-factor test, perhaps the most common test to address CMV. This method loads all items from each of the constructs into an exploratory factor analysis to see whether one single factor does emerge or whether one general factor does account for a majority of the covariance between measures; if not, the claim is that CMV is not a pervasive issue. The Harmon single-factor analysis results reveal that the one factor accounts for 23.69%, which does not account for a majority of the covariance between the measures. Hence, CMV is not a pervasive issue.

Second, the variance-extracted percentages for any two constructs are compared with the square of the correlation estimate between the two constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 4-7 shows that each of the variance-extracted estimates is greater than the corresponding inter-factor squared correlation estimates. Based on

these results, it seems that the common method bias is unlikely to be a concern in the data.

Finally, following the procedure used by Conger, Kanungo, and Menon (2000) this study tests the chi-square differences by using CFA. The relationship between construct of symbolic consumption and destination identification is tested by loading four factors of symbolic consumption and four items of destination identification into a single-construct model and a two-construct model respectively. The two-construct model generates $\chi^2 = 55.76$, d.f. = 19, CFI = 0.96 and RMSEA = 0.055. In comparison, the single-construct model, with all eight items loadings on a single construct, generates $\chi^2 = 158.04$, d.f. = 20, CFI = 0.84, and RMSEA = 0.103. The highly significant difference between chi-square of the two constructs suggests that each of the constructs is distinct. Similar results are found in the case of symbolic consumption and tourist satisfaction ($\chi^2$ for two-construct model = 49.84 vs. $\chi^2$ for single-construct model = 143.34), and symbolic consumption and destination loyalty ($\chi^2$ for two-construct model = 34.65 vs. $\chi^2$ for single-construct model = 122.43). Similar tests are performed between experiential consumption and destination identification ($\chi^2$ for two-construct model = 33.73 vs. $\chi^2$ for single-construct model = 143.28), experiential consumption and tourist satisfaction ($\chi^2$ for two-construct model = 14.1 vs. $\chi^2$ for single-construct model = 141.63), and experiential consumption and destination loyalty ($\chi^2$ for two-construct model = 2.62 vs. $\chi^2$ for single-construct model = 109.34). In the same manner, the same tests are performed on functional consumption and destination identification ($\chi^2$ for two-construct model = 29.23 vs. $\chi^2$ for single-construct model = 72.84), functional consumption and tourist satisfaction ($\chi^2$ for two-construct model = 19.82 vs. $\chi^2$ for single-construct model = 184.87), and functional consumption and destination loyalty ($\chi^2$ for two-construct model = 10.60 vs. $\chi^2$ for single-construct model = 157.20).

The chi-square difference between destination identification and tourist satisfaction is also high (χ² for two-construct model = 29.30 vs. χ² for single-construct model = 125.23). Similarly, the chi-square difference between destination identification and destination loyalty is also high (χ² for two-construct model = 19.10 vs. χ² for single-construct model = 72.10). Finally, the results produce significant difference of chi-square between tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty (χ² for two-construct model = 10.20 vs. χ² for single-construct model = 184.88). In conclusion, every case produces a significant difference of chi-square, suggesting that all measures of constructs in the measurement model have no problems with discriminant validity. Based on the results of these three different tests, it seems that the common method bias is unlikely to be a concern in the data. Table 4-8 shows the chi-square differences between each pair of constructs on a two-construct model and single-construct model CFA test.

Table 4-8

*Chi-square Differences between Each Construct by CFA*

| Constructs | χ² for two-construct model | χ² for two-construct model |
|---|---|---|
| Sym and DIdent | 55.76 | 158.04 |
| Sym and Satt | 49.84 | 143.34 |
| Sym and Loyalty | 34.65 | 122.43 |
| ExpQ and DIdent | 33.73 | 143.28 |
| ExpQ and Satt | 14.1 | 141.63 |
| ExpQ and Loyalty | 2.62 | 109.34 |
| FunQ and DIdent | 29.23 | 72.84 |
| FunQ and Satt | 19.82 | 184.87 |
| FunQ and Loyalty | 10.60 | 157.20 |
| DIdent and Satt | 29.30 | 125.23 |
| DIdent and Loyalty | 19.10 | 72.10 |
| Satt and Loyalty | 10.20 | 184.88 |

Sym = Symbolic consumption; ExpQ = Experiential consumption; FunQ = Functional consumption; DIdent = Destination identification; Satt = Satisfaction

To further examine the CMV more clearly, we conducted marker variable technique, which has been frequently employed along with Harman single-factor test to test common method variance (Sharma, Crawford, & Yetton, 2009). We examined the market variable technique using CFA marker technique with "the unpleasantness of the destination with two items: I feel a sense of disappointment and I feel a sense of unhappiness" as marker variables (Richardson, Simmering, & Sturman, 2013). The results of CFA market technique exhibited chi-square statistic of 259.045 with 210 degrees of freedom ($\chi^2$/d.f. = 259.7045/210 = 1.234), comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.985, the incremental fit index (IFI) = 0.985, the normed fit index (NFI) = 0.926, the Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) = 0.980, and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.019. In comparison to the baseline CFA model, there is no difference in statistical significance of the construct correlations, indicating that the common method bias was not problematic in the data. As a result, we ruled out the common method variance bias.
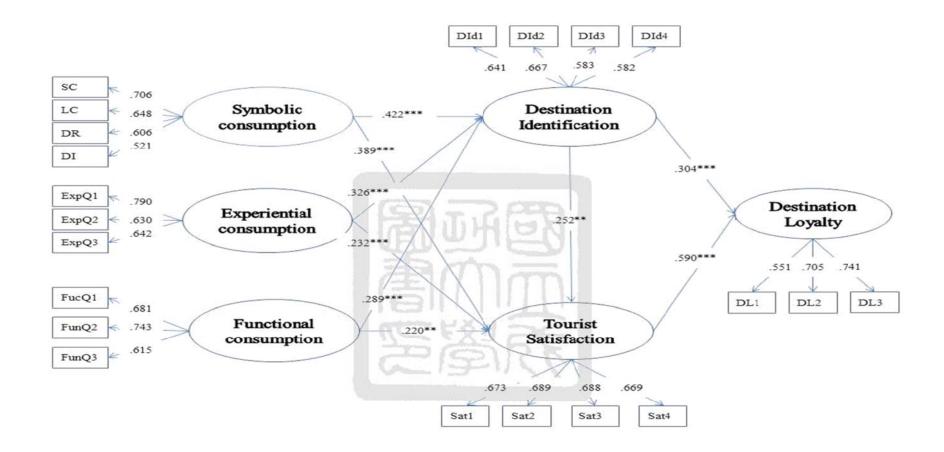
*4.4.2 Structural Equations Modeling (SEM).*

A maximum likelihood estimation method with AMOS 18.0 was used to test the predicted relationships among the constructs in the proposed conceptual model. The overall model achieves a good fit with $\chi^2$ (512) = 442.870 (p = 0.000), $\chi^2$/df = 442.870/208 = 2.129, meeting the criteria of value of less than 3 ($\chi^2$/df < 3), CFI = 0.928, IFI = 0.929, TLI = 0.904, which satisfied the threshold as suggested by Hair et al. (2010).

We controlled for education, travel experience, income, and nationality of tourists in the structural model test. Education had no significant effect on destination identification (-0.044, t = -0.920, p = 0.358), tourist satisfaction (-0.067, t = -1.575, p = 0.111), and destination loyalty (-0.052, t = -1.243, p = 214). Travel experience also had no significant effect on destination identification (0.010, t = 0.210, p = 0.834), tourist satisfaction (0.028, t = 0.659, p = 0.510), and destination loyalty (-0.003, t =

-0.082, p = 935). Income also had no significant effects on destination identification (0.020, t = 0.375, p = 0.708), tourist satisfaction (-0.026, t = -0.578 p = 0.563) and destination loyalty (-0.197, t = -0.549, p = 0.583). Nationality of tourists has significant effect on destination identification (0.103, t = 2.089, p = 0.037), but no significant effects on tourist satisfaction (-0.053, t = -1.240 p = 0.215) and destination loyalty (-0.049, t = -1.137, p = 0.255). Therefore, we assumed that the four control variables, education, travel experience, income and nationality of tourists had no significant effects on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. However, nationality of tourists has significant effect on destination identification, but no effect on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Accordingly, it is suggested that destination marketers should consider the regions or nationality of their tourists as tourists' nationality can positively affect their identification with the tourism destination.

The result of the structural equation modeling (SEM) shows that all proposed direct paths are significant. As shown in Figure 4-1, the symbolic consumption of tourism destination has significantly positive effects on destination identification (0.421, t = 6.303, p = <0.001) and tourist satisfaction (0.393, t = 5.591, p = <0.001). Hence, H1 and H2 are supported. Experiential consumption has significantly positive effects on destination identification (0.321, t = 4.689, p = <0.001) and tourist satisfaction (0.240, t = 3.670, p = <0.001). Accordingly, H3 and H4 are supported. In addition, functional consumption has significantly positive effects on destination identification (0.304, t = 4.308, p = <0.001) and tourist satisfaction (0.207, t = 3.135, p = <0.01), thus supporting H5 and H6. Destination identification further positively and significantly affects tourist satisfaction (0.248, t = 2.813, p = <0.01) and destination loyalty (0.326, t = 3.831, p = <0.001), supporting H7 and H8. Finally, tourist satisfaction significantly and positively affects destination loyalty (0.610, t = 6.449, p = <0.001), providing support for H9.

Model=Standardized estimates, Ch-square/df (500.649/239) = 2.095, CFI = 0.92; IFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.041; $p$ = .000

*Figure 4-1.* Estimated model

After having empirically validated our conceptual model (Model I) with respect to H1-H9, the question remains whether alternative model structures exit that better fit the data. Specifically, it should be tested if there are direct relationships between the symbolic consumption, experiential consumption and functional consumption of tourism destination and destination loyalty or if the fully mediated model best represents the data. Baron and Kenny (1986) suggest an approach to examine mediating effects and to conclude that a mediating effect exists only if four conditions have to be met: (1) the predictor variable should significantly influence the mediator variable (i.e. path a); (2) the mediator should significantly influence the dependent variable (i.e. path b); the predictor variable should significantly influence the dependent variable (i.e. path c); and (4) after we control for the mediator variable, the impact of the predictor on the dependent variable should no longer be significant (full mediation) or should be reduced in strength (partial mediation). Figure 4-2 shows the path diagram of mediator effect.
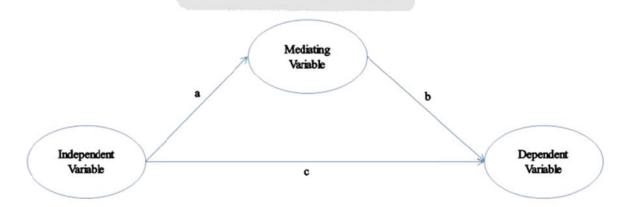


*Figure 4-2*. The mediation effect diagram

The first and second conditions were satisfied in the base model (Model I) as the independent variables (symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption) positively and significantly influence the mediators (destination identification and tourist satisfaction) and the mediating variables (destination identification and tourist satisfaction) positively and significantly influence the dependent variable (destination loyalty). Next, we examined the direct paths from the independent variables (symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption) to the dependent variable (destination loyalty) without the mediators (destination identification and tourist satisfaction) (Model 2). The condition was satisfied with the three direct paths were significant (p = <0.01) and fit the data well, as can be seen in Table 4-9. Thus, the third condition was satisfied. Finally, the fourth condition is fulfilled when the direct path from the independent variables (symbolic consumption, experiential consumption and functional consumption) to the dependent variable (destination loyalty) become nonsignificant (full mediation) or is significantly reduced (partial mediation) when the path from the independent variable to the mediator is included in the model. Model 3 shows that after the inclusion of destination identification and tourist satisfaction in the model, the paths from symbolic consumption, experiential consumption and functional consumption to destination loyalty become nonsignificant, thus full mediation existed. Figure 4.3 provides the results of the structural equations modeling (SEM) of the partial mediating effects of destination identification and tourist satisfactions on the relationships between the symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption on destination loyalty. The results of all models are displayed in Table 4-9.

The comparison between the three models reveals that Model I is superior to Model 2 and Model 3. This is especially true for the squared multiple correlation
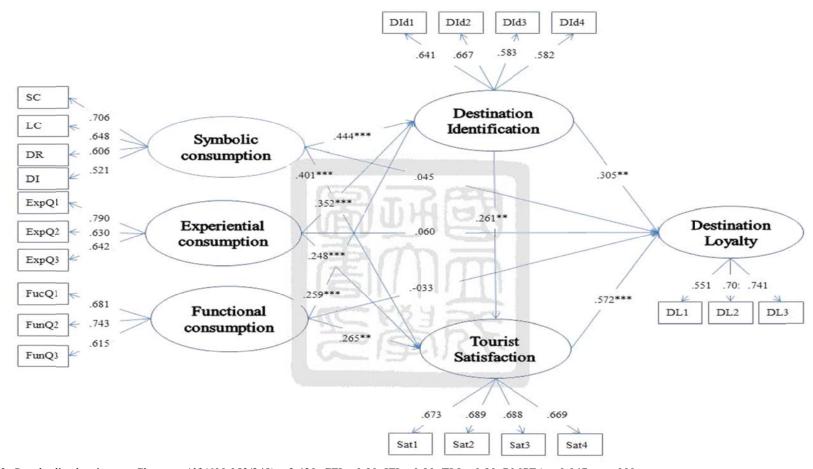
(SMC) measure. Similar to a regression analysis' $R^2$, SMC is used to indicate the dependent variables' explained variance by the independent variables in SEM (Stokburger-Sauer, 2011). Overall, the three models provides a good explanation for destination loyalty and model 1 and 3 provide good explanation for destination identification and tourist satisfaction. However, model 1 and model 3 are more superior to model 2 in explaining destination loyalty (SMC = 10.713 vs. 0.0.713 vs. 0.499). In comparison with model 2, model 1 provides better explanation for destination identification (SMC = 0.499 vs. 0.461) and tourist satisfaction (SMC = 0.592 vs. 0.554). Accordingly, the proposed conceptual model (model 1) fits the data better than the competing model 2 and model 3.

Table 4-9

*Results of Structural Equations Analyses for Full Mediation and Partial Mediation Models*

| Fit estimates | $\chi^2$ | df | CFI | IFI | TLI | RMSEA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model 1 | 500.649 | 239 | 0.92 | 0.92 | 0.90 | 0.042 |
| Model 2 | 366.607 | 109 | 0.90 | 0.90 | 0.81 | 0.070 |
| Model 3 | 600.053 | 248 | 0.90 | 0.90 | 0.90 | 0.047 |
| Paths | Model 1 Full mediation | | Model 2 IV affects DV | | Model 3 Partial mediation | |
| | Beta | t-value | Beta | t-value | Beta | t-value |
| Sym→DIden | 0.422*** | 6.278 | | | 0.444*** | 5.894 |
| Sym→Satt | 0.389*** | 5.559 | | | 0.401*** | 5.100 |
| ExpQ→DIden | 0.326*** | 4.111 | | | 0.352*** | 5.481 |
| ExpQ→Satt | 0.232*** | 3.552 | | | 0.248*** | 3.888 |
| FunQ→DIden | 0.289*** | 4.308 | | | 0.359*** | 5.448 |
| FunQ→Satt | 0.220*** | 3.365 | | | 0.265*** | 4.036 |
| DIden→Satt | 0.252** | 2.865 | | | 0.261** | 2.847 |
| DIden→Loy | 0.304*** | 3.667 | | | 0.305** | 3.129 |
| Satt→Loy | 0.590*** | 6.391 | | | 0.572*** | 5.133 |
| Sym→Loy | | | 0.453*** | 6.542 | 0.045 | 0.556 |
| ExpQ→Loy | | | 0.314*** | 4.540 | 0.060 | 0.890 |
| FunQ→Loy | | | 0.295*** | 4.254 | -0.033 | -0.424 |
| Square multiple correlation (SMC) | | | | | | |
| SMC DIdent | 0.499 | | | | 0.461 | |
| SMC Satt | 0.592 | | | | 0.554 | |
| SMC Loyalty | 0.713 | | 0.499 | | 0.713 | |

Model 3=Standardized estimates, Ch-square/df (600.053/248) = 2.420, CFI = 0.90; IFI = 0.90; TLI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.047; *p* = .000

*Figure 4.3* Partial mediation model (Model 3)

Table 4-10 reports the direct and indirect effects of all variables. Among all the three pattern of consumptions of tourism destination, symbolic consumption has the most direct effects on both destination identification and tourist satisfaction. All symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destination have positive direct effects on destination identification and both direct and indirect effects on tourist satisfaction via destination identification. Destination identification has direct effect on tourist satisfaction and both direct and indirect effects on loyalty via tourist satisfaction. These mean that destination identification not only positively influences tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty, but also mediates the effects of the three consumption patterns, namely symbolic consumption, experiential consumption and functional consumption on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Tourist satisfaction has greater effect on destination loyalty (0.590) in comparison with the total effect of destination identification on destination loyalty (0.452). In addition, tourist satisfaction mediates the effects of symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, functional consumption, and destination identification on destination loyalty.

Table 4-10

*Direct, Indirect and Total Effects of Relationships*

| Path | Direct Effect | Indirect Effects | Total Effect |
|---|---|---|---|
| H1:Symbolic consumption → Destination identification | .422 | -- | .422 |
| H2: Symbolic consumption → Tourist satisfaction | .389 | .106 | .495 |
| H3: Experiential quality → Destination identification | .326 | -- | .326 |
| H4: Experiential quality → Tourist satisfaction | .232 | .082 | .314 |
| H5: Functional quality → Destination identification | .289 | -- | .289 |
| H6: Functional quality → Tourist satisfaction | .220 | .073 | .293 |
| H7: Destination identification → Tourist satisfaction | .252 | -- | .242 |
| H8: Destination identification → Destination loyalty | .304 | .148 | .452 |
| H9: Tourist satisfaction → Destination loyalty | .590 | -- | .590 |

# CHAPTER FIVE

# DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter contains the research discussions and conclusion, including the results of the empirical tests, theoretical contributions and implications, managerial contribution and implications, and limitations and future research.

## 5.1 Research Discussions and Conclusion.

The major purpose of destination marketing and management research has been on destination loyalty due to the increasing competition in global tourism market and the recognition of the importance of loyal visitors. Tourist satisfaction has been studied extensively in the tourism literature to predict tourist loyalty. However, very few studies have investigated the effects of destination identification on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty even though social identification has been proven to be important factors in building consumers' loyalty (He & Li, 2011; He et al., 2012). Therefore, in this study we draw on social identity theory and self-congruity theory to explore new paths to tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty in tourism research.

Previous research has paid much attention on the functional attributes provided at tourism destination as the main driver of tourists' motivations to visit a destination. In recent years, tourism scholars have turned to and called for greater attention on experiential benefits and symbolic meanings of tourism destinations. Yet, few studies have investigated the three patterns of consumption of tourism destination and how they affect tourists' decision making and behaviors in tourism research. Accordingly, this study investigated the effects of consumptions of tourism destination on

destination identification and tourist satisfaction, which are further proposed to affect

destination loyalty. The structural relationships between all variables in the study were

tested using data obtained from a visitor questionnaire survey at Angkor tourism

destination of Cambodia. The empirical hypotheses testing are shown in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1

*The Summary of Hypotheses Testing*

| Hypotheses Development | Results |
|---|---|
| H1: Symbolic consumption of tourism destination positively affects destination identification. | Supported |
| H2: Symbolic consumption of tourism destination positively affects tourist satisfaction. | Supported |
| H3: Experiential consumption of tourism destination positively affects destination identification. | Supported |
| H4: Experiential consumption of tourism destination positively affects tourist satisfaction. | Supported |
| H5: Functional consumption of tourism destination positively affects destination identification. | Supported |
| H6: Functional consumption of tourism destination positively affects tourist satisfaction. | Supported |
| H7: Destination identification positively affects tourist satisfaction. | Supported |
| H8: Destination identification positively affects destination loyalty. | Supported |
| H9: Tourist satisfaction positively affects destination loyalty. | Supported |

The findings from this current research are relevant for service and tourism

research regarding the conception of identification and its relationships to other

important marketing management related variables. Although previous studies in

consumer brand context suggest that symbolic meanings of a brand has a direct effect

on brand identification and consumer satisfaction, this empirical study is the first to

integrate symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional

consumption of tourism destination brand into a conceptual model and examine the

effects of these different patterns of consumptions of destination brand on destination

identification and tourist satisfaction. All the three patterns of destination

consumptions have been confirmed to encourage tourists' identification with the

destination brand and improve tourist satisfaction. The study further showed that tourists' strong identification and satisfaction with the destination have positive effects on destination loyalty.

The results of the structural relationship analysis showed that symbolic consumption has the most influence on destination identification (0.422) and tourist satisfaction (0.389), compared with experiential consumption on destination identification (0.326) and tourist satisfaction (0.232) and functional consumption on destination identification (0.289) and tourist satisfaction (0.220). Different from the previous studies in which measurement of symbolic consumption was measured by self-congruity or lifestyle-congruity (Ekinci et al., 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011), four dimensions of symbolic meanings were tested in the current study: destination identity, destination reputation, self-congruity, and lifestyle-congruity. The results of this study is consistent with the studies by Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) and Westbrook (1987) which argued that the consumptions of leisure services such as amusement parks, upscale restaurants, theaters, resorts, recreation centers, and sporting events is driven by emotional motives or symbolic meanings rather than by functional motives. Furthermore, the result of this study is in line with those studies by Keller (1993), Ruzzier and Ruzzier (2009), and Ekinci et al. (2013), which argued that the symbolic consumption and experiential consumption of tourism destination play just as important role as functional consumption in developing a tourism destination brand.

The third and fourth hypotheses tested the positive influence of experiential consumption on destination identification and tourist satisfaction and were supported in this study. In consistent with previous studies in tourism research (Babin & Dholakia, 2006; Grappi & Montanari, 2011), this study suggests that experiential consumption positively affects destination identification. Furthermore, the current

study suggests that experiential consumption positively affects tourist satisfaction. Thus, it is postulated that the experiential benefits tourists receive at the destination are very important in successful destination branding.

The fifth and sixth hypotheses tested the positive influence of functional consumption on destination identification and tourist satisfaction. In consistent with previous studies in consumer research context (He & Li, 2011; Lam et al., 2013), this study confirms the positive relationship between functional consumption of tourism destination on destination identification. In addition, functional consumption of tourism destination is found to positively affect tourist satisfaction, which are congruent with prior studies (Bigné et al., 2001; Chen & Myagmarsuren, 2010). Accordingly, it is postulated that the functional quality offered at the destination is very important in increasing the chances of social identification between tourists and the destinations and increasing the level of tourist satisfaction.

Unlike previous studies which reveal that consumers or tourists express their social identification through the consumption of symbolic meanings of the brands of consumer products or tourism destinations (Ekinci et al., 2013; He et al., 2012; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011), our study findings reveal that tourists express their identification with tourism destinations through the consumption of not only symbolic meanings, but also experiential benefits and functional attributes derived from visiting tourism destinations. Hence, along with previous studies in consumer brand research and tourism research contexts (Ekinci et al., 2013; He & Li, 2011; He et al., 2012; Stokburger-Sauer, 2011), this study confirmed the implication of social identification is not limited to tangible consumer goods or service industry, but it can be extended to travel experience and tourism destinations. In this current study, it was found that destination identification between tourists with a particular tourism destination lead to greater satisfaction and loyalty toward the destination. Furthermore, destination

identification fully mediates the effects of the consumptions of tourism destinations on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Accordingly, destination identification plays a major role in branding tourism destination, particularly increasing tourist satisfaction and loyalty. As hypothesized, tourist satisfaction has been found to positively affect tourist's loyal behavior toward the destination. In consistent with many other studies in tourism research, tourist satisfaction is the main predictor of destination loyalty.

Finally, the findings from the current study show that all the three consumption patterns—symbolic consumption, experiential consumption and functional consumption—are important drivers of tourist's motivation to pick up a destination choice and destination identification and satisfaction with the tourism destinations, which in turn influence their behavioral loyalty. However, the study findings suggest that symbolic meanings such as unique destination identity, famous destination reputation, self-congruence, and lifestyle-congruence and experiential benefits such as hedonism, education and escape play more important roles than functional attributes in incorporating the pivotal model of destination identification along the path from consumptions of tourism destination to tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Furthermore, the study findings support the pivotal role of destination identification by finding that destination identification does not only have direct effects on both tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty, but also has significant indirect effects on destination loyalty via tourist satisfaction. More importantly, destination identification fully mediates the effects of symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption on tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

## 5.2 Theoretical Contributions and Implications.

The current study included symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption in one model to investigate how they influence destination

identification and tourist satisfaction, which further influence destination loyalty. The application of consumptions of tourism destination brand in tourism studies can potentially bridge the gap among these three approaches since it implies that the functional consumption and experiential consumption as well as symbolic consumption of tourism destinations provide fundamental motivations for visiting a particular destination. In order words, tourists are more likely to travel to places that offer good service qualities, experiential benefits, and symbolic values. While previous studies in tourism have often separated the discussion of symbolic consumption, experiential consumption and functional consumptions of tourism destination, this study incorporated the three to present a broader picture of travel motivations.

Another theoretical contribution of the study is to contribute to the growing literature of destination brandings in three ways. First, drawing on symbolic consumption, branding literatures, and social identification theory, an integrative destination brand model is developed. The results show symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption are the key components for building destination identification and tourist satisfaction, which further influence tourists' loyal behavior. Although there is a bundle of research on symbolic meanings of the brand and brand identification of consumer goods, a thorough literature review of tourism studies found that no or few studies have investigated the symbolic meaning of tourism destination on destination identification and tourist satisfaction. Furthermore, there are few or no studies investigating the experiential consumption and functional consumption of destination brand on destination identification and tourist satisfaction. In the current study, the findings suggest that tourists express their social identity not only through the symbolic meanings of the destination (destination identity, destination reputation, self-congruence and lifestyle-congruence), but also on

the basic of the destination's experiential benefits (hedonism, education, and escape) and functional attributes (attraction, service quality, and amenities) they receive from visiting a tourism destination.

The results of this study corroborate the findings of studies in consumer brand research by He and Li (2011) and He et al. (2012), which support the links from brand identification to consumer satisfaction and loyalty. In addition, the results of the current study are in line with the studies in tourism by Ekinci et al. (2013) and Stokburger-Sauer (2011) which highlight the importance of brand identification as the psychological foundation which develops tourist's loyal behaviors. The current study tested and confirmed that destination identification plays a central role along the path from consumptions of tourism destinations to tourist satisfaction as well as destination loyalty.

Investing the effects of consumptions of tourism destinations on destination identification expands the theory of social identity beyond the application of the self-congruence theory on consumer goods such as cars or clothes. Therefore, the current study provides supports for the growing body of research on destination brand management using social identification approach. Although theory of social identity can be traced back to the 1980s, there is limited research in examining social identity theory in tourism contexts. This study demonstrated that tourists express their social identification with the tourism destination they visited through the symbolic meanings, the experiential benefits, and the functional attributes they received from the destination. Tourists' identification with the tourism destination leads to greater satisfaction and loyalty toward that destination. The findings support the social identity theory, which explains that social identification of consumers with consumer-brand context takes place when an individual identifies with a certain group of people or the brand through the consumptions of product brands (Kuenzel &

Halliday, 2008) and that identification of consumers certain brands affect their behaviors, particularly satisfaction and loyalty toward the brands (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Grappi & Montanari, 2011). Therefore, the study contributes to the social identification literature in the sense that it demonstrates its applicability in explaining tourist satisfaction and travel intentions.

Last but not least, the findings of this study also expand the self-congruity theory in tourism research. Unlike previous researches which applied self-congruity theory to investigate the match between tourists' self-image and destination image (Ekinci et al., 2013; Sirgy, 1986), or the match between tourists' personality and destination personality (Stokburger-Sauer, 2011), this study investigates the match between tourists' symbolic meanings and tourism destination symbolic meanings, namely destination identity, destination reputation, self-congruence, and lifestyle-congruence. The findings of the current study reveal the symbolic meanings of tourism destinations drive destination identification and tourist satisfaction, supporting the self-congruity theory which explains how self-congruence drives brand identification and brand loyalty through self-congruity (Kuenzel & Halliday, 2010; Lam et al., 2013). Hence, this study expands self-congruity theory in its applicability in explaining the match between tourists' symbolic meanings and destination symbolic meanings, which include identify, reputation, self-congruence and lifestyle-congruence.

## 5.3 Managerial Contributions and Implications.

Our results have important implications for destination marketing managers as well. First destination marketers are increasingly interested in finding ways to attract tourists and motivate them to revisit and/or recommend their destinations to others, particularly building tourists' loyalty toward their destinations (Pike, 2005; Pike & Ryan, 2004). Our findings indicate that there are three important motivational motives for destination managers to consider when trying to attract and motivate tourists to

their destinations: (1) symbolic consumption, (2) experiential consumption and (3) functional consumption. In addition, the study findings reveal destination identification as a new path in building tourists' satisfaction and loyalty towards the destination.

The results of this study clearly indicate that all the three patterns of destination consumptions: symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption are important drivers of destination identification and tourist satisfaction, both of which further play pivotal roles in tourism destination loyalty. Specifically, the findings of this study suggest that by focusing on these consumptions of tourism destination that influence tourism destination identification, destination managers could achieve important and desired consequences, most notably tourists' identification and satisfaction, which further influence their loyalty toward the destination.

From a practical standpoint, since the symbolic consumption has the greatest positive influences on destination identification and tourist satisfaction, tourism marketers should study the destination's symbolic characteristics from tourist's point of view carefully. Destination brand development managers should match their destination's symbolic meanings to those of tourists' symbolic consumption. For example, if a destination is viewed as a unique and friendly place from tourists' point of view, tourism marketers may benefit from designing promotion messages featuring the uniqueness of the destination, loyal and friendly people, and service employees to position the destination brand in the competing markets. Additionally, destination marketers and destination planners can use carefully selected slogans, designs, multinational tourism environment, and cultures as symbols for creating symbolic consumption experiences.

The findings of the study suggest that tourists experience symbolic meanings of tourism destinations not only through unique destination identity and destination reputation, but also self-congruence and lifestyle-congruence. Therefore, tourism destination marketers should think strategically about strengthening their destination identity and reputation by capitalizing on opportunities for networking and organizing social events, local festivals, cultural shows, food exhibitions, and/or sport shows with themes that match tourists' social identity. In addition, destination markets can strengthen their destination identify and reputation through advertising and public relations (Lau & Lee, 1999). Furthermore, tourism destination marketers should think strategically about strengthening the self-congruence and lifestyle congruence of their destination by promoting the local lifestyle and multi-national lifestyle offered at the destination. For example, at the study site of Angkor tourism destination, foreign tourists can experience both local and multi-national lifestyles. While tourists visit the Angkor destinations, they experience the traditional cultures and lifestyle of the local people, and they can experience the multi-national lifestyles by socializing with tourists from around the world while they shop, relax, drink and chat at many bars, restaurants, and night markets at the Angkor Siem Reap downtown. Accordingly, destination managers should offer a variety of activities, shows, performances, entertainments and the likes where tourists can participate to learn and socialize to express their self-image and lifestyle.

Second, given that experiential consumption of tourism destination had a positively significant influence on both destination identification and tourist satisfaction, understanding what experiences tourists hold toward a tourism destination should be beneficial to the design of tourism destination offerings. The findings from the current study reveal that *hedonism, education* and *escape* are the main factors in providing memorable experiences to tourists. Thus, destination

marketers should invest their efforts and allocate their resources on repositioning their destination products and services which can provide pleasurable experience, educational benefits, and escape feelings from their daily life.

Third, functional consumption of tourism destination had a positively significant influence on both destination identification and tourist satisfaction as well. Thus, understanding what functional quality tourists hold toward a tourism destination should be beneficial to the design of destination products and services. The results from the current study reveal that *tourism attractions, amenities* and *service quality* are the primary dimensions in providing functional quality to tourists. Hence, destination marketers should invest their efforts on repositioning their tourism attractions and providing better amenities and service quality and adjusting promotional messages in order to attract tourists. For example, promotional messages or advertising could include the special features of their tourism destinations, the best amenities and excellent service quality offered at the destinations to arouse their motivations to visit the destinations.

Fourth, this study also offers some important insights into brand identification process in tourism and has some important implications for destination managers in building tourists' satisfaction and loyalty through identification with the destinations. The significant relevant of destination identification for tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty highlights the importance of brand identification in tourism because it shows that tourists are more likely to identify with destinations whose core symbolic meanings are consistently congruent with their own and experiential benefits and functional attributes are meeting or exceeding their expectations. According to the findings, destination managers should invest more in the area of symbolic meanings and experiential quality of the tourism destination brands. Instead of promoting tourism destinations for the purposes of functional attributes offered at the destinations,

destination managers should focus on the symbolic meanings and experiential benefits of the destination brands, so that it facilitates tourists search for destination-brand bond through destination identification. Therefore, tourism destination marketers must think strategically about strengthening their destination brand identification by capitalizing on opportunities for networking or organizing social events, and local festivals with them that match their consumptions, particularly symbolic values and experiential benefits. Furthermore, innovative communication strategies such as storytelling via movies or celebrity advertising would enable tourists to define their identification with the tourism destination brand (Ekinci et al., 2013) and enrich the destination brand's offering and association with tourist's social identity (Woodside, Blair, & Ning, 2007).

Finally, the study also has specific practical implications for the destination marketers of Angkor tourism destination. Since the symbolic meanings of Angkor tourism destination have greatest effects on tourists' social identification and satisfaction, both of which significantly influence their loyal behaviors, Angkor destination marketers are encouraged to differentiate Angkor tourism destination based on these symbolic meanings of their destination, particularly the unique identity of Angkor, the famous reputation of Angkor, and the special life-style of Angkor. In addition, experiential benefits and functional quality tourists derived from Angkor tourism destination have significant impacts on their social identification and satisfaction. Hence, promoting the experiential benefits in particular hedonism, educational benefits, and escape feelings from their daily life and exceptional functional quality such as destination attractions, amenities, and service quality would help attract new travelers. Accordingly, Angkor tourism destination marketers should focus on developing marketing strategies that emphasize on the unique symbolic meanings of Angkor, memorable experiential benefits and exceptional functional

quality worth their visit to Angkor in order to satisfy and maintain the existing tourists and attracting new travelers.

The findings from this study are an initial effort in order to better understand tourism destination branding or country branding and brand identification in tourism context and provide evidence that destinations or nations need to strategically manage and market their brands in search for sources of competitive advantages (Stokburger-Sauer, 2011). The findings of this study are not only important practical implication for Angkor tourism destination marketers and other tourism destination marketers, but also for marketing managers of the country as a whole or of particular service products related to the tourism industry, such as cruise lines, individual airlines, hotel chain, theme parks, travel agencies or tour operators. Country marketers or policy makers could try to strengthen the perceptions of travelers that the country's symbolic meanings are close to their own, and country's experiential benefits are exceptionally memorable and functional offerings are of high quality. Specifically, advertising, public relations, and celebrity endorsements could prove to have a positive impact on the perceptions of destination consumptions, particularly destination identity and destination reputation dimensions of symbolic meanings and the identification of the tourists with the destination brand. Accordingly, the goal of all institutions involved such as service providers, destination managers, national tourism authorities should be to build a consistent and coherent country's brand identity and brand reputation and communicate those with other symbolic meanings such as self-image congruence and lifestyle-congruence to current and potential tourists, who should have a positive perception with the unique symbolic meanings of the destination and strong motivation to visit the destination and identify with the destination.

**5.4 Limitations and Future Research.**

This study has several limitations and generates some avenues for future research. First, this study tests the hypotheses with tourists visiting one tourism destination, namely Angkor tourism destination, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, this study employed a convenience sampling method, so the sample may not reflect the entire population of visitors to the research site. Future research testing this model with larger random samples or samples in other contexts, for example, with multiple tourism destinations and in different country contexts would increase our understanding of this important research concept.

The literature review of consumer-product research proposes other outcomes of brand identification such as brand championship, word-of-mouth, and resistance of negative information and support of marketing activities. For example, the Angkor brand of Angkor Tourism destination has long been extended into Angkor beer, Angkor cigarette and recently Angkor car in Cambodia (Bangkok Post, 2013)[1], yet empirical research has not examined on these issues. Future research should aim to find empirical evidence for these effects and other effects, such as the effect of destination brand identification on brand extension in tourism research.

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[1] Cambodia gets rolling (May 7, 2013). Bangkok Post Available at
http://www.bangkokpost.com/business/marketing/348783/cambodia-gets-rolling

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# APPENDIX

**Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire**

**Dear Research Participants:**

This research work is carried out for the purpose of a doctoral dissertation, which is a part of Institute of International Management (IIM) curriculum of the College of Management, National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan. This academic questionnaire is used to investigate the "The effect of symbolic consumption, experiential consumption, and functional consumption of tourism destination on destination identification and tourists satisfaction, which in turn influence tourists' destination loyalty".

We sincerely invite you to spend some minutes completing it and return to us at your earliest convenient time. Please be assured that your answers will be strictly and confidentially kept and no personal information will be made public. Please feel free to take the time to fill out this questionnaire as accurately as possible. Your help is vitally crucial for our study. We deeply appreciate and thank you for your kind cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

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Section 1-Symbolic Perception Evaluation of Angkor Destination

| Symbolic perception evaluation of Angkor destination. | Level of Agreement | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thinking about the symbolic perceptions of Angkor destination, overall how likely are you agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements. | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| Destination Identity | | | | | |
| 1.  For me, Angkor has a distinctive identity. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.  For me, Angkor has an attractive identity. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3.  For me, Angkor stands out from its competitors. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Destination Reputation | | | | | |
| 1.  For me, Angkor has a very good reputation as tourism destination. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.  For me, Angkor is a trustworthy tourism destination. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3.  I consider Angkor one of the best tourism destinations. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4.  People I know think highly of Angkor. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Self-Congruence | | | | | |
| 1.  The image of the typical tourist to Angkor is similar to how I am. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.  The image of the typical tourist to Angkor is similar to how I would like to see myself. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3.  The image of Angkor is consistent with how I see myself. | | | | | |
| 4.  The image of Angkor is consistent with how I would like to see myself. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Lifestyle-Congruence | | | | | |
| 1.  Vacationing in Angkor reflects my personal lifestyle. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.  Staying in Angkor supports my lifestyle. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3.  Vacationing in Angkor is totally in line with my lifestyle. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Section 2- Experiential Consumption Evaluation of Angkor Destination

| Experiential consumption evaluation of Angkor destination. | Level of Agreement | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thinking about your travel experience at Angkor destination, overall how likely are you agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements. | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1.  The experience at Angkor was truly enjoyable | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.  I had a lot of fun. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3.  I derived a lot of pleasure from the trip. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4.  I truly felt delighted. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5.  I expanded my understanding at Angkor. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6.  I gain information and knowledge about Angkor. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 7.  I learn many different things about Angkor. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 8.  I felt like I was in another world. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 9.  I truly felt it like an escape. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 10. I got so involved that I forgot everything else. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Section 3- Functional Consumption Evaluation of Angkor Destination

| Functional consumption evaluation of Angkor destination. | Level of Agreement | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thinking about functional attributes of Angkor destination, overall how likely are you agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements. | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1.  Angkor has scenic, historical and cultural attractions. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.  Angkor offers entertaining activities and events. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3.  Angkor provides a variety of good foods. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4.  Angkor offers good quality food services. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5.  Angkor offers high quality accommodation services. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6.  Angkor offers good quality local transport services. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 7.  Angkor has high quality tourism facilities. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 8.  Angkor offers good tourism amenities. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 9.  Angkor has great value tourism service. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 10. Tour services and employees' attitude at Angkor is good. | | | | | |

Section 4-Destination Identification

| Destination identification evaluation of Angkor destination. | Level of Agreement | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Please tick (☑) in the box the response which you feel is the most appropriate to you taking into consideration the items mentioned below based on your identification level with Angkor. | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1.  When someone praises Angkor, I feel like a personal compliment. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.  I am very interested in what other think about Angkor. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3.  When someone criticizes Angkor, I feel like a personal insult. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4.  If a story in the media criticized Angkor, I would feel embarrassed. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Section 5-Tourist Satisfaction

| Tourist's satisfaction evaluation of Angkor destination. | Level of Agreement | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thinking about your satisfaction toward Angkor destination, overall how likely are you agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. Angkor destination goes beyond my expectations. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. My trip to Angkor is very meaningful for me. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. I am happy with my travel experience at Angkor. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4. Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to Angkor. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Section 6-Destination Loyalty

| Destination loyalty evaluation of Angkor destination. | Level of Agreement | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thinking about your loyalty toward Angkor destination, overall how likely are you agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements. | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
| 1. It's likely for me to revisit Angkor in the future. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. It's likely for me to recommend my family and friends to visit Angkor. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. I will tell others about my trip to Angkor. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Section 7-Demographic Data and Trip Characteristics

| Demographic data and trip characteristics | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Gender: | ☐ Male | ☐ Female | |
| 2 | Marital Status: | ☐ Single | ☐ Married | |
| 3 | Age: | ☐ 18-25 | ☐ 26-35 | ☐ 36-45 |
| | | ☐ 46-55 | ☐ Over 55 | |
| 4 | Education: | ☐ ≦High school | ☐College/University | ☐ Graduate School |
| 5 | Occupation: | ☐ Student | ☐ Employed | ☐ Unemployed |
| | | ☐ Retired | ☐ Other……………. | |
| 6 | Monthly income: (USD) | ☐ $1,000 & below | ☐ $1,001-$3,000 | ☐ $3,001-$5,000 |
| | | ☐ $5,001-$7,000 | ☐ $7,001 and above | |
| 7 | Purpose of visit: | ☐ Pleasure | ☐ Business | ☐ Other……… …. |
| 8 | Number of visit | ☐ First-time visit | ☐ Repeated visit | |
| 9 | Travel Arrangement: | ☐ Independent travel | | ☐ Package tour |
| 10 | Sources of Information about Angkor: | ☐ Television  ☐ Friends or relatives | ☐ Internet  ☐ Travel agents/tour operator | ☐ Books  ☐ Other………….. |
| 11 | Nationality | …………………………… | | |

**Thank you so very much for your cooperation.**