

# PRECEDENTS OF TOURIST ATTRACTION AT LAHORE FORT, PAKISTAN

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**ABSTRACT:** *The main aim of this paper is to identify the relationship between heritage image, tourist perceived value, tourist experience influences on tourist attraction at Lahore Fort, Pakistan. A tourist attraction is a key component in today's business environment. The more tourists attraction towards the tourist site the higher will be the income generation. Previously, ecotourism and entertainment tourism-related studies were the main focus of many researchers in defining tourist attraction. However, very little research is available in the current literature where heritage and historical sites are the main focus of research in respect to tourist attraction phenomenon. A survey questionnaire was used to collect data. The data were initially screened on SPSS 23. After the initial screening data were further analyzed for measurement and structural model analysis by using SmartPLS 3. The results indicate that heritage image has a small effect on tourist attraction. However, tourist perceived value and tourist experience have a greater effect on elaborating tourist attraction.*

**KEYWORDS:** Heritage Image, tourist perceived value, tourist experience, tourist attraction.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the current literature, the phenomenon of heritage site attraction is a debatable issue and need further considerations. The importance of heritage attraction was further escalated when UNESCO developed world heritage list. Lahore Fort, Pakistan was inscribed in the world heritage list by UNESCO back in 1981 [1]. Thus, the recognition of Lahore Fort by UNESCO as a world heritage site make it an attractive destination for tourist visits [2]. This Fort was built by emperor Akbar in years 1556-1605 [1]. The Lahore Fort is popular among locals and international tourists for its attraction and originality. From time to time cultural and social events were organized by the government of Pakistan at this historical Fort. However, there is a dearth of research to identify as to what extent tourist perceived value and heritage site image effects the tourist experience to such an extent that the attractiveness of this site can compel local and foreign tourists to visit Lahore Fort.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The presence of the heritage aspect in tourist destinations can play a key role in attracting local and international tourists [3]. However, in the current literature, it is still a debatable issue as to what extent, heritage attraction is important for local and international tourists. According to [4], that heritage attraction is a very complex phenomenon. Because it involves cultural aspects embedded in it. A heritage attraction also involves tourist facilities. However, the main aspect still is its historical value, which can attract a large number of tourists. The Mogul emperor's architectural essence and historical value of the Lahore Fort is still in its original form. Therefore, this historical image will be sufficient in order to attract tourists. In recent times it has been unsealed that, the growth of tourism is expended around the world is due, too many tourists taking a keen interest in visiting historical sites [2]. In terms of income generation for the host country, the influx of foreign tourists to visit historical and heritage sites can bring socio-economic stability to the local community [5]. A heritage attraction of tourists towards historical sites constantly increasing with the passage of time. Thus, these aspects compel the researcher to conduct this study. Because, it is pertinent to understand the importance of heritage image, tourist perceived value, tourist experience tourist's attractions towards the Lahore Fort. A number of research studies have classifies tourist

attraction in recent time, such as museums, theme parks, national parks, religious sites, historical sites, and culturally embedded heritage tourist destinations [5-7].

The image of the tourist destination represents the overall anticipations and emotional attachment to the history and culture of the specific destination [8]. The image of a historical destination can also play a very important role in tourism-related strategies [9]. Destination image has been discussed many times in the literature, however, there are few researchers who consider the importance of historical image attached to a particular site. The destination image composed of two main components such as, cognitive and affective. A cognitive component is the amalgamation of an individual belief and his/her knowledge and interest in history and heritage tourist destinations [8, 10]. While the affective component of heritage image composed of the emotional attachment and personal feelings of the tourists towards the historical sites [11]. The image of the heritage site if is according to the emotions and feelings of tourist his/her experience will be positive and effective [11]. However, if the image of the destination was not according to the tourist emotions and feelings towards the destination his/her experience will be negative and discouraging [8]. During the last two decades, the concept of heritage tourist site also emerged as a value-based attitude that discourages a particular area where historical site exist [12, 13]. The value in the context of marketing has been discussed many times in term of benefits associated with the product and services [14]. In marketing related studies, the value is perceived in the form of physical traits, services and support for technical help available to customers [14, 15]. Perceived value is also attached to the customer emotions and feelings about the products or services such types of values, includes, functional, social and emotional values [14, 16]. However, perceived values in relation to tourism-related studies are slightly different from that of marketing-related studies. Tourist evaluates the value of tourist site in the form of price and time capitalized on one hand and exploration of experience on the other hand [17]. Some of the basic characteristics involve in defining the tourist perceived value consist of natural landscapes, history and cultural aspects, cleanliness of the site, quality of food and accommodation, transport and recreational facilities, events and functions, and the behaviour and attitude of the staff [17-19].

Furthermore, if the experience of the tourist is according to his/her expectation about the touring site, it will further

increase his/her attraction. This is further elaborated by [19], that positive tourist experience is a precious aspect of the tourist site attraction. Thus, the importance of perceived value can be considered as a fundamental tool for tourist attraction towards the tourist site [20]. Hence, the experience of the tourist depends on his/her judgment towards perceived value which in turn depends on the outcome in the form of tourist attraction [14].

Many researchers suggest that the tourist experience at historical sites depends on value related in terms of its history and culture which ultimately can make the site more attractive to the tourists [14, 19]. Therefore, it can be summarised that tourist perceived value and experience will influence tourist attractions towards historical and heritage sites. The researcher has adopted Mehrabian and Russell (1974) stimulus organism response (SOR) theory, as an underpinning theory. According to this theory that stimulus in the environment can affect the inner feeling of the individuals which in turn can prone to certain response [21]. As, per SOR theory the researcher will identify the relationship between, heritage image, tourist perceived value (stimulus) and tourist experience which might be good or bad (organism), influence tourist attraction (response). The conceptual framework for this study is represented in fig 1.

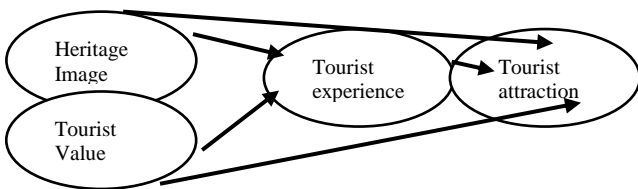


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

As per SOR theory, the following direct and indirect hypotheses are deduced.

**Direct hypotheses:**

- H1: Heritage image has a positive effect on a tourist attraction
- H2: Tourist Perceived value has a positive effect on a tourist attraction
- H3: Heritage image has a positive effect on the tourist experience
- H4: Tourist perceived value has a positive effect on the tourist experience
- H5: Tourist perceived value has a positive effect on a tourist attraction
- H6: Tourist experience mediates the relationship between heritage image and tourist attraction
- H7: Tourist experience mediates the relationship between tourist perceived value and tourist attraction

**3. METHODOLOGY**

The data were collected from local and foreign tourists who visit Lahore Fort during the Month of January - March 2019. The simple, convenient sampling technique was used to collect the data due to unavailability of the tourist's list. The data were collected on 5 Likert scale ranges from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5). In total 250 survey questionnaires were distributed. After initial screening 11 univariate and 3 multivariate outliers were removed from the final data set. Then the data were analysed for further screening on SPSS 23 and the results show that data lying within the range of common method bias multicollinearity. The male

respondents were (77.1%), the majority of the visitors were from age 26-36 (25.8%), in the category of the profession (61%) were salaried, and higher proportion in the category of nationality local tourists (81%) exhibit the large proportion.

**3.1 RESULTS**

After the screening of data SmartPLS 3 was used to further analyze the data for measurement and structural models as per [22] guidelines. The results for Cronbach Alpha, Composite Reliability and Average Variance are according to the standard values and were retained for further analysis (refer table 1). Only item HEMO2 was dropped because the outer loading value was 0.138 less than 0.7. VIF values were ranged from 1.401 to 3.183, which shows no multicollinearity problem.

Table 1 Convergent Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Heritage Image	0.832	0.88	0.595
Tourist Attraction	0.852	0.894	0.628
Tourist Experience	0.912	0.927	0.587
Tourist Perceived Value	0.802	0.863	0.559

For discriminant validity, other methods such as Fornell-Larcker Criterion and cross-loadings were used consistently. However, this study used Hetrotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) method for discriminant validity, due to limitations and issues in the previous methods. A number of recent researchers prefer HTMT method over Fornell-Larcker and Cross loading methods [22-24]. The results of HTM discriminant validity (refer table 2) were less than 0.85 cut-offs recommended by [22]. Therefore, discriminant validity was established as all the items of the constructs are distinct from one another.

Table 2 HTMT

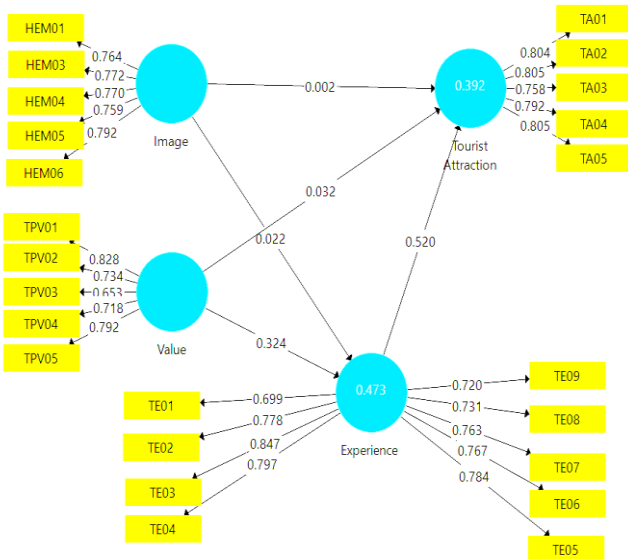
	Heritage Image	Tourist Attraction	Tourist Experience	Tourist Perceived Value
Heritage Image				
Tourist Attraction	0.254			
Tourist Experience	0.612	0.674		
Tourist Perceived Value	0.845	0.322	0.781	

For structural model analysis, 5000 bootstrapping method was applied as recommended by [22]. The direct hypothesis H1 and H2 were rejected as their p-value was less than >.05, while H3, H4, H5 were supported. The indirect specific hypothesis H6 was rejected while H7 was supported (refer to table 3). Thus, shows that experience cannot mediate the relationship between image and tourist attraction, while experience mediates the relationship between tourist perceived value and tourist attraction.

**Table 3 Direct and Indirect Hypothesis**

		$\beta$	(M)	T Value	P Values	Decision
H1	HEM >TA	-0.049	-0.046	0.571	0.568	
H2	HEM >TE	0.149	0.157	1.801	0.072	Rejected
H3	TPV >TA	-0.222	-0.223	2.169	0.03	Supported
H4	TPV >TE	0.575	0.573	7.382	0	Supported
H5	TE >TA	0.775	0.775	12.033	0	Supported
H6	HE ->TE >TA	0.116	0.12	1.851	0.064	Rejected
H7	TPV >TE >TA	0.446	0.445	5.8	0	Supported

As, per Cohen, (1988) criteria  $R^2$  for tourist attraction is 0.392 and tourist experience is 0.473 thus can be considered as substantial [25] (refer figure 2). The results of  $f^2$  value indicate that heritage image (0.002) and tourist perceived value (0.032) have a small effect in producing  $R^2$  for tourist attraction. Heritage image (0.022) also has a small effect in producing  $R^2$  for the tourist experience while a tourist perceived value (0.324) has a substantial effect in producing  $R^2$  for the tourist experience. Tourist experience (0.52) has also a substantial effect in producing  $R^2$  for tourist attraction. Based on predictive relevance  $Q^2$  tourist attraction (0.225) and tourist experience (0.254) shows that the two endogenous variables of the model possess predictive relevance because  $Q^2$  is below above 0 [23].



**Figure 2 PLS structural Model results**

**4. DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

This study was conducted in Lahore Fort to identify the relationship between heritage image, value and the influence of experience on tourist attraction. The hypothesis H1 was rejected as according to the analysis, heritage image at Lahore Fort has a very small effect on tourist attraction. However, heritage image in other studies suggests a strong positive relationship with tourist

attraction [26]. This might be due to the fact that a heritage image of Lahore Fort is still not yet well established in the mind of local and international tourists. The second direct hypothesis H2 was also rejected as from the analysis, it is concluded that heritage image has a small effect on tourist experience at Lahore Fort. In contrast to this study analysis, findings of other studies suggest that tourist expectations depend on the extent, how well the heritage image promoted and marketed by the government in order to attract local and international tourists [26-28]. The third hypothesis H3 supported the relationship between tourist perceived value and tourist attraction. It is suggested that the value of historical and cultural aspects can attract a large number of tourists to this historical site. Findings from other empirical studies also support, a positive relationship between tourist perceived value and tourist attraction [29]. Hypothesis no H4 and H5 support a positive relationship between value and attractiveness, and experience and attraction.

The indirect specific hypothesis H6 was rejected, because, the mediating effect of experience between heritage image and tourist attraction was weak as compared to H7, where the mediating effect of experience between tourist perceived value and tourist attraction was strong.

Thus, Mehrabian and Russell (1974) stimulus, organism, response theory was tested in this research study. Where Stimulus (heritage image, tourist perceived value), organism (tourist experience) and response (tourist attraction).

**5. CONCLUSION**

The main objective of this study was to identify the effect of precedents of tourist attraction at Lahore Fort, Pakistan. The precedents of tourist attraction consist of heritage image, tourist perceived value and the tourist experience. The results of this research study support theoretical suggestions regarding the relationships between tourist perceived value, tourist experience in line with tourist attraction perspectives. However, the hypothesis of heritage image and its impact on tourist attraction were not supported. The significant theoretical contribution of this study is that heritage image has less impact on tourist attraction as compared to historical value and tourist experience on tourist attraction.

The managerial implications can be that; the tourism department needs to focus on heritage image marketing strategies. If the tourist experience was, according to his/her expectations his/her behaviour towards historical sites of Pakistan can more attractive.

**5.1 Limitations and recommendations for future research**

This research study examined, the relationship between heritage image, tourist perceived value, tourist experience on tourist attraction. Hence, testing these relationships the finding of this study contributed well in the body of knowledge. Data was collected by simple convenient sampling method and this was the only possible way to collect data at Lahore Fort due to, non-availability of tourist lists. Convenient sampling technique is a non-probability sampling technique which has its own limitations [30]. Secondly, this research study was only limited to the Lahore Fort, and due to limitations to only this particular site the results of this study can also be tested in other historical sites of Pakistan. The heritage image which cannot strongly develop a relationship with a tourist attraction, other dimensions of heritage image can

also be included in futures research to further enhance tourist attraction.

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