The perceptions turned chaff at the destination – experience effect on cultural tourists' satisfaction

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Abstract: Cultural tourism as a branch of tourism has acquired dimensions of immense significance in the economic development of destinations, across the globe, enriched with a plethora of art-forms, folklores and rich cultural heritage. The promotion of such destinations in terms of induced perceptions and the experiences matching the expectations of tourists has been predominantly the marketers' visualisations of the means and measures of consumer satisfaction. The focus of this research is on destinations of cultural importance, in Kerala, an Indian state acclaimed to be one of the ten paradises of the world by the National Geographic Traveler. It aims to redefine pull motivators as pre-visit destination perceptions and probe how such perceived expectations, which in turn reflects customer loyalty. The PLS path model results show that while destination perceptions and experiences significantly predict tourists' satisfaction, such satisfaction fails to predict loyalty.

Keywords: cultural tourism; destinations; pre-visit perception; post-visit experience; tourists' satisfaction; loyalty.

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1 Introduction

The ability not to take the obvious or seductive course of action but explore the truth is regarded as one of the ways of pursuing and discovering one's self. The Buddhist teaching, ehipassiko, translated as 'come and see for yourself' is based on the concept of taking nothing on faith but on their own questioning. Whether it is exoneration from one's worldly bound onus that tempts one to move or extolling attempts to try new things and meet new people, travelling is believed to have sprung up from the desire to learn. Often reckoned as push and pull factors in researchers' platforms, these motivators are the tools in the hands of marketers in promoting the tour operations. Innovative tourist products, though are attractions that motivate travel and tourism, when blended with the fulfilment of the travellers' desire supplementing experiential travel needs and the quest for realising their social esteem suggests efficiency of tourism management and marketing inventions (Chan et al., 2016).

Edification of ethos and values imbibed through culture, history embedded in the past and antiquity, as well as the legacy indicated by the heritage of destinations identified as the prominent push motivators and attractions at the destinations as the major pull motivators (Karamehmedovic, 2018), had been the core competency of cultural tourism promotion. The role of websites and destination management organisations in building destination images by elaborating destination offerings and destination descriptions besides the accessibility and availability of such places of attraction (Lončarić et al., 2013) had also been the piece of meat from the researchers' point of view.

The concept that whether satisfaction results from the fulfilment of expectations and dissatisfaction results when performance on products or services is unsatisfactory (Swan and Combs, 1976) is the core research question, in the context of cultural tourism, of this study. Extant literature on site-specific (Andruliene et al., 2018; Yousefi and Marzuki, 2015; Prasad et al., 2019; Mannaa, 2018), hobby specific (Caber and Albayrak, 2016; Ewert, 1985; Chen and Chen, 2015) or category-specific (Ramchurjee, 2013) tourism attractions, by and large sketches out the satisfaction and loyalty from push and pull motivators identified (Yoon and Uysal, 2005) or the impact of cognitive and affective images of destination on the overall image (Alcocer and Ruiz, 2020) that leads to satisfaction.

We attempt to cross the threshold of push-pull motivators or image formations and establish linkages in perceived benefits and experiences of destinations, especially the cultural tourism ones, in tourism management. Notwithstanding the push motivators and their role in the promotion of cultural tourism destinations, the study takes the outlook of pull motivators in the creation of pre-visit destination perception and how the same as post- visit experiences influence the satisfaction and loyalty towards a geographic area enriched with cultural and heritage values one cannot ignore. Explicitly approving the fact that the perception about a destination is created through sources of information that promote the site, this study discusses the destination perceptions framed by visitors from time to time, ignoring the mass appeal of a specific destination or its promotional impact. The study relies on a unique method of identifying common components through exploratory factor analysis and modelling them using partial least squares path modelling with loyalty as a reflection of satisfaction which is the formative construct of destination perception and destination experience.

2 The proposed model

The study basically is inclined towards the marketing concepts of product perception and its actual performance in terms of the cognitive dissonance resulting in consumer dissatisfaction. It also tries to connect how far customer satisfaction results in the development of loyalty towards a product or service. Though a number of studies on push and pull motivational factors that lure tourists to visit a particular destination and post-visit satisfaction and loyalty has been made, studies on perceptions about cultural tourist destinations created by advertisements and promotions and the actual post-visit experience derived from such destinations have not been explored much in terms of tourists' satisfaction and its effect on loyalty towards such destinations. The hypothesised model that addresses the research questions envisaged by this study is shown in Figure 1.





The destination perception construct is based on the perceived product performance which is deep-rooted in expectations pronounced as notions (Katona, 1958) about performance of products or services prior to its purchase (Engel et al., 1968). Yet another construct, the destination experience, denote the actual performance of the product or service bought and consumed, in this case the actual experience from visit, which is the actual objective product performance and customer satisfaction stem from the belief that when performance outcomes equal to or above expectations, satisfaction emerges while a dissatisfaction tends to be associated with performance outcomes below expectations (Swan and Combs, 1976) as well as the argument that post-consumption satisfaction or dissatisfaction has something to do with the actual performance of the product or service besides the discrepancies in prior expectations (Day, 1984).

3 Conceptual background

3.1 Destination perception

The transformation of psychologists' perspective of perception as interpretations of sensations to make meaningful impressions of stimuli around to marketers' perspective of conscious impression about firms and what they offer in the mind of customers has gone a long way in projecting and promoting products. The physical attributes of a product circumscribed in the frame of the verdict of the consumer relating to product beliefs revolved around analytical expectations coupled with the hedonist or positive attitudes that are assimilated as associative knowledge is referred to as schema (Schifferstein, 2001). Therefore, this study perpetuates the product perception as the prior use expectation of a cultural tourist destination. Often described as the destination image in tourism literature, this perception that is conceived about a destination to be visited is a blend of the perceptive or cognitive image and emotional or affective image. Physiological and psychological characteristics reflected, the requirements, dispositions, ethics, earlier practices, and the environment settings form the cognitive set which is formed over time (Robertson, 1970).

3.2 Destination experience

In the context of cultural tourism development, its forerunner namely destination experience can be visualised as nothing but the product performance envisaged in the vocabulary of marketing literature. Defined from various perspectives, such performances measure the function and behaviour of what the product has been designed to do (Ullman, 1997) coupled with responses of a product and peripheral reactions towards the environment in which it performs (Zeng and Gu, 1999). Though promotion strategies driven by right targeting and positioning can impact product performance (Obasan et al., 2015) product experience often involves a subset of user experiences redefining customer experience as one that overlays rather intrudes with the consequence variables such as fulfilment and worthiness, or as an independent variable leading to satisfaction (Becker and Jaakkola, 2020). Several realms of tourism experiences including education, aesthetics, escapism, and entertainment have been identified (Stamboulis and Skayannis, 2003). As put forward by Chen and Rahman (2018), the destination experience of local life and traditions that can lead to satisfaction/dissatisfaction of tourists through their interactions with local culture and residents may provide good experience connoted as satisfaction or bad experience described as dissatisfaction to remember

3.3 Satisfaction

Clemons and Woodruff (1992) points out that customer satisfaction is a function of expectations of attributes of the product and the judgements of performance of perceived at- tributes. This notion can in no way be distinct from the tourists' satisfaction that may be related to destinations that are bound to keep up performances as experiences memorable. Postulated as consumer behaviour models, the existing literature discusses the expectancy-disconfirmation theory as the one accounting for satisfaction/dissatisfaction of consumer who first forms expectations prior to purchase

and use of products and services which may in real terms be fulfilled or not before concluding that as far as cultural tourism and tourist satisfaction is concerned, heritage and cultural attractions influence overall satisfaction than general tour attractions and maintenance factors at destinations (Jin and McCleary, 2006). Customer satisfaction in the cultural tourism industry where visitors at cultural destinations are referred to as the cultural tourists', being the customer, associates satisfaction to pre-travel expectations and post-travel experiences (Sukanthasirikul and Trongpanich, 2016) form the foundations of theory for this study. It revolves around the overall satisfaction from experiences at destinations in the backdrop of prior use perceptions. The overall satisfaction stemming out from experiences at destinations is postulated to lead to loyalty resulting in recommending and revisiting the destinations.

3.4 Destination loyalty

Conventionally, the loyalty concept in the market has been intricately interwoven around the behavioural, attitudinal, and composite approaches. While sequential and repeated purchases pronouncing the brand preference and insistence denote the behavioural approaches as observed by Oliver (1999), Tranberg and Hansen (1986) and Zeithaml et al. (1996) the attitudinal tactic is related to the extent of its benchmarked liking; the optimistic attitude or the intention to endorse it (Jones and Sasser, 1995). The integration of the above two revelations reflected as the composite approach orients itself in viewing loyalty as the psychological pledge affirming the repurchase decisions as is observed by Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000). Ultimately the question of sustainable loyalty depends on the convergence of product, personal, and social forces that is supported by the social environment which enables consumers to look beyond the borders of the environment (Oliver, 1999). It is in this context the destination perception that push and/or pull motivators of travel generate in the minds of cultural tourists and the reality of their experiences at destinations that moulds the behavioural, attitudinal, and psychological affirmation towards destinations need to be examined in terms of expectancy disconfirmation or confirmation.

4 Study site and sample

The researchers relied on a self-administered questionnaire among foreign and domestic tourists for the collection of data on the study of the development of cultural tourism in Kerala, a small state of India, located on the southernmost tip of the peninsula. Kerala, named as one of the ten paradises of the world by National Geographic Traveler, is a state with high human development indices when compared to other Indian states. Popularly branded as the 'God's own country', the fertility provided by God's own endowment of lush green natural landscapes and a very high literacy rate coupled with the generous hospitality towards guests made it feature as one among fifty places of a lifetime list from 1999 of National Geographic Traveler (2009) The state is conducive to espouse tourism as the reliable tool for laying the foundation of development whether economic, social or environmental. The culture of Kerala evolved from traditional Dravidian and undergone transmutation over decades through invasions of predominantly the Dutch, the Portuguese, and the English as well as influx of religions namely

Christianity and Islam is currently enriched with the mortal remains of forts, palaces, synagogues, caves, and other built heritage monuments denoting the archaeological pride, festivals, art forms, martial arts, cuisines, etc., that portray reflections of its culture and heritage. While promoting inter-regional relations that make the state proud of the beauty and cultural diversity, the potential of attaining developments in the economy through cultural tourism is worth exploring.

The potential of cultural tourist attraction in Kerala is identified by the formalised framework of cooperation in the areas of cultural heritage protection and promotion of the ancient Spice Route heritage of the state (Kerala Govt., 2014). For instance, in 2019, there were 1,189,771 foreign tourist arrivals and 18,384,322 domestic tourist arrivals to Kerala of which roughly 40% are estimated to be cultural tourists as per UNWTO standards (Department of Tourism, 2019).

The target population of this study was tourists visiting cultural destinations in Kerala, both from abroad identified as foreign tourists and from states of India including Kerala referred to as the domestic tourists. A multi-stage random sampling method was employed by dividing the state as regions on the basis of cultural destination rankings in districts. Participants were randomly selected from the tourists at selected cultural tourism destinations on several days when the survey was conducted. A total of 428, 126 foreign and 302 domestic tourists voluntarily participated in this study. The sample consisted of 251 males (58.6%) and 177 females (41.4%); the majority 41% belonging to the age group of 21–30 years; 66% were married and 55% were graduates. In terms of occupation and monthly income, 24% were employed in the government sector and 44% have a monthly income of less than approximately US \$675 (Indian | 50,000). While 45% were on their first time visit to Kerala, 27% had visited three times before their current one. Majority, i.e., 32% of cultural tourists were accompanied by friends and only 8% visited cultural destinations in Kerala alone.

Since it is common for cultural tourists to hang on at destinations where their perceived expectation is not different from the actual experience, the average length of stay in the state of Kerala was examined, only to find that majority (59%) of the sample had only a less than one-week duration in Kerala. Since the destination perception is mainly formed from the sources of information, the same was examined and websites/internet contents of Indian/Kerala tourism was found to be the major source of information where 54% of the sample relied on before visit to Kerala in contrast to a meagre 6.8% who was recommended by friends and relatives.

4.1 Variables, measurement scales and methodology

Besides the initial section of questions intended to sketch out the socio-economic profile of respondents in terms of age, marital and educational status, occupation, monthly income, and the number of times of visit, travel companion, the average duration of stay at destinations as well as the source of information about destinations, the structured questionnaire contained 20 items each that focused on destination perception as well as a destination experience. Further, five items including the overall satisfaction that scaled the satisfaction from and loyalty towards cultural tourism destinations in Kerala were also included. The first two constructs, the destination perception, and destinations experience, representing product perception and product actual performance in marketing terms, is conceptually multidimensional in the sense that these dimensions self-possessed various but identical genres namely cultural entertainment (Ent), experiential learning (Exp), built heritage (BH) and appeal (App). The tourist satisfaction from and loyalty towards destinations after their visits to destinations mainly focused on post-visit feelings that they really cheer about and recommends to others.

Each item was measured by a five-point scale indicating the degree of importance from not at all important (1) to extremely important (5) in the case of destination perception (acronyms prefixed with P) and experience (acronyms prefixed with E) as is shown in Table 1 as well as strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) in the case of satisfaction and loyalty depicted in Table 2. Based on Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Zhong and Moon (2020) and Chan et al. (2016), the rating of overall post-visit satisfaction from destinations was measured with a unique question for which responses were obtained on a 5-point scale ranging from highly dissatisfied (1) to highly satisfied (5).

The methodology pursued, to arrive at the satisfaction/dissatisfaction from destination perceptions derived from sources of information and actual experience at destination, included exploratory factor analysis and the confirmatory factor analysis as a continuum. With a view to reducing the number of variables through dimension reduction and due to modifications made in the attributes of constructs since the variables identified from the literature were not as such applicable in the context of the study an exploratory factor analysis was made. The attributes that commonly appeared in perceptions of and experiences at destinations were modelled using PLS – path model to approve the effect of perceptions prior to the visit and post-visit actual experience on overall satisfaction and satisfaction from and loyalty towards destinations.

4.2 Results

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted for 11 and 12 out of 20 variables in the case of destination perceptions and experiences respectively by means of the Kaiser criterion for fixing the number of factors to hold with varimax rotation. The assumption of multivariate normality does not become applicable since factors were extracted using the principal axis factoring method. The factorability of the data is assessed by Pearson correlations for determining the intercorrelations for each variable. All variables appear suitable for factor analysis since they had at least one correlation coefficient greater than .30 which justifies (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2019) criteria. The determinants for the correlation matrices were 0.00045 and 0.00067 respectively, both being \geq 0.00001 (Field, 2013), ruled out the possibility of any multicollinearity in the data.

The factor loadings were individually judged on the basis of each absolute value loading as excellent (>0.71), very good (0.63–0.71), good (0.55–0.63), fair (0.45–0.55) and poor (0.32–0.45) as suggested by Comrey and Lee (2013), Engel et al. (1968) and Chan et al. (2016). The Tabachnick and Fidell (2019) recommendation of a minimum threshold of 0.32 was used as a cutoff to determine the loadings to be included for each factor. To arrive at how many factors to retain, Kaiser criterion was chosen, and accordingly all factors that were retained for interpretation had an eigenvalue greater than or equal to 1. The observed eigenvalues were extracted from the correlation matrix with the diagonal of the matrix being replaced by each variable's squared multiple correlations (Ledesma and Valero-Mora, 2007; Montanelli and Humphreys, 1976) to estimate each variable's communality (Distefano et al., 2009; Stewart and Ware, 1992). Kaiser's eigenvalue-greater-than-one rule is a simple and common practice used throughout

research (Floyd and Widaman, 1995; Ledesma and Valero-Mora, 2007; Yong and Pearce, 2013). As a result, three factors in the case of destination perceptions and two factors in the case of destination experiences were used for the EFA.

No.	Destination perception	Acronym	No.	Destination experience	Acronym
Ι	Cultural entertainment		Ι	Cultural entertainment	
1	Art forms	P_Ent1	1	Plethora of art forms available	E_Ent1
2	Local customs and traditions	P_Ent2	2	Attractive way of life and customs	E_Ent2
3	Local folklore and singing	P_Ent3	3	Enriched and colourful tradition of folklores and songs	E_Ent3
4	Cultural events, exhibitions	P_Ent4	4	Rich cultural heritage	E_Ent4
5	Festivals and concerts	P_Ent5	5	Splendor spirit and essence of the land	E_Ent5
6	Cuisine	P_Ent6	6	Quality and variety of food at reasonable prices	E_Ent6
II	Experiential learning		II	Experiential learning	
7	Educational value	P_Exp1	7	Fully literate state worth of knowing	E_Exp1
8	Meaningful discovery	P_Exp2	8	Practices deep rooted in traditions and values of agrarian times	E_Exp2
9	Craftsmanship	P_Exp3	9	Exquisite skills of artisans	E_Exp3
10	Water sports	P_Exp4	10	Popular boat races	E_Exp4
11	Local resource utilisation	P_Exp5	11	Use of coconut leaves, fibre (coir), bamboo, etc.	E_Exp5
III	Built heritage		III	Built heritage	
12	Heritage buildings and streets	P_BH1	12	Glimpses of the tradition and colourful heritage	E_BH1
13	Museums and galleries	P_BH2	13	Well maintained museums and galleries	E_BH2
14	Archaeological sites	P_BH3	14	Insights into a land's history and culture	E_BH3
15	Local artwork and handicrafts	P_BH4	15	Art and handicrafts that signifies glory of tradition	E_BH4
16	Pilgrim centres/religious buildings	P_BH5	16	Peaceful co-existence of various religious worship centres	E_BH5
IV	Appeal		IV	Appeal	
17	Affordable tourist destination	P_App1	17	Capability of providing authentic experience to the visitors	E_App1
18	Accessibility	P_App2	18	Adequacy of information and transport services	E_App2
19	Perfect weather	P_App3	19	Attractiveness of weather and climate	E_App3
20	Clean and sustainable environment	P_App4	20	Aesthetic, clean and pollution free destinations	E_App4

 Table 1
 Measurement variables (destination – perception and actual experience)

	Satisfaction and loyalty	Acronym
А	Worth of time and money	Sat1
В	I will recommend this to my friends, relatives and neighbours	Sat2
С	I will say positive things about this to other people	Sat3
D	I would like to visit again next time	Sat4
Е	Overall satisfaction	Sat5

 Table 2
 Measurement variables (satisfaction from and loyalty towards cultural tourism)

The sample size for exploratory factor analysis is very important when constructing repeatable and reliable factors. According to Osborne and Costello (2004) the most common guideline for the ratio of sample size to the number of variables (participant to item ratio) included should be at least 10 to 1, but some research indicates a minimum ratio of 5 to 1. The participant to item ratio for this analysis was approximately 38 to 1, where sample size was 428 and the number of variables included was 11 in the case of destination perception. The same for destination experience was approximately 35 to 1, where sample size was 428 and the number of variables included was 12. This indicates that the given sample size was sufficient to produce reliable results in both the cases.

In the case of destination perception, the three-factor model accounted for 69.34% of total variance in the data and in the case of destination experience the two-factor model explained 55.31 % of total variance in the data. The factor analysis summary is shown in Table 3.

Factor	Eigenvalue	% of variance	Cumulative %						
	Analysis 1 – destination perception								
1	4.18	38.01	38.01						
2	1.96	17.84	55.84						
3	1.48	13.50	69.34						
Analysis 2 – destination experience									
1	5.21	43.45	43.45						
2	1.42	11.86	55.31						

 Table 3
 Eigenvalues, percentages of variance and cumulative percentages for factors

The factor analysis loadings are shown in Table 4.

There were no variables with a low communality (< .40) in the initial analysis of destination perceptions. However, one variable namely experiences of 'art and handicrafts that signifies glory of tradition' (E_BH4) had a low communality (< .40) in the case of exploratory factor analysis of destination experiences. However, the factor structure describes the data well (Osborne and Costello, 2004). There were no variables with cross-loadings with loadings > 0.32, in any of the cases, which suggests a factor structure that is simple and easy to interpret. Each factor had at least three significant loadings (> .32), except in the cases of factor 3 in analysis one and factor 2 in analysis two, which is indicative of a strong and solid factor (Osborne and Costello, 2004).

The principal components extracted from both the analysis namely destination perception and destination experience had in common two variables each under built heritage and appeal only. They were 'museums and galleries (P_BH2)' and

'well-maintained museums and galleries (E_BH2)', 'archaeological sites (P_BH3)' and 'insights into a land's history and culture (E_BH3)', 'accessibility (P_App2)' and 'adequacy of information and transport services (E_App2)' as well as 'clean and sustainable environment (P_App4)' and 'aesthetic, clean and pollution free destinations (E_App4)'.

Latont variable	Observed variable —		- Communality		
Latent variable	Observed variable -	1	2	3	- Communality
Destination	P_Ent1	0.81			0.66
perception	P_Ent2	0.79			0.68
	P_Ent3	0.84			0.75
	P_Ent4	0.8			0.65
	P_Ent5	0.87			0.77
	P_Ent6	0.84			0.71
	P_App2		0.69		0.78
	P_App3		0.92		0.63
	P_App4		0.78		0.52
	P_BH2			0.86	0.85
	P_BH3			0.78	0.62
Destination	E_Exp1	0.69			0.48
experience	E_Exp2	0.73			0.53
	E_Exp3	0.75			0.56
	E_Exp5	0.77			0.59
	E_BH1	0.68			0.47
	E_BH2	0.76			0.58
	E_BH3	0.71			0.5
	E_BH4	0.58			0.34
	E_BH5	0.79			0.62
	E_App1	0.74			0.55
	E_App2		0.85		0.73
	E_App4		0.82		0.67

Table 4Factor loadings – exploratory factor analyses 1 and 2

The common variables formatively constituting constructs such as 'destination perception' and 'destination experience' that affect overall satisfaction and thereby loyalty towards to cultural tourism destinations were subjected to confirmatory factor analysis using partial least squares path modelling (PLS-PM). The relationships in network of common variables as a formative model for destination perception and destination experiences, and their reflective influence on satisfaction from and loyalty towards destinations are shown as Figure 2.

The PLS-PM model was assessed by evaluating the validity of the measurement model and the structural model. After model validation, the regressions of the PLS-PM were analysed. For the latent variables with reflective indicators, the measurement model was assessed by examining the unidimensionality, loadings, communalities, and cross-loadings of the indicator variables. For the latent variables with formative indicators, the measurement model was evaluated by checking for multicollinearity among indicators. Bootstrapping was used to check for significant weights and loadings.



Figure 2 Node diagram for the PLS-PM model with loadings

For reflective indicators, the latent construct must be positively correlated with each indicator. If the latent variable increases in value, then each indicator should also increase. Sanchez (2013) defines this as the unidimensionality of indicators. To evaluate the unidimensionality of indicators, Cronbach's alpha (α) and Dillon-Goldstein's rho (ρ) were calculated. Unidimensionality of indicators can be assumed if Cronbach's alpha and Dillon-Goldstein's rho have large values ($\alpha \ge .7$ and $\rho \ge .7$). All latent variables exhibited unidimensionality, indicating the relationships between the latent variables and indicators are appropriate for PLS-PM. The unidimensionality assumption does not apply to latent variables with only one indicator variable. The Cronbach's alpha and Dillon-Goldstein's rho statistics are presented in Table 5.

Construct	Indicator type	Number of items	α	ρ
Loyalty	Reflective	4	0.83	0.89
Destination perception	Formative	4	-	-
Destination experiences	Formative	4	-	-
Cultural tourists satisfaction	Reflective	1	-	-

Note: Unidimensionality does not apply to formative indicators or latent variables with only one indicator variable.

The factor loadings and communalities of reflective indicators were examined to know whether the variability in each indicator explains at least 50% of its latent variable construct ($|loading| \ge .707$; communality $\ge .50$) (Sanchez, 2013; Henseler et al., 2009).

Otherwise, it is identified as a weak loading. There were no reflective indicators with weak loadings, indicating that each reflective indicator explained a significant portion of the variance in its latent construct. Table 6 presents the loadings and communalities for the measurement model.

Indicator	Construct	Weight	Loading	Communality
Sat1	Loyalty	0.34	0.83	0.69
Sat3	Loyalty	0.34	0.87	0.76
Sat2	Loyalty	0.22	0.72	0.52
Sat4	Loyalty	0.31	0.84	0.70
P_BH2	Destination perception	0.86	0.79	0.62
P_BH3	Destination perception	-0.08	0.50	0.25
P_App2	Destination perception	0.20	0.05	0.00
P_App4	Destination perception	-0.69	-0.51	0.26
E_BH2	Destination experiences	0.00	0.08	0.01
E_BH3	Destination experiences	0.09	0.11	0.01
E_App2	Destination experiences	1.24	0.32	0.11
E_App4	Destination experiences	-1.32	-0.44	0.20
Overall satisfaction	Cultural tourists' satisfaction	1.00	1.00	1.00

 Table 6
 Outer model summary table for the PLS-PM model

 Table 7
 Loadings and cross-loadings the outer model

Indicator	Loyalty	Destination perception	Destination experiences	Cultural tourists' satisfaction
Sat1	0.83	0.26	-0.24	0.42
Sat3	0.87	0.33	-0.31	0.42
Sat2	0.72	0.31	-0.13	0.27
Sat4	0.84	0.37	-0.25	0.38
P_BH2	0.56	0.79	-0.24	0.29
P_BH3	0.49	0.50	-0.18	0.18
P_App2	0.32	0.05	-0.20	0.02
P_App4	0.17	-0.51	-0.08	-0.19
E_BH2	0.00	-0.07	0.08	-0.03
E_BH3	0.04	-0.08	0.11	-0.04
E_App2	0.18	0.10	0.32	-0.11
E_App4	0.40	0.22	-0.44	0.15
Overall satisfaction	0.46	0.37	-0.34	1.00

Note: The bolded items are the specified loadings for each indicator.

The cross-loadings were also examined for the reflective indicators to assess the validity of the model. A cross-loading occurs when an indicator has a higher absolute loading on a different latent variable than the one to which it is assigned (Henseler et al., 2015, 2009; Sanchez, 2013). There were no cross-loadings for reflective indicators in the

model, suggesting the specified latent variable structure is appropriate for the data. The cross-loadings are presented in Table 7.

Multicollinearity was examined with variance inflation factors (VIF) to assess the validity of the formative indicators. A VIF with a value greater than 10 indicates that there is extreme multicollinearity among the predictors (Henseler et al., 2009; Cenfetelli and Bassellier, 2009; Menard, 2010; Chan et al., 2016). No formative indicators exhibited multicollinearity, which suggests that the formative indicators are appropriate for the latent variables. The VIFs for each formative indicator are presented in Table 8.

Indicator	VIF
Destination perception	
P_BH2	2.12
P_BH3	2.00
P_App2	1.49
P_App4	1.38
Destination experiences	
E_BH2	1.45
E_BH3	1.45
E_App2	1.97
E_App4	1.97

 Table 8
 VIFs for each block of formative indicators

Path	Original	M	SE	95% CI
$Loyalty \rightarrow Sat1$	0.83	0.83	0.01	[0.80, 0.86]
$Loyalty \rightarrow Sat3$	0.87	0.87	0.01	[0.85, 0.89]
$Loyalty \rightarrow Sat2$	0.72	0.72	0.03	[0.65, 0.78]
$Loyalty \rightarrow Sat4$	0.84	0.84	0.02	[0.80, 0.87]
$P_BH2 \rightarrow Destination perception$	0.86	0.82	0.22	[0.51, 1.14]
$P_BH3 \rightarrow Destination perception$	-0.08	-0.07	0.19	[-0.45, 0.30]
$P_App2 \rightarrow Destination perception$	0.20	0.20	0.14	[-0.07, 0.49]
$P_App4 \rightarrow Destination perception$	-0.69	-0.66	0.18	[-0.92, -0.45]
$E_BH2 \rightarrow Destination experiences$	-0.00	0.05	0.15	[-0.25, 0.36]
$E_BH3 \rightarrow Destination experiences$	0.09	0.04	0.16	[-0.31, 0.34]
$E_App2 \rightarrow Destination experiences$	1.24	0.25	1.19	[-1.30, 1.40]
$E_App4 \rightarrow Destination experiences$	-1.32	-0.17	1.28	[-1.37, 1.45]
Cultural tourists satisfaction \rightarrow Overall satisfaction	1.00	1.00	0.00	[1.00, 1.00]

 Table 9
 Bootstrap results for the loadings of each indicator

Bootstrapping was performed with 428 resamples. The loadings were assessed for the reflective indicators, and the weights were examined for the formative indicators. Significance was determined using 95% confidence intervals for the given parameter estimates, which were calculated based on an alpha value of 0.05 (Henseler et al., 2009;

Sanchez, 2013; Chin, 2010). Each reflective manifest variable had a significant loading, suggesting that a significant portion of each reflective indicator is explained by its latent variable. Table 9 shows the results for the bootstrapped loadings. The bootstrapped weights are presented in Table 10. The structural or inner model was assessed by examining the R²-values for each endogenous variable and the average variance extracted (AVE) for each latent variable with reflective indicators. Bootstrapping was also used to determine the reliability of the inner model. The R²-values were calculated for each endogenous variable should have an R²-value \geq .20 (Sanchez, 2013). All R²-values were sufficiently large, indicating that each relationship is appropriate for the model. Table 11 shows the inner model summary and the R²-values.

Path	Original	М	SE	95% CI
$Loyalty \rightarrow Sat1$	0.34	0.34	0.02	[0.30, 0.39]
$Loyalty \rightarrow Sat3$	0.34	0.34	0.02	[0.31, 0.38]
$Loyalty \rightarrow Sat2$	0.22	0.22	0.03	[0.16, 0.27]
$Loyalty \rightarrow Sat4$	0.31	0.31	0.02	[0.28, 0.35]
$P_BH2 \rightarrow Destination perception$	0.86	0.82	0.22	[0.51, 1.14]
$P_BH3 \rightarrow Destination perception$	-0.08	-0.07	0.19	[-0.45, 0.30]
$P_App2 \rightarrow Destination perception$	0.20	0.20	0.14	[-0.07, 0.49]
$P_App4 \rightarrow Destination perception$	-0.69	-0.66	0.18	[-0.92, -0.45]
$E_BH2 \rightarrow Destination experiences$	-0.00	0.05	0.15	[-0.25, 0.36]
$E_BH3 \rightarrow Destination experiences$	0.09	0.04	0.16	[-0.31, 0.34]
$E_App2 \rightarrow Destination experiences$	1.24	0.25	1.19	[-1.30, 1.40]
$E_App4 \rightarrow Destination experiences$	-1.32	-0.17	1.28	[-1.37, 1.45]
Cultural tourists satisfaction \rightarrow Overall satisfaction		1.00	1.00	0.00

 Table 10
 Bootstrap results for the weights of each indicator

The inner model node diagram is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Inner node diagram for the PLS-PM model



Each latent variable should have an AVE \geq .50, which suggests that 50% or more of the variance for the indicators is explained by its latent variable (Henseler et al., 2009; Sanchez, 2013). AVE is only assessed for reflective variables. There were no latent variables with a low AVE, indicating that each latent variable accounted for a significant portion of the indicator's variance. The AVE values can be found in Table 11.

Construct	Туре	R2	AVE
Loyalty	Endogenous	0.21	0.67
Destination perception	Exogenous	-	-
Destination experiences	Exogenous	-	-
Cultural tourists satisfaction	Endogenous	0.21	1.00

 Table 11
 Structural model summary

Note: For constructs with formative factors, AVE is not assessed; R^2 is not calculated for exogenous variables

The regression coefficients were evaluated using 95% confidence intervals to determine the significance of the regression paths using an alpha value of 0.05 (Sanchez, 2013; Chin, 2010; Henseler et al., 2009). Destination perception significantly predicted cultural tourists satisfaction, B = 0.46, 95% CI [0.38, 0.54], indicating a one-unit increase in Destination Perception will increase the expected value of cultural tourists satisfaction by 0.46 units. Destination experiences significantly predicted cultural tourists satisfaction, B = 0.32, 95% CI [0.25, 0.41], indicating a one-unit increase in destination experiences will increase the expected value of cultural tourists satisfaction by 0.32 units. Cultural tourists satisfaction did not significantly predict loyalty, B = -0.28, 95% CI [-0.36, 0.34], suggesting there is no relationship between cultural tourists satisfaction and loyalty. Table 12 shows the regression results for the inner model with bootstrapping.

 Table 12
 Bootstrap results for the inner model regression paths

Path	Original B	М	SE	95% CI
Destination perception \rightarrow Cultural tourists satisfaction	0.46	0.46	0.04	[0.38, 0.54]
Destination experiences \rightarrow Cultural tourists satisfaction	0.32	0.32	0.08	[0.25, 0.41]
Cultural tourists satisfaction \rightarrow Loyalty	-0.28	-0.06	0.28	[-0.36, 0.34]

4.3 Discussion and implications

Site specific studies on tourists' satisfaction has mainly highlighted the push-pull motivations and what agencies involved in tourism promotion and management could seek in terms of providing consumer satisfaction and ultimate loyalty. Similarly, activity or hobby specific studies emphasised the need for physical settings conducive to adventurists in the context of push-pull motivators. The studies of satisfaction and loyalty of tourists revolved around the need for determination of satisfaction in relation to relative rather than absolute judgements. The destination perceptions and destination experiences subjected to study revealed that built heritage aspects such as pairs of 'museums and galleries as perceived' and 'well-maintained museums and galleries experienced', 'archaeological sites perceived' and 'insights into a land's history and culture experienced' as well as the appeal aspects in pairs of 'accessibility perceived' and 'adequacy of information and transport services experienced' plus 'clean and sustainable environment perceived' and 'aesthetic, clean and pollution free destinations experienced' were the commonly explored perception' and experience factors. These common factors in the formative model of 'destination perception' and 'destination experience' impacted

satisfaction of tourists which could significantly reflect the loyalty dimensions of 'worth of time and money', 'I will recommend this to my friends, relatives and neighbours', 'I will say positive things about this to other people' and 'I would like to visit again next time'.

The finding that a one-unit increase in 'destination perception' will increase the expected value of cultural tourists satisfaction by 0.46 units and the same increase in 'destination experience' will lead to a 0.32 increase in the expected value of cultural tourists satisfaction have great implications on the policymakers' outlook towards sustainable cultural tourism development. The need for creating increased awareness of cultural tourism destinations in the state of Kerala and improvements in amenities at such destinations could go a long way in improving consumer satisfaction through the destination perceptions and destination experiences.

This study confirms that both the destination perception of and destination experience at cultural tourist destinations in Kerala precedes tourists' post-visit satisfaction, which is in tune with the findings that the tourists' perceived image of destinations influences their satisfaction as observed by Alcocer and Ruiz (2020). Our results also support views of treating push-pull motivators as determinants of satisfaction as observed by Caber and Albayrak (2016) in conjunction with the perceptions and experiences such pull motivators could plant in the minds of cultural tourists.

However, our finding that cultural tourists' satisfaction did not significantly predict loyalty supports the findings of Khairawati (2019) that the customer satisfaction has not been able to have strong effect on the customer loyalty. This is in contradiction to the results of Zhong and Moon (2020) which showed that satisfaction could have positive effects on loyalty. The contradictory results could only be explained by the fact that the real experiences that cultural tourists in Kerala could satisfy them in terms of the perceptions they had about destinations such experiences were not strong enough to make them loyal to a greater extent.

The findings of this study have significant managerial implications for the Indian state of Kerala in the sense that exploratory factor analyses revealed that only the four common observed variables covering built heritage aspects such as 'museums and galleries' and 'archaeological sites' as well as appeals such as 'accessibility' and 'clean and sustainable environment' turned out to be rich in experience. The cultural entertainment and experiential learning experiences as they have been pursued and promoted by Kerala tourism has not been successful so far. Considering the vast potential of art forms, folklores, festivals, culinary skills, boat races and artisan skills that yet remains untapped, the study points out the enhanced responsibility on the part of agencies assuming the role of cultural tourism promotion in the public and private sector. We therefore suggest marketers to contemplate the practical implications of these destination perception variables, since they fundamentally influence experiences at destinations so as to ensure satisfaction with services really experienced. This could be seen as a long-term objective in converting satisfaction to destination loyalty of the highest degree. The possibility of using the right sources of information, whether traditional or online, to the greatest advantage of building up perception about the destinations cannot be over looked.

4.4 Conclusions

The study relied on IBM SPSS 23 and Smart PLS 3 for statistical analysis and the results obtained were supplemented by logic and explanations applicable through Intellectus Statistics (2021), available online. The results supporting the built heritage and appeal elements of cultural tourism, when viewed from the wider perspective of pull motivations, that can shape the perceptions of destinations and the fulfilment of expectations drawn out of these perceptions as real experiences at destinations could implant consumer satisfaction acquires manifold dimensions as far as tourism management is concerned. The scope of further research in the marketing literature pertaining to consumer satisfaction and loyalty as applicable to cultural tourism management is highlighted by the findings of the study that in spite of destination perceptions and experiences creating the tourists' satisfaction such overall satisfaction may not lead to loyalty, compelling them to revisit or recommend such destinations. This happens due to the limited number of perceived elements leading to real experiences and if and only if all the elements that create perception can bring in real experiences at destinations tourists' satisfaction could be transformed to ultimate loyalty that will vield long-term economic, socio-political and environmental benefits for the cultural destinations. The major limitation confronted by the study was its inadequate model fit which challenges the predictability of the variability in satisfaction and loyalty there from out of the destination perceptions and experiences. However, the fact that certain fit measures assume a common factor model and that the outer residuals of composite models are not required to be uncorrelated and reporting model fits are inappropriate for PLS-SEM (Benitez et al., 2020) comes to the rescue.

With limited attributes of destination perceptions and destination experiences significantly predicting the tourists' satisfaction which in turn proved to be insignificant in predicting loyalty, the study findings throw light on the fallacy that can be caused by the notion that satisfaction always leads to loyalty. This is prominent in understanding implications of policies. Hence, our results imply the need from marketers' point of view to understand whether all the perceptions created for each and every cultural destination promoted are capable of providing real and explicit experiences that are compatible to the expectations of the tourists.

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