

# Exploring the Factors Influencing Heritage Tourism Development

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It is clear in many nations that the development of historical and cultural tourism is correlated with brand value enhancement. The development of heritage and cultural tourism can help a location or attraction build a good name for itself, attract more tourists, and boost brand recognition. A destination's reputation is an important factor when considering cultural heritage sites as tourist destinations. It is understood that the development of historical tourism and cultural tourism is a significant component of the tourism industry. Governments and stakeholders can contribute to enhancing a destination's quality and bringing in more visitors by making investments in infrastructural development, promoting attractions, and offering cultural events.

destination branding

cultural heritage

brand value

reputation

tourist experience

## 1. Introduction

Destination branding (DB) is defined as a communication form that includes identity representations (as notified by a place's culture, history, economy, and people) and that develops an unforgettable and unique identity by incorporating various destination characteristics <sup>[1]</sup>. The process of DB includes three main aspects, namely brand image, brand positioning, and brand identity. Brand positioning is seen as the next level in the process of DB, in which activities are conducted to accurately position the brand. Brand images are held by consumers (i.e., the demand side), who are impacted by the brand positioning process, as well as other platforms (reports, documentaries, blogs, films and social media). Brand identity is built through the activities used by destination marketers to classify the image of the destination adequately for projection to stakeholders (i.e., the supply side) and the market <sup>[2]</sup>. Destination branding builds attractive and unique identity values for delivery that are intentionally linked with the sense of a destination <sup>[3]</sup>.

Branding a place or destination is a very difficult task, and it is not only about creating brand logos and slogans, as a majority of places are attempting currently. A kind of branding that is integrated with creativity, for example, in interesting logos and catchy slogans, is essential; at the same time, it should be restricted, so that the correct approach to the process of branding can be taken. The process of DB is about moving ahead of advertising and promotional activities, and spotting the actual identity or value of a destination, as well as visitors' perceived image of that destination. Building a consistent and clear image of a segment of the market requires the brand to have unique characteristics <sup>[4]</sup>.

An increasingly well-liked strategy for promoting and drawing attention to a heritage site is using branding. Attributes related to history and heritage are key elements in crafting the marketing of a destination <sup>[5]</sup>. A heritage site's visibility, reputation, and financial performance can all benefit from branding. Heritage sites may bring in new audiences, build a favorable image, and prompt increased visitor traffic with the help of branding. The potential for greater financial gain, which can be used to safeguard and preserve the destination, is also raised by branding. Additionally, branding can foster a sense of pride and ownership in both locals and tourists, which can promote engagement with and admiration for the location.

Cultural tourism has gained great significance in recent times <sup>[6]</sup>. Internal tourism has a big part to play in relation to heritage sites. It allows visitors to engage in cultural and historical experiences that can deepen their knowledge of, appreciation for, and understanding of a nation's history and culture. In addition to fostering a sense of pride and identity in the nation, these monuments can also boost economic activity by generating jobs and drawing both domestic and foreign tourists.

## 2. Exploring the Factors Influencing Heritage Tourism Development

### 2.1. The Relationship between Brand Value Enhancement and the Development of Heritage Tourism

International historical and cultural tourism is a developing sector in the global tourism industry, with many nations investing in its growth to boost the value of their national brands <sup>[7]</sup>. Enhancing brand value is an important aspect of this growth, since it allows nations to use their cultural history to give visitors from other countries an exceptional and unforgettable experience <sup>[8]</sup>. Brand value can be increased via a variety of tactics, including marketing campaigns, the creation of cultural activities, and the promotion of tourism attractions. The construction of tourist-friendly infrastructure, better access to historical locations, and the implementation of educational initiatives and cultural experiences are further ways to promote heritage and cultural tourism <sup>[9]</sup>. Countries can boost the value of their domestic brands and attract more foreign tourists to their regions by implementing these techniques.

Many nations have investigated the connection between building brand value and developing cultural and historical tourism. For instance, a study carried out in the UK discovered that places and attractions connected to particular cultural and historical themes can be utilized to generate and increase brand value <sup>[10]</sup>. According to this study, developing historical and cultural tourism can increase brand value by fostering a favorable perception of a location or attraction. In addition, history and cultural tourism can give visitors an exceptional and unforgettable experience. This can enhance the reputation of the destination or attraction and foster positive associations with it. Furthermore, a Chinese study discovered that developing heritage and cultural tourism can help in raising the brand value of a tourist destination <sup>[11]</sup>. The study revealed that developing heritage and cultural tourism can help in raising brand awareness, improving tourists' perceptions of the location or attraction, and enhancing visitor numbers. The study also discovered that developing heritage and cultural tourism can contribute to a destination or attraction's image of exclusivity and uniqueness, which can help to raise the value of its brand.

The protection of a nation's brand value depends on the preservation of its cultural heritage monuments. The perceptions of a nation and its shared ideals are referred to as brand value, and they can be exploited to advance economic and political advantages <sup>[12]</sup>. Because they are manifestations of the distinctive culture, traditions, and history of the nation, cultural heritage sites are essential to a nation's brand value <sup>[13]</sup>. For instance, the Taj Mahal in India is a representation of the nation's rich culture, and has grown to be an iconic building in India, adding to the country's brand value <sup>[14]</sup>. Similarly, by presenting Saudi Arabia's historical heritage, the Al-Ula archaeological site enhances the value of the nation's brand <sup>[15]</sup>.

The promotion and marketing of cultural heritage sites frequently reflect the fact that a nation's cultural heritage may be a potent weapon for enhancing its sense of national identity. The branding of heritage monuments is viewed as a vital aspect in both their preservation and in growing tourist numbers in nations such as India, where cultural heritage is strongly ingrained in the national identity <sup>[16]</sup>. A brand's ability to evoke familiarity and nostalgia can be leveraged to draw tourists and promote financial support for cultural sites' preservation.

Cultural heritage sites are "locations of tremendous worth, both real and intangible, to humanity and its shared identity," claims the UNWTO <sup>[17]</sup>. A cultural heritage site can forge strong ties to the neighborhood, region, and nation when it is successfully branded and promoted, which in turn serves to increase the site's brand value. As one of the most famous cultural heritage monuments in the world, the Taj Mahal in India has been branded and promoted as a representation of the country's rich cultural legacy and a tribute to love <sup>[18]</sup>. Similar to this, the Acropolis in Athens, Greece has come to represent the nation's ancient Greek heritage and culture, and is a crucial component of the country's national identity <sup>[19]</sup>. These illustrations show how cultural heritage places may be branded and promoted to build a strong bond with a nation, and how they can enhance the site's brand value.

Countries all over the world have just started to understand how important brand value is to their cultural heritage assets. To improve the reputation and value of its cultural heritage properties, the National Trust in the United Kingdom has adopted a branded strategy <sup>[20]</sup>. Similar to this, as part of its "Cultural Italy" program, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities in Italy has invested in promoting cultural heritage sites and their brand value <sup>[21]</sup>.

A measure of a cultural heritage site's intangible value, such as its reputation, recognition, and perceived quality, is associated with its brand value. It is crucial to make sure that a cultural heritage site is well-maintained and promoted in order to increase its brand value. This can entail a range of actions, including promoting the website through print and online media, participating in cultural events, and creating products and services that are connected to the website.

## 2.2. The Relationship between Destination Reputation Enhancement and the Development of Heritage Tourism

The advertising of cultural heritage places must take into account the reputation of the destination. A specific cultural heritage site may draw visitors if the area has a positive reputation <sup>[22]</sup>. For instance, the 15th-century Incan citadel of Machu Picchu in Peru's Andes Mountains is one of the most well-known cultural heritage places in the

world due to its excellent reputation amongst travelers [23][24]. The growth of heritage and cultural tourism is a good approach to improve a place's reputation, since it may provide locals a sense of pride and identity while simultaneously giving potential tourists a special and memorable experience [25]. A destination's distinctive history, culture, and customs can be promoted through historical and cultural tourism, which can enhance the area's reputation and draw more tourists [26]. Moreover, history and cultural tourism can support the local economy by generating jobs and promoting activities locally [27].

The reputation of a visitor destination is objective, and subject to a valuation made by external and internal stakeholders based on communication, stakeholders' mindsets, and direct experiences of the target destination that entail WOM (word-of-mouth) and offline and online media such as radio, print media, digital media, and the Internet [28]. [29] carried out an investigation to explore the mediating impact of familiarity on emotions and the reputation of a visitor destination, and identified that familiarity will not normalize the impact of emotional and cognitive perceptions of a destination's reputation. Furthermore, it was noticed that places with a good reputation are considered destinations with greater trustworthiness and credibility levels, when compared with other places.

Likewise, cities and states with good reputations have the capacity to attract new visitors and re-attract existing visitors. According to [30], such cities will increase economic growth and motivate the growth of tourist firms, as well as minimizing unemployment rates [31][32]. In addition, a higher quality of accommodation increases tourist satisfaction and enhances the reputation of a destination. Furthermore, these factors can influence huge numbers of visitors and tourists [33], as well as people and creative industries [34]. In addition, the authors also identified that a destination's reputation is important in branding the destination [35][36][37][38]. A number of variables, such as the potential of the cultural and historical attractions, the accessibility of the location, the safety and security of the location, the availability of activities and services, and the quality of the lodging and hospitality, play a major role in forming the reputation of a destination [39][40][41].

### **2.3. The Relationship between Tourist Experience Enhancement and the Development of Heritage Tourism**

The most important elements of the tourism business include the growth of cultural tourism, historic tourism, and tourism experiences. These components of tourism can be improved to increase the number of visiting tourists, spur economic growth, and raise the standard of living of locals. Research by the World Tourism Organization [42] found that nations who have made investments in the growth of their cultural tourism and heritage have gained significant economic benefits. Moreover, cultural tourism can offer visitors a singular and unforgettable experience, and help residents feel more connected to one another.

The authors of [43] pointed out that perceptions of visitors are important, since the tourism sector is becoming more and more competitive every day. Tourist destinations have to portray themselves well in order to influence tourists and visitors. Understanding tourists' behaviors and perceptions, enhancing a destination's image, creating an effective group of stakeholders, and providing a pleasant experience to can contribute to effective destination branding [44]. Heritage and cultural destinations have to be creatively maintained and used in an ecological way,

both for their own survival, and so that they make an effective contribution to enhancing the image of a tourist destination [\[45\]](#).

The increase in overall service quality, which includes accommodation, travel, food, entertainment, and other services required for a pleasurable stay, contributes to the enhancement of the tourist experience [\[46\]](#). By offering high-quality services like a welcoming environment, effective transportation, and cozy lodging, a destination can improve tourists' experience. A destination can also offer visitors educational and cultural experiences, including workshops and guided tours, to help them better understand the customs and culture of that particular area [\[47\]](#).

Heritage tourism is known to be influenced by visitor experiences and brand perception [\[48\]](#). According to the authors of [\[49\]](#), visitor experiences can affect how people view a place generally, and whether they have a favorable or negative attitude towards it. This can have an impact on how well the particular destination performs as a tourist attraction. Brand image, on the other hand, can help heritage places stand out from the competition, and encourage more visitors from different demographics [\[50\]](#). Strong brand perceptions can also enhance the overall quality of the tourist's experience, and promote return visits [\[51\]](#). Heritage tourism sites can increase their competitive edge and forge a deep bond with visitors by developing a strong and distinctive brand image [\[52\]](#).

## **2.4. The Relationship between Marketing and Promotion and the Development of Heritage Tourism**

A crucial component for sustainable economic development is the development of tourism based on heritage and culture. Effective marketing and promotion are essential for raising the awareness of the place and its attractions in order to reap the advantages of such tourism [\[53\]](#).

According to [\[54\]](#), heritage is developed in a destination on the basis of itineraries that include handicraft trails, temples, architecture, and so on. Heritage site centers have to be created in every destination of cultural and historic importance in order to increase awareness about the value of cultural heritage. Information centers could be opened for tourists, and offices could be set-up for providing technical help to district authorities.

Activities in marketing and promotion aid in building a destination's brand identity and drawing tourists to a particular place. By educating potential visitors about a location's attractions, history, and cultural heritage through targeted marketing, it is possible to increase the intention or desire of tourists to visit that location. Advertising campaigns can also highlight distinctive events, such as particular cultural occasions that will draw tourists who are interested in the region's history and culture.

Tourism promotion may also include indirect tactics like sponsorship, public relations, and media relations, in addition to direct marketing operations [\[55\]](#). These activities can contribute to the development of a favorable perception of the tourist location and its cultural features, which will enhance its value and draw more visitors.

Additionally, it is crucial to think about the best ways to divide the target market and modify the messages for different categories of tourists. Marketing and promotion, for instance, can be tailored to appeal to specific age

groups, cultures, and interests. A destination can more successfully sell its distinctive cultural legacy and draw more tourists by carefully choosing its target demographic population through proper segmentation.

Advertising campaigns have an impact on tourists' perception of a destination, as campaign content includes elements that draw the attention of target visitors <sup>[56]</sup>. Each promotional advertisement campaign contains information for tourists or consumers. It is clear that advertising content provides transformational and informational content as a way of presenting new data to potential tourists, and can change their choice of tourist destination by offering as yet unexplored experiences.

When it comes to promoting new or under-marketed tourist locations, print media is extremely effective. Print advertisements can be used to tell potential visitors about the local area's amenities and accessible attractions. Images, descriptions of the attractions, and accounts of recent and historical events can all be used to do this. This might enhance the local sense of place and draw tourists who otherwise may not travel there <sup>[57]</sup>.

In order to promote heritage and cultural tourism, conventional marketing strategies including print advertising, radio and television ads, and direct mail can be useful <sup>[58]</sup>. Moreover, outdoor advertising in the form of billboards and signs can aid in highlighting specific locations or activities.

Digital marketing has been successfully employed in recent years to promote cultural and heritage sites, draw more visitors, and increase the profitability of local businesses. For instance, search engine optimization (SEO) and other internet marketing strategies have assisted in increasing traffic to historical and cultural sites <sup>[59]</sup>.

According to <sup>[60]</sup>, heritage and cultural tourism enterprises have been able to forge better bonds with their patrons and forge more personal connections through the usage of social media. This has made it possible for them to more effectively target particular demographics with their services, and to design experiences that highlight their distinctive products. Social media has also made it possible for companies who offer heritage and cultural tourism to clients in a more engaging and dynamic way, giving clients the chance to share their experiences and stories.

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