Antecedents and outcomes of destination image of Malaysia

Yusuf Kani [a], Yuhanis Abdul Aziz [b], Murali Sambasivan [c, *], Jamil Bojei [b]

[a] Faculty of Business Administration, University of Medical Sciences & Technology, P.O. Box 12810, Khartoum, Sudan
[b] Faculty of Economics and Management, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia
[c] Taylor's Business School, Taylor's University, Lakeside Campus, Subang Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this paper is to analyse the antecedents and outcomes of destination image. Specifically, the antecedents considered are cultural values and destination source credibility; the outcomes considered are destination attachment, destination satisfaction, and revisit intention. This paper also investigates the moderating role of perceived risk between destination image and revisit intention. A questionnaire-based survey was conducted on international tourists from five countries of West Asia. The key findings of this study are the mediating roles of destination image, destination attachment, and destination satisfaction and moderating role of perceived risk. The results provide evidence concerning the role of mediators and moderators of the study. Theoretical contributions are discussed, with future research suggested.

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1. Introduction

Over the decades, an increasing number of tourist destinations have emerged, and investment in tourism related activities has increased. Throughout the world, development in tourist sector has been on the rise through continuous expansion and diversification, turning tourism into a key driver of socioeconomic progress through export revenues, creation of jobs and enterprises and infrastructure development (UNWTO 2013). With a 4.7% growth, 2014 marks the fifth successive year of vigorous progression of tourism sector on the average ever since the financial crises of 2009. One of the important factors that influence the tourists to choose one tourist destination over the other is destination image. According to Pike (2002), destination image plays a crucial role in a tourist's purchase related decision making and his/her satisfaction. Tasci and Gartner (2007) affirm that destination image is "an interactive system of thoughts, opinions, feelings, visualizations, and intentions toward a destination" (p. 200). A comprehensive image of the destination is formed by the interaction between these elements (Prayag & Ryan, 2011). Two questions are addressed in this research: What are the factors that influence formation of a destination image? What does the destination image lead to?

Prayag and Ryan (2011) have comprehensively modelled the outcomes of destination image by considering place attachment, overall satisfaction, and revisit intention. They have argued that destination image has a direct effect and an indirect effect through place attachment on overall satisfaction and revisit intention of tourists. In the process of understanding how destination image leads to tourist's satisfaction and revisit intention, we are motivated by four major incidents linked to Malaysia that happened in 2014. The triple air disasters of MH370 (Malaysian airline flight that disappeared on its way to Beijing, China), MH17 (Malaysian airline flight that was shot), and QZ8501 (Air Asia flight that crashed) and the repeated kidnap cases in Sabah by armed militants from Philippines, have created an adverse impact on the image of Malaysia. These incidents and the aftermath bring forth an important question about the effect of perceived risk of the tourists on their revisit intention. In this research, we argue the need to study the role of perceived risk in light of the major disasters that afflict a country. A few attempts have been made to associate perceived risk to some form of destination image (e.g. Chew & Jahari, 2014; Lehto, Douglas, & Park, 2008; Lepp, Gibson, & Lane, 2011). Despite the significance of these issues, the examination of perceived risk and destination image within a single study is lacking (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Chew & Jahari, 2014) and this aspect has been addressed in this research.

This study argues that the cultural values and destination source credibility are important antecedents of destination image. The psychological factors of tourists such as cultural values have a significant impact on the image of a destination (Lopes, 2011; San Martin and Del Bosque, 2008). The inclusion of cultural values as an antecedent is an opportunity to further strengthen the positive image of a destination and therefore, increase the likelihood of a particular destination being selected (Lopes, 2011). Destination source credibility has an influence on consumer attitudes towards products or service brands (Veasna, Wu, & Huang, 2013). Among the marketing practices related to tourism, the credibility of the source of destination branding is critical in shaping the overall attitude and behaviors of tourists towards a destination (Bianchi & Pike, 2011; Veasna et al., 2013).

Malaysia faces a stiff competition from a number of neighboring countries in the region that have similarities in terms of natural resources, tours, infrastructure, culture, traditions and hospitality (Badaruddin, 2009). The country is blessed with abundant natural resources, such as agriculture, mineral, and forestry. However, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC 2002), Amran (2004) and Mintell (2011), the major problem facing Malaysia's tourism industry is its image. Malaysian destination managers have a problem in selecting an ideal image to brand the country (Abdul and Lebai, 2010). This problem has been compounded by the disasters that shook Malaysia in 2014.

The contributions of this study are threefold. First, we have addressed the role of cultural values and destination source credibility as the antecedents of destination image. Earlier studies have looked at these constructs in isolation (Lopes, 2011; Veasna et al., 2013) and we have considered both the affective and cognitive dimensions of destination image as recommended by San Martin and Del Bosque (2008). Second, this study has analyzed the impacts of (1) destination image on destination attachment, (2) destination attachment on satisfaction, (3) satisfaction on revisit intention, and (4) destination image on revisit intention. Another significant feature of this research is the analysis of the moderating role of perceived risk between destination image and revisit intention. Perceived risk is a significant construct to consider if destination of a country or city suffers a setback because of major disasters. Third, this study has analyzed the mediating role of destination image between the antecedents (cultural values and destination source credibility) and destination attachment. Besides, this study has also analyzed the mediating role of (1) destination attachment between destination image and destination satisfaction and (2) destination satisfaction between destination attachment and revisit intention. The logical question at this point is: What are the research gaps and objectives that led to the development of framework and hypotheses? The next section addresses this question.

2. Research gaps and objectives

The central construct of this research is destination image. The image of a destination is considered to be a key determinant that has a relationship with the way tourists make decisions to select destinations they intend to spend their vacations. The concept of destination image can be facilitated by the strengths of a destination in the mind of potential tourists (Augustyn & Ho 1998; Hui, Wan, & Ho 2007). A number of studies have defined destination image as an individual's overall perception of a destination (Alhemoud & Armstrong 1996; Bigné, Sánchez, & Sánchez, 2001) and it has been identified to have a significant influence on decision-making (Um & Crompton 1990; Woodside, Frey, & Daly 1989). The importance of perception of tourists has been explained succinctly by Pike (2017) as follows: "perception is reality, given what consumers believe to be true will be real in their decision making. Again, this presents challenges for emerging destinations that have little or no image in the market, or for destinations suffering negative perceptions. While negative perceptions might not be based on fact and actually be wrong, they nevertheless guide an individual's travel planning. Thus, whether a consumer's perceptions of a destination are correct is not as important as what that individual actually believes to be true." (p. 127). Therefore, destination image is a key determinant that influences the behavior of tourists towards a destination (Oh, 1999; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). This research addresses both the cognitive and affective components of destination image unlike some earlier studies (Veasna et al., 2013).

Veasna et al. (2013) have argued based on brand marketing theory that destination image has to translate to destination attachment of the tourist before it can lead to satisfaction. The emotional and physical attachments with the destination are keys to satisfaction and continuous patronage of a destination (Hou, Lin, & Morals 2005; Prayag & Ryan, 2011). According to Yuksel, Yuksel, and Bilim (2010), "tourists may develop attachment to a destination because of its ability in fulfilling specific goals or activity needs and/or because of its symbolic meaning and thus, attachment could be an important measure of tourist satisfaction and loyalty." (p. 274). Therefore, in this research, destination attachment is considered as an immediate outcome of destination image that translates into satisfaction and revisit intention of tourists.

Even though the literature on destination image has been studied for four decades, few studies have addressed the potential mediating role of destination image to advance destination image literature (e.g., Qu, Kim & Im, 2011; Veasna et al., 2013; Chen, Hua & Wang, 2013 and Chew & Jahari, 2014). As a result, the mediating effect of destination image remains widely unexplored in the field of tourism. Meanwhile, few attempts have also been made to extend theoretical attention to compare the mediating effect of destination image in relation to cultural values, and destination source credibility and destination attachment.

Much of the tourism literature has focused on destination image and there is a lack of research concerning the impact of culture on tourists' perceptions (Abodeeb, 2014). According to Chen and Tsai (2007), cultural values influence destination image and tourist behavior. Tourists from different cultural backgrounds tend to have differing perceptions about the same destination. Besides, the perception of a tourist destination is significantly influenced by psychological factors such as cultural values which have a significant impact on the image of a destination that is developed (Lopes, 2011; San Martin and Del Bosque, 2008). The inclusion of cultural values as an antecedent to destination image is an opportunity to further strengthen the positive image of a destination and therefore, increase the likelihood of a particular destination being selected (Lopes, 2011). Therefore, while studying the destination image of international tourists such as this study, it is essential to consider cultural values of tourists as an antecedent to destination image.

Few attempts have been made to associate perceived risk to some form of destination image (e.g. affective response in Lehto et al. (2008); organic image in Lepp et al. (2011); and effects of perceived risk of destination image in Chew and Jahari (2014)). Despite the significance of these issues, the risk literature has barely examined perceived risk and destination image as distinct constructs within a single study to understand their impacts (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Chew & Jahari, 2014). In this research, besides addressing the role of destination image on destination attachment, satisfaction, and revisit intention, the study also analyzes the moderating role of perceived risk on the relationship between destination image and the intention of tourists to revisit Malaysia.

In summary, the objectives of this research are to examine: (1) the mediating effect of destination image on the relationship between cultural values, destination source credibility and destination attachment, (2) the mediating effect of destination attachment between destination image and destination satisfaction, (3) the mediating effect of destination satisfaction between destination attachment and revisit intention of tourists, and (4) the moderating role of perceived risk between destination image and revisit intention of tourists.

3. Conceptual framework and hypotheses development

The conceptual framework of this study has been developed based on the adaptation of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). The S-O-R model argues that stimuli from environments affect an individual's cognitive and affective reactions, which in turn lead to behavioral outcomes (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). This model has been widely applied to consumer behavior studies (Eroglu, Machleit, & Davis, 2003; Sheng & Joqinapelly, 2012). In this study, the stimuli are the antecedents of destination image of Malaysia as a tourist destination, namely: cultural values and destination source credibility. Organism refers to the emotional state of the human being (O) which mediates the relationship between environment and human action. Organism refers to internal processes and structures intervening between stimuli external to the person and the final actions, reactions, or responses emitted (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). In this study, the organism refers to the destination image (includes cognitive and affective dimensions) of Malaysia which mediates the relationship between cultural values, destination source credibility and destination attachment. The destination attachment, destination satisfaction, and revisit intention are the responses (R). The proposed conceptual framework of this study is given in Fig. 1.

3.1. The mediating effect of destination image between cultural values and destination source credibility, and destination attachment

Socio-demographics used to be the primary emphasis of a number of destination image studies. Even though there is a dearth of research on culture, it is acknowledged that destination image has close links with culture (Frías, Rodríguez, Alberto Castañeda, Sabiote, & Buhalis, 2012). The effect of culture is pronounced when the tourist's destination and the tourist's home country are culturally distinct from one another (Tasci and Gartner, 2007). Previous studies have suggested that psychological nature which comprises of motivation, values, personality, and lifestyle have an influence on the destination image (Beerli & Martin, 2004). The deliberation of destination source credibility within the context of destination image proposes that it is likely to change the image of a destination subject to the credibility of the source that is considered (Glover, 2009). The significant characteristics of destination source credibility include: the development of symbolism, image, tourist beliefs, and attitudes (Veasna et al., 2013).

According to Veasna et al. (2013), "destination image is associated with a subjective interpretation of tourists' feelings and beliefs toward a specific destination." (512). Destination image plays a significant role in influencing tourists' attitudes toward the destination (Oh, 1999; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Prayag and Ryan (2011) have argued the role of destination image as an antecedent to destination attachment. Therefore, it is plausible that a more favorable destination image will lead to a stronger cognitive attachment to a given destination. Based on the above arguments, we hypothesize as follows:

H1a. Destination image mediates the relationship between cultural values and destination attachment amongst tourists visiting Malaysia.

H1b. Destination image mediates the relationship between destination source credibility and destination attachment amongst tourists visiting Malaysia.

3.2. The mediating effect of destination attachment between destination image and destination satisfaction

Previous studies have developed a framework and examined the constructs that are likely to influence the level of attachment a tourist will have with a destination (Changuk & Allen, 1999; Kyle, Graefe, Manning, & Bacon, 2003) and the impact destination attachment will have on other managerially significant constructs
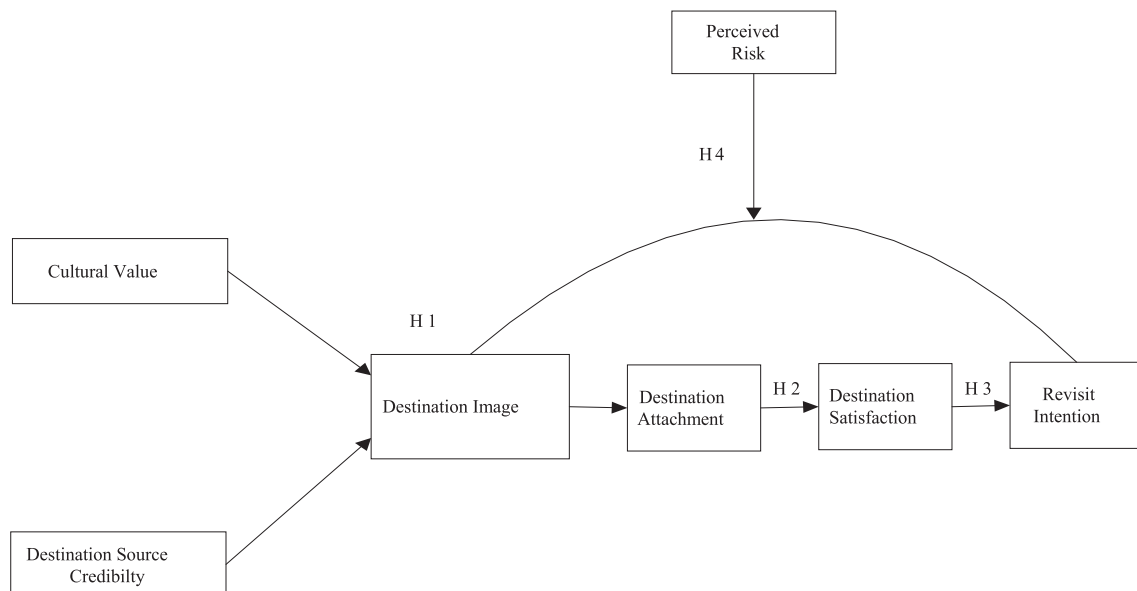

Fig. 1. Conceptual framework.

(Brocato, 2006; Kyle, Absher, & Graefe, 2003; Wickham, 2000). The use of destination attachment as a construct in tourism research has become popular.

A few researchers have argued that destination image has a significant influence on destination satisfaction (Bloemer & De Ruyter, 1998; Esch, Lagner, Schmott, & Geus, 2006; Lai, Griffin, & Babin, 2009; Veasna et al., 2013). Nevertheless, there is a dearth of research in tourism that tests this association. Loureiro and González (2008) suggest that a significant image of a destination will result in an increase in the level of satisfaction of tourists (Chi & Qu, 2008). Furthermore, the greater the effect of destination image on destination satisfaction, the more likely the tourist will have a favorable attitude towards the object of attachment, which results in a higher level of satisfaction with a particular country or region (Murphy, Benckendorff, & Moscardo, 2007). In relation to mediation relationship, it is presumed that destination image is a major factor influencing destination attachment, which in turn is likely to have a greater level of satisfaction. Consequently, it is recommended that if the perceived images of a destination are highly favorable, the level of satisfaction towards the destination as a result of attachment to the destination will also increase. It is therefore hypothesized that:

H2. Destination attachment mediates the relationship between destination image and destination satisfaction amongst tourists visiting Malaysia.

3.3. The mediating effect of destination satisfaction between destination attachment and revisit intention

There are quite a number of practical reasons for studying tourists' satisfaction. Since a customer's repeated purchase and brand loyalty are closely linked with his/her satisfaction through an initial purchase, the concept of customer satisfaction is of significance because of its influence in repeated purchase and word−of−mouth (WOM) publicity (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Fornell, 1992; Halstead & Page, 1992). Customer satisfaction is identified to be a significant determinant of repeat sales and customer loyalty (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Liljander & Strandvik, 1995) and the satisfaction is influenced by destination attachment (Veasna et al., 2013). Eventually, the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of a tourist will have a significant impact on his subsequent behavior (Kotler, Haider, & Rein, 1994). A tourist who is satisfied has a higher tendency of selecting a destination again, and he/she is more likely to engage in positive WOM behavior.

Customer loyalty is influenced by customer satisfaction (Bitner, 1990). Similarly, tourists that have enjoyed better than expected experiences are more likely to return in the future (Ross, 1993). Kozak and Rimmington (2000) have concluded that the level of overall satisfaction with holiday experiences have the greatest influence on the intention to revisit the same destination. The need for further study on the link between overall satisfaction and revisiting is highlighted by Opperman (1998). Based on the above arguments, we hypothesize as follows:

H3. Destination satisfaction mediates the relationship between destination attachment and revisit intention of tourists visiting Malaysia.

3.4. The moderating effect of perceived risk between destination image and revisit intention

The nature of tourism as an intangible service makes it quite difficult to systematize. Perceived risk is one of the major factors that have an impact on the decision making process of tourists with regards to their travel intentions (Law, 2006; Sönmez & Graefe, 1998). It has an effect on future travel activities such as recommendations, adoption of new products, brand loyalty and dependence on well established brands (Erdem & Swait, 1998). There is a dearth of studies investigating the moderating role of perceived risk between destination image and revisit intention. According to the brand-signaling theory, "brands as market signals improve consumer perceptions about brand attribute levels and increase confidence in brand's claims" (Erdem & Swait, 1998, p. 131). In this study, 'Malaysia' is the brand. Perceived risk as a moderator can be described when the perception of risk associated with a destination can send a negative signal to the tourists about the destination and which in turn can affect the behavior of the tourists. For instance, tourists who have fewer risk perceptions are more likely to revisit or suggest the destination to friends and relatives compared to tourists who have a high perception of risk (Chaudhuri, 2000). Erdem and Swait (1998) have contended that higher risk inhibits exploratory predispositions and lead customers to prefer destinations that are perceived less risky. We argue that when threats are real, a positive destination image may not necessarily translate into revisit intention. Therefore, based on the above discussion, this study hypothesizes that:

H4. Perceived risk moderates the relationship between destination image and revisit intention of tourists visiting Malaysia.

4. Methodology

The data for this study were collected by self-administered method in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. In 2012 and 2013, out of the top ten average per capita (APC) expenditure with average length of stay (ALOS) the top five countries were from West Asia and the top five highest spenders also came from West Asia (Tourism Malaysia, 2013). This is a clear indication that tourists from West Asia have a significant impact on the tourism industry of Malaysia compared to tourists from other countries, some of whom are classified as excursionists spending less than 24 h without an overnight stay or in other words referred to as same day visitors. Accordingly, the population of the study consists of tourists from Saudi-Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, UAE and Iran, who visit Malaysia to spend their vacation. Tourists from these five countries have been identified as the highest spenders per person per day (Malaysia Tourists Profile, 2013).

4.1. Study site

The research survey was carried out randomly through tourism agencies where the tourists make their travel arrangements. The distribution of questionnaires also included tourists who independently arrange their trip, because 82% of tourists from West Asia make their own travel arrangements (Malaysia Tourists Profile, 2013). The tourists were randomly selected at different locations in and around Kuala Lumpur such as: Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA), Petronas twin towers and Arab Street, Putra Mosque located at Putrajaya and a selected number of Iranian and Arab restaurants randomly selected from Malaysia Yellow Pages and Trip Advisor Malaysia based on the recommendations made by tourists online.

4.2. Sampling and data collection

The study used quota sampling, a non-probability sampling technique. Previous studies on destination image (Bigné, Sánchez, & Sánchez, 2001; Chen & Uysal, 2002; Govers & Go, 2003;

Hamilton & Lau, 2005; Pike, 2003; San Martin & Del Bosque, 2008; Prayag, 2009) used quota sampling as a result of a lack of a sampling frame and non-availability of accurate information about the population. A sample of 383 tourists (based on sample-size calculator) from five West Asian countries were chosen. To account for some possible uncertainties that are inherent in a survey-based research, a total number of 600 questionnaires were administered. Based on the proportion of tourists from the five West Asian countries, number of questionnaires distributed to tourists was: 238 (39.7%) from Saudi Arabia, 196 (32.6%) from Iran, 66 (11%) from UAE, 50 (8.4%) from Oman and 50 (8.4%) from Kuwait.

4.3. Questionnaires design and measurement of variables

The questionnaire was designed in English and translated into Arabic and Persian languages by adopting a back to back translation technique. Before using the Arabic, Persian and English version of the questionnaire in the main survey, pre-tests were conducted in order to assist in the development of the questionnaire to ensure the correct translation of the instruments and to avoid confusion or misunderstanding. The pre—tested questionnaire was sent to an expert panel of academicians, to ensure that the three versions of the questionnaire match as closely as possible. The questionnaire items were measured based on a 7-point Likert scale (i.e., from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) based on the recommendation by Lee and Lings (2008). According to them, a 7-point Likert scale gives the respondent a wider range of likely responses and this can avoid the responses being cluttered at the extreme ends. The questionnaires for the pilot phase were distributed in June 2014. The questionnaires were given to a sample of 38 tourists from the five West Asian countries, in different proportions based on the sample size and quota allocated to each country: Saudi Arabia 18 (43.9%), Iran 10 (24.4%), Oman, 6 (14.6%), United Arab Emirates 2 (4.9%) and Kuwait 2 (4.9%). The questionnaire was checked for any inadequacies that might have emerged when the respondents' answered the items. The reliability values for all the constructs ranged between 0.78 and 0.95. The final distribution of questionnaire to 600 tourists was conducted without any modifications to its items.

Eleven items of the destination image were operationalized from Prayag and Ryan (2011) and Russell, Ward, and Pratt (1981). Nine items of cultural values were operationalized from (Kahle, 1983). Eight items from destination attachment were operationalized from Prayag and Ryan (2011). The five questions of destination satisfaction were operationalized from Westbrook and Oliver (1981). Revisit intention with five dimensions was operationalized from Olorunniwo, Hsu, and Udo (2006) and Ryu and Jang (2007). Perceived risk with nine dimensions was operationalized from Gallarza and Saura (2006).

5. Data analysis and results

5.1. Profile of the respondents

The final sample of 383 is representative of the population of 239,760 tourists from the five West Asian countries selected for this study. The profile of the respondents is given in Table 1. The composition of tourists based on their country of origin and country of residence are as follows: Saudi Arabia −152 (39.7%), Iran - 125 (32.6%), Oman - 42 (11%), Kuwait − 32 (8.4%), United Arab Emirates − 32 (8.4%). Some salient points about the respondents are: (1) 66% of the respondents were in the age group 18—34 years, (2) 67% of the respondents were married, (3) 70% of the respondents came with the family, (4) 66% of the respondents had monthly income more than USD 2000, (5) 64% of the respondents

Table 1
Profile of the respondents.

Demographic characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Country of origin		
Iran	125	32.6
Kuwait	32	8.4
Oman	42	11.0
Saudi Arabia	152	39.7
United Arab Emirates	32	8.4
Country of Residence		
Iran	125	32.6
Kuwait	32	8.4
Oman	42	11.0
Saudi Arabia	152	39.7
United Arab Emirates	32	8.4
Gender		
Male	283	73.9
Female	100	26.1
Age (years)		
18—24	89	23.2
25—34	166	43.3
35—44	89	23.2
45—54	29	7.6
55—64	10	2.6
Marital status		
Single	118	30.8
Married	256	66.8
Others	9	2.3
Income		
1—2000	130	33.9
2001—5000	172	44.9
5001—8000	52	13.6
8001—10000	29	7.6
Daily Expenditure		
1—500	136	35.5
501—1000	176	46.0
1001—3000	59	15.4
3001—5000	8	2.1
5001—10000	4	1.0
Occupation		
Executive/Managers	98	25.6
Company Employee	69	18.0
Professional	59	15.4
Worker	18	4.7
Teacher	33	8.6
Housewife	15	3.9
Retired	6	1.6
Education		
Primary	8	2.1
Secondary	84	21.9
Bachelor	144	37.6
Postgraduate	99	25.8
Travel Party		
Unaccompanied	36	9.4
Family group	270	70.5
Special interest	30	7.8
Friends/relatives	31	8.1
Travel Arrangement		
Tour package	95	24.8
Own arrangement	275	71.8
Number of Visits		
First time	217	56.7
Second time	87	22.7
Third time	37	9.7
Type of Accommodation		
3- 5 star	301	78.6
Budget	33	8.6
Rented apartment	26	6.8
Friends/family	19	5.0
Duration of Stay (days)		
2—5	43	11.2
6—10	120	31.3
11—20	171	44.6
21—30	31	8.1
Choice of Transportation		
Tour Bus	34	8.9

Table 1 (continued)

Demographic characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Car rental	70	18.3
Taxi	234	61.1
Public Transport	14	3.7
Train	9	2.3
Others	22	5.7
Total	**383**	**100.0**

Source: Survey.

spent more than USD 500 per day, (6) 72% of the respondents made their own travel arrangements, (7) More than 40% were re-visiting Malaysia, (8) 78% were staying in 3, 4, or 5 star hotels, and (9) 31% were staying between 6 and 10 days and 45% were staying between 11 and 20 days. It can be seen that tourists from West Asia spend more time and money during their stay at Malaysia.

5.2. Descriptive statistics

The mean, standard deviation, and skewness and kurtosis statistics are provided in Table 2. The salient points of the statistics are: (1) destination image (mean = 5.29 on a 7-scale, sd = 0.75) is 'high' indicating that Malaysia has a good image according to tourists from West Asia; (2) cultural values (mean = 5.11 on a 7-scale, sd = 1.13) is 'high', indicating that tourists from West Asia (i) feel a sense of belonging, (ii) experience warmth from Malaysians, (iii) feel safe, and (iv) feel well respected; (3) destination source credibility (mean = 4.69 on a 7-scale, sd = 0.65) is 'moderate' indicating that tourists from West Asia feel that the information they have about Malaysia are credible and can be banked upon; (4) destination attachment (mean = 4.10 on a 7-scale, sd = 1.58) is 'moderate' indicating that the tourists from West Asia have some psychological attachment towards Malaysia. This can also be due to the fact that most of tourists from West Asia are Muslims; (5) destination satisfaction (mean = 5.32 on a 7-scale, sd = 1.33) is 'high' indicating that tourists from West Asia are satisfied with their vacation in Malaysia, (6) revisit intention (mean = 4.64 on a 7-scale, sd = 1.62) is 'moderate' indicating that Malaysian government and people must do more to attract more tourists from West Asia, and (7) perceived risk (mean = 3.52 on a 7-scale, sd = 1.49) is 'moderate' indicating that West Asian tourists perceive a moderate degree of risk travelling to Malaysia. The skewness and the kurtosis statistics indicate the values of all constructs are within +1 and −1 implying that data for the constructs appear to come from normal distribution. Besides, the correlation values between the constructs are given in Table 3. The correlation values indicate that all constructs are correlated.

5.3. Reliability and validity

Table 2 provides the reliability scores of all constructs. It can be seen that Cronbach alpha scores are between 0.750 and 0.941. The convergent and discriminant validities were assessed based on

Table 3
Correlation and correlation square matrix of latent variables.

	CV	DSC	DI	DA	DS	RI
CV	1	0.230	0.270	0.120	0.230	0.150
DSC	0.481*	1	0.290	0.260	0.410	0.320
DI	0.523*	0.528*	1	0.230	0.330	0.350
DA	0.345*	0.511*	0.481*	1	0.380	0.450
DS	0.480*	0.643*	0.571*	0.619	1	0.530
RI	0.385*	0.568*	0.580*	0.670*	0.728*	1

Legend: CV – cultural values, DSC – destination source credibility, DI – destination image, DA – destination attachment, DS – destination satisfaction, RI – revisit intention.
*Values above the diagonal are squared correlations.
*Significant at 0.01 levels (1-tailed).

measurement model using the following indicators: factor loading (threshold >= 0.5), composite reliability (CR) (threshold value >= 0.70, average variance extracted (AVE) (threshold value >= 0.5), and comparing the AVE of each construct with the squared correlation of that construct with other constructs (threshold − AVE > squared correlation). The fit statistics of the measurement model are: RMSEA = 0.051 (threshold <= 0.08), CFI = 0.935 (threshold >= 0.90), TLI = 0.928 (threshold >= 0.90), IFI = 0.935 (threshold >= 0.90), and chi-square value/degrees of freedom = 1.986 (threshold <= 3.0). The factor loading of all items on the constructs are greater than 0.5. The CR values are between 0.700 and 0.930. The AVE scores are between 0.380 and 0.810 with destination image scoring 0.380, cultural values scoring 0.46, and perceived risk scoring 0.45. All other constructs have AVE scores more than 0.50. However, comparing the AVE scores of destination image and cultural values with the squared correlation with other constructs indicate that AVE score is greater than squared correlations.

5.4. Structural model results

The structural model (SEM) was tested using AMOS version 20. The structural model is given in Fig. 2. The fit statistics are: RMSEA = 0.058, CFI = 0.916, IFI = 0.916, TLI = 0.908, chi-square/ degrees of freedom = 2.256. The summary of structural model results are: (1) relationships between cultural values ($\beta = 0.410$, p-value = 0.000) and destination image and between destination source credibility ($\beta = 0.433$, p-value = 0.000) and destination image are significant. This implies that both the antecedents of destination image play an important role in the formation of cognitive and affective images about a tourist destination (Malaysia, in this case); (2) relationship between destination image ($\beta = 0.887$, p-value = 0.000) and destination attachment is significant. We have used Sobel's test to assess the mediation effects of destination image between cultural values and destination attachment and between destination source credibility and destination attachment (Hypotheses 1a and 1b). Based on the results of the test, we observe that destination image is the full mediator
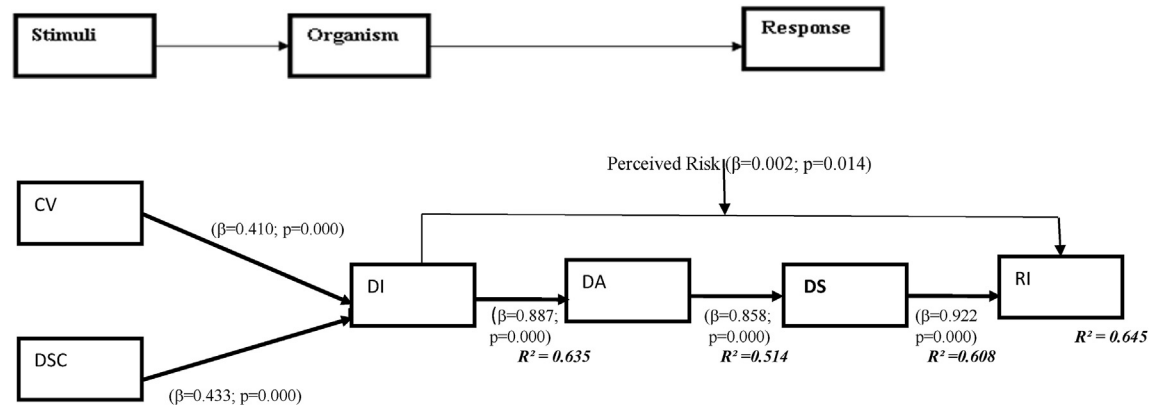
Table 2
Mean, standard deviation, AVE, CR, Cronbach alpha, skewness and kurtosis statistics.

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Average Variance Extracted	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha	Skewness	Kurtosis
Cultural Values	5.11	1.13	0.46	0.88	0.88	−0.317	−0.860
Destination Source Credibility	4.69	0.65	0.60	0.89	0.90	0.049	−0.280
Destination Image	5.29	0.75	0.38	0.76	0.75	0.087	−0.399
Destination Attachment	4.10	1.58	0.63	0.93	0.94	0.020	−0.914
Destination Satisfaction	5.32	1.33	0.66	0.90	0.90	−0.510	−0.649
Revisit Intention	4.64	1.62	0.81	0.94	0.94	−0.316	−0.939
Perceived Risk	3.52	1.49	0.45	0.88	0.88	0.168	−0.740

Fig. 2. Hypothesized Full Structural Model. **Legend**: **CV**- cultural values; **DSC**- destination source credibility; **DI**- destination image; **DA**- destination attachment; **DS**- destination satisfaction; **RI**- revisit intention.

between cultural values and destination attachment (*Sobel's test value = 5.293, p-value = 0.000*) and between destination source credibility and destination attachment (*Sobel's test value = 6.446, p-value = 0.000*); (3) relationship between destination attachment ($\beta = 0.858$, *p-value = 0.000*) and destination satisfaction is significant. The Sobel's test indicates that destination attachment is a full mediator (*Sobel's test value = 7.710, p-value = 0.000*) between destination image and destination satisfaction; (4) relationship between destination satisfaction ($\beta = 0.922$, *p-value = 0.000*) and revisit intention is significant. Based on the Sobel's test (*Sobel's test value = 10.273, p-value = 0.000*), we observe that destination satisfaction is a full mediator between destination attachment and revisit intention; and (5) the moderating role of perceived risk between destination image and revisit intention (*t-value = 2.455, p-value = 0.014*) is significant. The result implies that if perceived risk is high tourists will opt for destinations that are considered to be less risky.

6. Discussion

The general objective of this research study was to examine the antecedents and outcomes of destination image. In that context, we examined the roles of cultural values and destination source credibility as antecedents and destination attachment, destination satisfaction, and revisit intention as outcomes. In fact, this research explicitly showed the mechanism by which destination image got translated to revisit intention of tourists. Besides, we studied the role of perceived risk as a moderator between destination image and revisit intention. This was motivated by the fact that Malaysia faced severe disasters in 2014 and therefore, the role of perceived risk was very real and relevant. There is a dearth of studies linking destination image, perceived risk, and revisit intention. Our study considered tourists from one region, West Asia (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Iran, and UAE), where the cultural values are similar. The framework used in this study has recorded high R-squared values. The R-squared values are: destination image − 0.635, destination attachment − 0.514, destination satisfaction − 0.608, and revisit intention − 0.645. This indicates that our model has high predictive ability.

The importance of destination image is on the rise and many researchers have used this construct to explain destination satisfaction and loyalty (Veasna et al., 2013). It is significant to note that the perception of destination image by tourists is subjective and are influenced by many factors (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Pike, 2017). The current study has shown clearly the significant impact of cultural values on destination image. The observation of this study is in line

with a few studies. According to Beerli and Martin (2004), destination image (both cognitive and affective components) is affected by tourist's country of origin and different countries have heterogeneous cultural values. Beerli and Martin have used cultural distance between the host country and tourists' country of origin to represent cultural values. They have showed that cultural distance does affect the destination image. San Martin and Del Bosque (2008) have argued the role of cultural values of the tourists as an influencing factor as the cultural values have significant effects on the behavior of tourists. Therefore, it is imperative that the agencies promoting a tourist destination (Malaysia) understand the cultural values of the target tourist's country of origin (West Asia). Destination source credibility has a crucial role to play in the formation of destination image that guides the tourists' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. The researchers have argued that veracity of credible sources exerts a major influence on tourists' opinions about a destination (Veasna et al., 2013). The current study has clearly established a significant link between destination source credibility and destination image. In fact, among the antecedents of destination image, destination source credibility has a stronger effect on destination image than cultural values. This relationship suggests that managers promoting a tourist destination need to make higher investments over time on marketing communications and destination image advertising. The medium used for promotion and the content of the messages disseminated must be directed toward the intended tourists' countries of origin. Scholars in marketing have demonstrated that brand image has a significant positive relationship with brand satisfaction (Lai, Griffin, & Babin, 2009; Martenson, 2007). The researchers in tourism have extended this concept, studied, and have shown that destination image has a positive impact on tourists' satisfaction (Chi & Qu, 2008; Loureiro & González, 2008; Veasna et al., 2013). How does image translate into satisfaction? Recently, a few researchers have tested the role of destination attachment as a mediating variable between destination image and destination satisfaction (Silva, Kastenholz, & Arbantes 2013; Veasna et al., 2013). This study along with other studies argue and has shown that higher levels of destination image lead to higher levels of emotional attachment toward the destination which in turn leads to higher tourists' satisfaction. Among the attachment studies that have analyzed the mediating effect of destination image and destination satisfaction, this study has demonstrated a very strong effect (βimage-attachment = 0.887; βattachment-satisfaction = 0.858). The result suggests that for the tourists from West Asia destination image is vital to be emotionally attached and satisfied with a destination.

Marketing literature is replete with papers that have established

the links between customer satisfaction and loyalty/re-purchase behavior. The current study has established a strong link between tourists' satisfaction and revisit intention (βsatisfaction-revisit_intention = 0.922) in line with other studies (Kozak & Rimmington, 2000; Opperman, 1998). This result suggests that satisfaction of tourists' from West Asian countries is essential to ensure that they will revisit Malaysia in future.

7. Theoretical and practical implications

The implications of the study are many. First, the moderating role of perceived risk between destination image and revisit intention of tourists visiting Malaysia has highlighted the significance of perceived risk. This gains significance given the terrible disasters encountered by Malaysia in 2014. This study has shown that higher the perceived risk, the revisit intention among tourists from West Asia is not high in spite of higher perception of destination image of Malaysia. The result is also verified by comparing the mean scores of destination image (mean = 5.29 on 7-scale – 'high') and revisit intention (mean = 4.64 on a 7-scale – 'moderate'). The impact of disasters on the revisit intention of tourists is real. Despite high satisfaction (mean = 5.32 on a 7-scale), customer loyalty has suffered a setback. The mean score of perceived risk reveals that the perception of risk by tourists about Malaysia is moderate. Therefore, it is important that Malaysia invests heavily in marketing communications and advertisements portraying Malaysia as a 'safe' destination to spend holidays with family. We recommend that perceived risk be considered as an important construct in the study of tourist destinations that have encountered disasters. This can help the tourism managers to market their destinations effectively.

Second, the inclusion of cultural values as an antecedent of destination image has strengthened the literature on destination image. Previous studies such as (Lopes, 2011 and San Martin & Del Bosque, 2008) have proposed that the inclusion of cultural values as a construct is an opportunity to further strengthen the positive image of a destination and, therefore, increase the likelihood of a particular destination to be selected. Third, prior to this study, only Veasna et al. (2013) have used destination source credibility as an antecedent of destination image. The current study vindicates the arguments by Veasna et al. (2013) and strongly encourages the use of this construct in the tourism literature when any research on destination image is carried out. In summary, the antecedents considered in this study have a strong relevance and impact and are important additions to the literature on destination image. As in this study, two components of destination image must be considered: cognitive and affective.

Fourth, the mediation effects of destination attachment and destination satisfaction explain the mechanism by which the destination image gets translated into revisit intention of tourists. An earlier study by Veasna et al. (2013) did not consider revisit intention of tourists, cultural values and perceived risk of tourists. The findings of this study have essentially confirmed and extended the literature on cultural values, brand credibility, brand image, brand attachment, satisfaction, and customer loyalty to be integrated in tourism context. Fifth, the moderating role of perceived risk that has not been considered earlier has been studied in this research and it has been shown that perceived risk moderates the relationship between destination image of Malaysia and revisit intention of tourists from West Asia. Specifically, this study has shown that under conditions of higher perceived risk higher destination image need not necessarily translate to higher revisit intention. The role of perceived risk assumes importance in the literature related to destination image especially, when the destination country faces unusual conditions, such as disasters, terrorist

attacks and so on. This study has provided a solid foundation to the academia by providing a comprehensive framework to study destination image by considering antecedents, outcomes, mediation effects, and moderation effect.

Sixth, the results of the current study must encourage tourism marketing managers to invest on marketing communications and advertisements that are culturally and emotionally appealing in a medium that enjoys credibility from the targeted tourists. However, according to Pike (2017), marketers' attempts to stimulate induced images about a destination cannot change people's minds, immediately. Therefore, "what is required then is the identification of those attributes that are important to travelers for a given travel context, and where the destination is perceived to rate higher than competitors. Such attributes are representative of strengths, which should be emphasized in marketing communications." (Pike, 2017, p. 128).

8. Conclusions and limitations

Based on S-O-R model it has been shown empirically in this study that stimuli such as destination source credibility and cultural values of tourists affect their cognitive and affective reactions leading to the formation of destination image which in turn lead to tourists' destination attachment, satisfaction, and revisit intention. The current study provides valuable insights into the antecedents and outcomes of destination image besides mediating roles of destination attachment and destination satisfaction and moderating role of perceived risk. The study provides a comprehensive framework to study destination image and revisit intention of tourists. Even though, this study studied West Asian tourists visiting Malaysia, the framework could be utilized to study any tourist destination and tourists visiting that destination.

The current study is not without limitations. First, the study captured the perception of tourists from West Asia who are predominantly Muslims. The tourists from other parts of the world may have differing perceptions. Second, the study was conducted after the disasters hit Malaysia. A comparative study between before and after disasters was not done to assess the real impact on the behavior of the tourists. Third, the present study considered only two antecedents: cultural values and destination source credibility. Additional antecedents such as lifestyle and personality traits of tourists could have impact on destination image. Fourth, the number of tourists in the sample from UAE, Kuwait and Oman were less compared to the number of tourists from Saudi Arabia and Iran. The study used quota sampling based on the number of tourists from each country. A higher sample could provide more robust results. Fifth, our study was cross-sectional and it would be useful to consider a longitudinal study.

Conflict of interest statement

There are no conflicts of interest.

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