The Relationship
between Destination Image,
Tourist Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty

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 Destination Loyalty"

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Abstract

Several studies have confirmed the interrelationship among destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty, in which destination image and tourist satisfaction are believed to have great influences on the destination loyalty of tourists.

Located in the central region of Vietnam, Hue holds great potential for tourism development and this destination has also obtained numerous significant tourism achievements over recent years. Nevertheless, there are still a lot of issues needed to be addressed by the destination managers in order to make Hue gain a better position and higher level of destination loyalty in the tourism market, in which successfully communicating an attractive destination image to the tourists and improving their satisfaction are the most important tasks. In fact, there exist very few researches concerning destination image, tourist satisfaction or even destination loyalty which have been done in Hue. Moreover, most of these studies are in very small scale and they only examine either the destination image or the tourist satisfaction or the destination loyalty independently. This paper, therefore, aims to deliver the first and comprehensive theoretical and empirical analysis of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty as well as the causal relationship among them in the context of Hue.

In this study, a destination loyalty research model was proposed and hypotheses were derived. The empirical data base on two tourist surveys with a total number of 2042 questionnaires collected in Hue in 2013 and 2014. In addition, ten experts were interviewed in different periods during the study.

The results find that the tourists' perceptions on the destination image of Hue are quite positive and the positive level is higher for those who completely have no earlier experience in Hue. It is also discovered that the destination is offering tourists with a pretty satisfactory experience, not as high as their initial expectations, but acceptable with positive ratings received from the tourists. However, if the destination is able to better communicate a positive image to tourists and improves the quality of its offers and services, the tourists' satisfaction will be increased and thus the destination loyalty will also be enhanced. This finding supports the proposed destination loyalty model: (1) destination image directly influences attribute-satisfaction; (2) destination image and

attribute-satisfaction are both direct influences of overall-satisfaction; and (3) overall-satisfaction in turn has a direct and positive impact on destination loyalty. The findings also confirm that attribute-satisfaction and destination image are also the direct influences of destination loyalty. Furthermore, the results add to the proposed loyalty model a new relationship: Destination image is influenced strongly by tourist overall-satisfaction and attribute-satisfaction.

The outcomes of this research are expected to be used as a valuable reference for the local policy-makers, governmental agencies, tourism companies and other relevant stakeholders. Also, important theoretical and managerial implications are drawn based on the study findings and the recommendations for future researchers are made from the limitations and scopes of the study.

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Abbreviations

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CHO	Cultural Heritage Office
DMO	Destination Management Organization
ESRT	Environmentally and Socially Responsible Tourism Capacity Development Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSO	General Statistical Office of Vietnam
HDCST	Thua Thien Hue Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism
HMCC	Hue Monuments Conservation Centre
HSO	Thua Thien Hue Statistical Office
IPA	Importance – Performance Analysis
ISA	Importance – Satisfaction Analysis
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TTH	Thua Thien Hue
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	The United Nations World Tourism Organization
VNAT	Vietnam National Administration of Tourism
WOM	Word-of-Mouth

1 Introduction

Over the past decades, tourism has experienced continuous expansion and diversification to become one of the largest and fastest-growing economic sectors in the world. Despite occasional shocks, tourism has shown virtually uninterrupted growth. International tourist arrivals have increased from 25 million globally in 1950 to 1133 million in 2014. Likewise, international tourism receipts earned by destinations worldwide have surged from US$ 2 billion in 1950 to US$ 1245 billion in 2014. In 2014, tourism exports accounted for 30% of the world's exports of services. (Unwto 2015)

Along with this global tourism growth and its benefit, more and more destinations are striving for a bigger share in an extensively competitive tourism market. The destination managers of Hue have also called for the best efforts aiming at *"developing tourism as a leading economic sector, striving to make Hue become a leading destination in the region in 2020; building Hue as a tourist destination on par with the world's cultural heritage cities in 2030"* (Hdcst 2014: 4). To achieve such a goal, there are many missions ahead for Hue tourism which need to be implemented in short term as well as in long term.

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, with the strong growth in global tourism, several new destinations have emerged in addition to the established favorite attractions in Europe and North America. This, however, has also created many challenges in tourism marketing of the destinations since the more places in the world are developed for tourism exploitation the more destination choices are available to visitors. Accordingly, a large number of existing and new destinations are competing with each other to attract tourists as well as to gain a better position in the international tourism market. This globally competitive environment requires dedicated efforts in destination management and promotion in order to create an attractive portfolio of tourism products and services at the local level. In which, creating and managing destination image is becoming one of the key sources of competitive advantage and one of the important elements in the process of tourist' destination choice (Gallarza et al. 2002, Lee et al 2006, Kavoura 2014). Besides,

tourist satisfaction with a destination is another important point that should be focused on by the destination because if a destination is able to identify and satisfy the needs and wants of tourists, these tourists will possibly make repeat visits and spread positive word of mouth publicly, which is so-called destination loyalty (BRAMWEL 1998, KOZAK 2001, YOON/ UYSAl 2005, CHI/ QU 2008, ZHANG et al.2014). Essentially, it has been proved by a number of tourism researches that tourists' destination loyalty is increased by positive destination image and high satisfaction (CHI/QU 2008). Therefore, creating a distinctive and appealing destination image and maximizing tourist satisfaction are the key missions of any destinations in order to win in this on-going globally intensive competition.

In line with the development of tourism in the world, Vietnam tourism industry has seen impressive growth recently. In 2014, Vietnam welcomed more than 7.8 million international tourists and the domestic tourists also increased rapidly to about 38.5 million visitors which generated an income of US$8.8 billion, contributing a significant proportion to the country's GDP and tourism ranked 5th among the best industries to bring income in foreign currencies for the country (VNAT 2015). In the development strategy of Vietnam's tourism toward 2020 with a vision to 2030, the tourism industry in Vietnam is expected to achieve an average growth of 11.5-12% annually and contribute 5.5 - 6 % to the national GDP (VNAT 2015).

Together with the development of Vietnam tourism, tourism in Hue has also obtained lots of significant achievements in recent years. Located in the central region of Vietnam, Hue – the provincial city of THUA THIEN HUE Province *(see figure 1.1)* - has a great potential for tourism development with the highlight of two World Cultural Heritages recognized by the UNESCO, namely The Complex of Hue Monuments and Hue's Royal Court Music. In addition, Hue is a gateway for visitors to travel to neighboring destinations such as the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in Quang Tri, Phong Nha - Ke Bang World Natural Heritage Site in Quang Binh and Hoi An Ancient Town in Quang Nam. In 2014, Hue welcomed more than 1.8 million overnight arrivals including 778,158 internationals and 1,072,135 domestics and earned an income of US$125.9 million. Hue tourism created 9,810 direct jobs and about 20,000 indirect jobs such as related micro businesses, handicraft/food vendors and local transport service providers. Tourism and services contributed 56.0% to the GDP of the city in 2014.

Regarding the accommodation industry, there has been a relatively strong growth in the last 10 years with the number of rooms approximately 10,000 in 2015 (Hᴅᴄꜱᴛ 2015). Hue has been voted as one of the most attractive destinations in Vietnam by many world prestigious magazines for years.

Beside the achievements of the tourism industry in Vietnam generally and in Hue particularly, there are still lots of things needed to be addressed. A recent large-scale tourism survey conducted in 2014 by EU-ESRT Project shows that more than 70% of the interviewed international tourists are satisfied with the destination and willing to return to Vietnam (Eꜱʀᴛ 2014). This is probably a good sign for the country's tourism industry. However, the data of this project's survey also identify that the actual number of repeat tourists in Vietnam accounts for only 11.2% (Eꜱʀᴛ 2014). And Hue tourism is also in such a situation. In recent years, though there has been a growth in the number of tourists to Hue, this growth remains slow through the years and lower than that of the other tourist destinations within the area and the country. Moreover, the average tourists' length of stay in Hue is quite short with around 2 days since the years of 1990 and unfortunately this number has kept unchanged until now. Despite that fact, Hue tourism still has no effective policy in place to promote its destination image, and as a result confusion and vagueness are what the visitors can feel about the destination of Hue. In addition to poor promotion, the limitation in tourism services is another element which created negative impression in the minds of visitors after their trips in Hue. Above all, the most important point is that the visitors' expectations in their trips to Hue have not been fulfilled (Tʀᴀɴ/Tʀᴜᴏɴɢ 2014). Thus, the destination of Hue should also focus on enhancing the quality and quantity of tourism products and services, communicating an appealing destination image to its tourist, improving tourist satisfaction, and from that mounting destination loyalty.
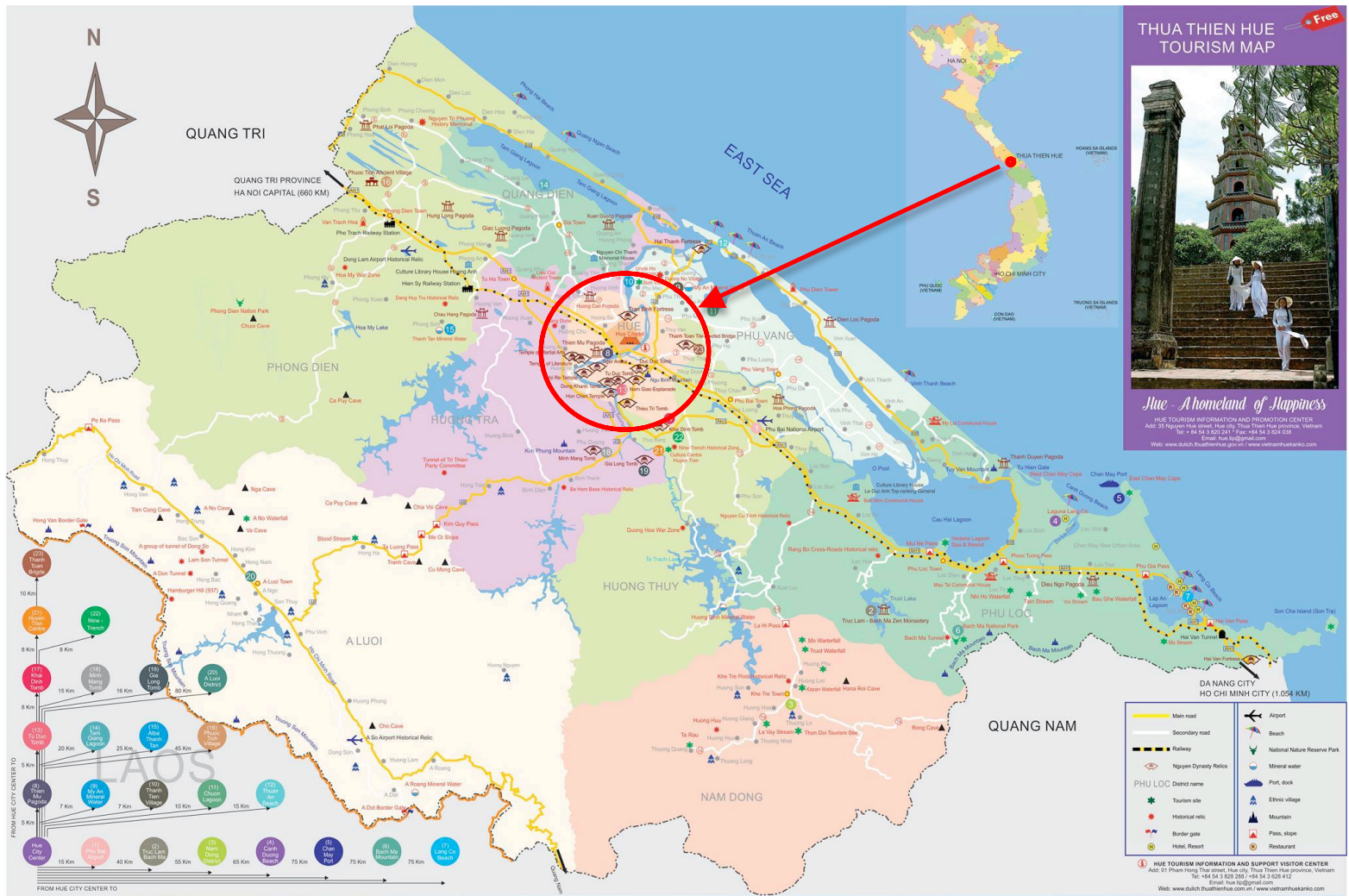
Figure 1.1: Location of Hue (Source: HDCST 2015)

1.2 Research Objectives

With the profusion of worldwide tourism destinations nowadays, the tourists have many options on the choice of their vacation destination. In order to be successfully promoted to the targeted markets and appealed to visitors, a destination must be favorably differentiated from its competitors and positively positioned in the minds of the travelers. Therefore, making a destination visible, distinctive and appealing to its potential tourists is a vitally necessary and urgent mission of the destination marketing strategies, of which building a positive destination image is the first priority.

Apart from the matter of destination image, tourist satisfaction is also the key concern of any destinations. It is widely accepted that satisfaction affects destination selection decisions, consumption of goods and services at a destination, and the intention to revisit.

Both destination image and tourist satisfaction are believed to have great influences on the destination loyalty of tourists. Tourists' perceptions of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty are very important for successful destination marketing. Nevertheless, the relationships among them have not been revealed in any previous researches for the case of Hue.

Addressing the key issues raised in current debates and discussions, this research has been inspired and driven by an important question: *"How to make Hue become a leading destination in the region and be on par with world's cultural heritage cities?"*. In which, successfully building a prominent destination image, highly satisfying its tourists and growing returning guests are the main concerns. This study aims to deliver the first comprehensive analysis and evaluation of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty and the relationship between them in the context of Hue city. This is expected to provide Hue tourism planners and marketers a scientific insight to be used as foundation for their strategic marketing decisions. Based on this motivation and in accordance with explorative interviews, the specific objectives sought to be explored are:

- to identify and measure the destination image of Hue in multi-dimensions;
- to measure tourists' overall satisfaction as well as tourists' attribute satisfaction;
- to measure the tourists' loyalty with the destination and the interrelationship of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

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The study also examines the tourists' demographic and trip characteristics as well as the significant differences in their evaluations in order to help the destination marketers and planners better understand their customers.

Based on the given objectives, the following research questions have been built in order to guide the study. By answering these questions, the author aims to focus the research to the main defined objectives and narrow down the findings to accomplish the research goals:

1. What are the perceptions of visitors on the destination image of Hue?
2. What is the most successful imagery of Hue in terms of functional - psychological, common - unique and attribute - holistic dimensions?
3. To what extent do the tourists satisfy with the destination and which gaps need to be fulfilled?
4. To what extent are the tourists loyal to the destination of Hue?
5. How do destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty influence each other?

This thesis is an effort to measure the destination image of Hue, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty and above all to investigate the relationship among them as well as to empirically test the constructs that are likely to influence destination loyalty.

1.3 Study Framework and Hypotheses

One of the most commonly adopted approaches used to measure the destination image and tourist satisfaction is Expectancy-Disconfirmation theory. This paper uses the Importance-Performance Analysis - IPA (MARTILLA/JAMES 1977) which is part of the Expectation-Disconfirmation theory as the key tool to measure tourist satisfaction.

Furthermore, in order to inclusively measure the destination image of Hue, the destination image theory of ECHTNER/RITCHIE (2003) is also applied, with the combination of scale evaluation and open-ended questions as the sources of information gathered from tourists in Hue. This theory suggests that destination image consists of two main dimensions: attribute-based and holistic, in which each dimension contains functional and psychological characteristics.

Finally, the study employs CHI/QU's structure (2008: 631) to examine the relationship between destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

Based on the research objectives and theoretical framework, the following important hypotheses have been generated for this study:

H1:   Destination's general-image and attribute-images of Hue are positive to tourists;

H2:   Tourists' overall-satisfaction and attribute-satisfaction with the destination of Hue are positive;

H3:   Destination image has a positive influence on tourist satisfaction;

H4:   Destination image has a positive effect on destination loyalty;

H5:   Tourist's attribute-satisfaction is directly influenced by destination image;

H6:   Tourists' overall-satisfaction is determined by attribute-satisfaction;

H7:   Attribute-satisfaction is a direct antecedent of destination loyalty; and

H8:   Tourist satisfaction has a positive effect on destination loyalty.

1.4 Thesis Structure

The paper is divided into 9 chapters. Chapter 1 gives an introduction to the study and explains the background of the study, the research objectives, the key concepts and the outline of the research.

Chapter 2 is committed to providing a review of available literatures related to the concepts of destination image, destination attributes, tourist expectation and satisfaction as well as destination loyalty. The chapter also includes a discussion on the measurement of destination image and tourist satisfaction. Finally, the last sections of the chapter present important literatures about the interrelationship among destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed description of the research methodology, including the methods and techniques used in the study, the data collection (secondary data collection, expert interviews and questionnaire surveys), and finally data analysis.

Chapter 4 aims to answer the two main questions:

(1) What are the natural- socio-economic contexts that have driven tourism development in Hue?

(2) What is the current situation of the tourism development in Hue?

The chapter then offers an overview about the climate, history and culture, demographic and socio-economic structure of the city. Touristic attractions and official tourism statistical data of the destination are also presented and discussed thoroughly in

this chapter. In addition, the last section shows a glance on some challenges of Hue tourism.

Chapter 5 gives an overview about the structural characteristics of the surveyed respondents, including tourists' socio-demographic features, their origins as well as the characteristics of their trips.

Chapter 6 presents the first research findings, focusing on the tourism destination image of Hue. The chapter discusses the tourist's general impression about the destination of Hue, the measurement of importance-performance gaps of individual destination attribute-images, followed by a combination of different methods to measure the destination imagery of Hue in terms of attribute-holistic, functional-psychological, and common-unique dimensions.

Chapter 7 reveals the next research findings of the thesis, pointing out the results of tourist satisfaction measurement. The chapter presents and discusses the tourists' overall satisfaction with the destination of Hue. The key findings of this chapter are to measure the gaps between tourist expectation and satisfaction. In the end of the chapter, an analysis based on the importance-satisfaction grid showing the tourists' overall ratings of the importance and their satisfaction on the destination attributes also discloses importation implications for the destination planners and marketers.

Chapter 8 discusses destination loyalty and the important results from the analyses of the relationships between destination image and tourist satisfaction, tourists' attribute-satisfaction and overall-satisfaction, destination image and attribute-satisfaction, destination image and destination loyalty, attribute-satisfaction and destination loyalty, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

Finally, Chapter 9 presents the limitations of the research, significant findings, implications for Hue tourism and recommendations for further research. The chapter implicates important proposals for the development of cultural/heritage tourism in Hue in a way that can help the destination to gain the goals set in the Provincial Tourism Development Master Plan, with a focus on how to promote successfully the destination image to tourists and to enhance tourist satisfaction. The chapter is concluded with some important recommendations for further research.

2 Theoretical Background

A cautious and systematic overview of related literatures is an indispensable step for any successful researches. In this chapter, related documents have been logically indicated and discussed within the scope of the study's objectives.

The theoretical framework of the study focuses on the tourism destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. Accordingly, this chapter begins with the discussion of relevant terms used in the study and then provides more comprehensive discussion on tourism destination image and tourist satisfaction measurement. The last two sections of this chapter argue the relationship between destination attributes and tourist satisfaction as well as the relationship among destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

2.1 Relevant Definitions

In this section, the definitions of the key terms of this thesis including tourism destination, tourism destination attributes, tourism destination image, tourist expectation and satisfaction, and tourist loyalty will be concisely presented and discussed.

2.1.1 Tourism Destination

Tourism destination is one of the most used terms in the field of travel and tourism. There have been various understandings of the destination concept so far. In the early time, BURKART/MEDLIK (1974: 46) define the tourism destination as follows:

> "*This geographical unit visited by a tourist may be a self contained centre, a village or a town or a city, a district or a region, an island, a country or a continent. This geographical unit may be described as the tourist destination... The tourist destination, however defined geographically, provides a convenient focus for the examination of the tourist movement and of its manifold impact and significance. How important any geographical unit is as a tourist destination, or how it is*

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potentially, is determined by three prime factors: attractions, accessibility and amenities which may be termed the tourist qualities of a destination."

This definition is reviewed in this study because it focuses nearly all the perspectives of a tourist destination which have been discussed later on by many researchers.

Later, LEIPER (1995: 87) simply defines tourism destination as places which people travel to and where they choose to stay for a while in order to experience certain features or characteristics of a perceived attraction of some sort.

UNWTO (2007: 13) defines tourism destination as *"a physical space in which a tourist spends at least one overnight"*. In this regard, destination includes tourism products such as supportive services and attractions and tourist resources within one day's return travel time. The UNWTO's definition is broad and covers all aspects of a tourism destination such as tourism services, tourist attractions, tourism resources and physical space.

To be more specific, tourism destination is understood as a mix of tourism products, experiences and other intangible components which are promoted to the visitors. According to COOOPER et al. (1998, cited by BUHALIS 2000: 98), destination is a focus of facilities and services designed to meet the needs of the tourists.

Regarding the physical space, destination normally has physical and administrative boundaries defining its management, and images and perceptions defining its market competitiveness. Local destinations incorporate various stakeholders often including a host community, and can nest and network to form larger destinations. Destinations could be on any scale, from a continent (e.g. Australia), a country (e.g. Germany), a region (e.g. Spanish 'Costas') or island (e.g. Bali), to a city, a town or a village or a self-contained centre (e.g. Disneyland). (UNWTO 2007: 14)

Concerning the elements of a tourism destination, MILL/MORRISON (1992: 263) state that:

> *"At a destination, there is a mix of interdependent elements. The elements are interdependent, because in order to produce a satisfying vacation experience, all elements must be present. The destination is composed of: attractions – facilities – infrastructure – transportation – hospitality."*

Nevertheless, another statement of the UNWTO (2007: 13-14) on the elements of destination is more prefered by the researchers due to its integrated characteristics. In this sense, destination *"contains a number of basic elements which attract the visitor to the destination and which satisfy their needs on arrival"*. These basic elements can be broken down into *attractions*, *amenities*, *accessibility*, *image*, *price* and *human resources*. The provision and performance of these important elements will influence the visitor's decisions in making their trip.

In order to attract tourists, destinations should respond to the basic travel demands of customers such as cost, convenience and timeliness. For this particular type of service buyer, they weigh the cost against the value of a destination (KOTLER et al. 2003: 724-727). Travel costs include money, time, and effort in exchange with education, experience, recreation, relaxation and good memories that consumer get from a destination. The convenience in tourism has various implications such as time spending to gain necessary information, language barriers, cleanliness and environmental concerns, accessibility and specific needs. Other critical elements also have an effect on the destination such as socio-political issues, risk and crimes.

In addition, tourism destinations need to reconsider their positioning compared to other competitors to prepare for short-term demand shocks and long-term shifts of traveler flows. In the past, a narrow focus on attracting the maximum number of budget tourists in the market had very strong growth. However, this focus brings about extensive risks, including break-neck competition, environmental exploitation, and unhealthy investment bubbles. (RINGBECK/PIETSCH 2013: 43)

2.1.2 Tourism Destination Attributes

Destination choice of the tourist has been of great concern to tourism researchers (PIKKEMAAT 2004, OMERZEL 2006, NICOLAU/MAS 2004) and many other studies are possibly added to this file.

There are so many factors affecting the destination choice process of a tourist, but generally, the choice of a tourist destination is determined by two categories of factors, namely *pull factors* and *push factors* (PIKKEMART 2004: 90).

- Pull factors are mainly composed of attributes associated with the destination such as distance, type of destination, infrastructure, size of area, type of vegetation and activities in the destination (LAM/HSU 2006: 590). Also, it is accepted that pull factors could be grouped as tangible and intangible attributes (PIKKEMAAT 2004: 90, LAM/HSU 2006: 591).

- While pull factors imply destination related attributes, push factors contain personal motives that push individuals from home. It has been stated that most push factors derive from individual's intangible or intrinsic desires, such as desire for escape, adventure seeking, dream fulfillment, novelty seeking, rest and relaxation, health and fitness, prestige, and socialization (LAM/HSU 2006: 590)

BALOGLU/UYSAL (1996) argue that the concept of product bundles is used to refer to the perceived importance of the interaction between push and pull factors. This implies that certain reasons for travel may correspond to certain benefits that are to be valued and obtained at the destination site. Thus, marketers and destination promoters in tourism should keep in mind that most successful tourism destination are those which respond best to a bundle of needs within a given market segment, and should give more marketing efforts to matching tourism destination attributes to the tourists' needs and wants.

On the supply side, tourism destination attributes are understood as a set of components that describe a place as a tourism destination (HEUNG/QUF 2000). BUHALIS (2000: 98) suggests that destinations comprise several components and they are classified into six headings called 6A's framework following the first letter of each heading, namely:

- *Attractions* represent natural, hand-made, artificial buildings, special events;
- *Accessibility* refers to the entire transportation system, terminals and vehicles;
- *Amenities* indicate accommodation, catering, retailing and other tourism services;
- *Available packages* represent pre-arranged packages by intermediaries and principals;
- *Activities* are all the activities could be done by tourists while they are at the destination; and finally,
- *Ancillary services* mention to banking, telecommunications, posts and hospitals, etc.

More specifically, researchers usually use the common destination attributes namely: (1) *culture, history*, (2) *landscape*, (3) *services*, (4) *entertainment*, (5) *relaxation*, (6)

climate, (7) *price,* (8) *safety*, (9) *community and hospitality*, (10) *events and activities*, (11) *accessibility*, (12) *adventure* and (13) *wild life or environment* (ECHTNER/RITCHIE 2003, OLIMPIA, JORGENSEN 2004). However, these attributes do not always appear and be used in the same level of importance in specific destination because: in one hand, not all destinations share the same attributes, and on the other hand, tourists always have their own perception of the particular destinations.

Destination attributes play an important role in tourists' valuation of the attractiveness, image, and satisfaction of a particular destination. In a narrower scope, due to the research objectives this study also tries to identify cultural/heritage destination attributes which satisfy tourists when they visit cultural/ heritage destinations:

- PELEGGI (1996) examines the relevance of Thailand's heritage attractions to both international and domestic tourism, including an analysis on the state tourism agency's promotion of heritage and the ideological implications of heritage sightseeing in relation to the official historical narrative. This research finds that traditional villages, monuments, museums, and temples are typical attributes of Thai heritage tourism.

- In a study on cultural tourism in Demark, ANDERSEN et al. (1997) choose a number of attributes to have evaluated by visitors such as historical buildings, museums, galleries, theaters, festivals and events, shopping, food, palaces, famous people, castles, sports, and old towns. They discover that the most important attributes to tourists' decision to visit Denmark are castles, gardens, museums, and historical buildings.

- SOFIELD/LI (1998) learn the cultural tourism of China by choosing history, culture, traditional festivals, historical events, beautiful scenic heritage, historical sites, architecture, folk arts (music, dancing, craft work) and folk culture villages as the attributes of significance.

- A research of BUI (2011) states that the destination attributes playing important roles in tourists' choice of Vietnam are: cheap purchases, exotic food, interesting local lifestyles, rich culture, historical relics, world heritage sites, beautiful architectural buildings, beautiful landscapes and beaches, cultural festivals and events, friendly people, political stability, good climate, close to other destinations.

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- Recently, a cultural tourism research in London (HPI 2014) confirms that the destination attracts tourists simply because of its culture with historic buildings, famous places, museums, galleries and theatres. For first-time tourists, the 'must see list' includes iconic places like Buckingham Palace, Big Ben, Piccadilly Circus, the Tower of London, and National Gallery, etc.

- In a discussion about the attributes that effectively contribute to the attractiveness of Thailand, a recent research finds that these attributes are categorized in five dimensions, i.e. functional, social, emotional, epistemic and conditional. The *functional dimension includes* the fascination of cheap purchases, exotic food, historical places, friendship, virgin tropical rural regions, and gorgeous sights. The *social dimension* is the convenience in all categories for tourists. The emotional *dimension* consists of calm and relations. The *epistemic dimension* is cultural experience and climate. Finally, the *conditional dimension comprises* proximity, cheap travel and accessibility to other close destinations (OLIMPIA 554-559).

To sum up, it can be concluded that destination attributes have a strong relationship with tourist satisfaction. Recent researches have mostly focused on attribute-level conceptualization of satisfaction; and in this approach, satisfaction is the function of attribute-level evaluation (EUSÉBIO/VIEIRA 2013).

2.1.3 Tourism Destination Image

It is necessary to understand the concept "*image*" before examining the definitions of tourism destination image. PEARCE (1998: 162) states that *"image is one of those terms that won't go away… a term with vague and shifting meanings"*. The term "*image*" has been used broadly in various contexts and disciplines with different meanings:

- In psychology, the concept of image comes with the visual representation such as charts, graphs, icons.

- In behavioral geography the definition of image is more holistic which includes impressions, knowledge, emotions, belief, values and so on.

- From the marketing view, image is associated with the attributes that underlie image and there is always a connection between image and consumer behavior.

Normally, image has been described in a number of methods: as a person's set of principles, opinions and impressions concerning an object, a consideration of all knowledge gained from diverse channels or an intellectual implication the person has about something outside material perception (AKSOY/KIYCI 2011: 478).

Destination image is one of the most investigated and examined concepts in the analysis of modern tourism (PAN/XIANG 2011). Destination image has become a popular field of study among tourism researchers since it has been proved to have influences on tourist's destination choice, satisfaction, and post-purchase behavior (CHON 1990, UM/CROMPTON 1990, ECHTNER/RITCHIE 1991, OPPERMANN 2000, BIGNÉ at al. 2001, ECHTNER/RITCHIE 2003, CHEN/TSAI 2007, CASTRO et al. 2007, CHI/QU 2008, PRAYAG 2009, ZHANG et al. 2014). The term "*destination image*" has been conceptualized and defined by numerous studies. However, defining an exact meaning of the term "*destination* image" is somewhat problematic. More than twenty years ago, ECHTNER/RITCHIE (1991: 2) stated that many of the definitions on destination image used in previous studies are quite vague and this statement is still valid up to now.

Past definitions of destination image are numerous but there is no consensus and officially recognized definition for 'destination image' so far. Table 2.1 shows some typical definitions of destination image among different researchers.

Upon the examination of "*destination image*" definitions, it is obvious that many of these definitions are quite ambiguous.

In the simplest approach, HUNT (1975: 1) defines destination image as the impressions that a person holds about a region in which he or she does not reside. Another author considered destination image as "*the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination*" (CROMPTON 1979: 18).

Similarly, KOTLER/GERTNER (2004: 42) state that: "*...images represent a simplification of a larger number of associations and pieces of information connected to a place. Destination image is a product of the mind trying to process and pick out essential information from huge amounts of data about a place*". Thus each person's imagery of a destination is distinctive, including their own memories, associations and imaginations of that place (JENKINS/MCARTHUR 1996: 11).

Table 2.1: Definitions of destination image used by researchers

	Definitions
REYNOLDS (1965: 69)	A complex and selective mental processes carried out by individuals from a flood of selected impressions.
HUNT (1975: 1)	Perceptions held by potential visitors about an area.
CROMPTON (1979: 18)	Sum of belief, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination.
CALANTONE et al. (1989: 25)	Perceptions of potential tourist destinations.
FONT (1997: 124)	Set of belief, ideas, and impressions that the public holds of the named product, and to some extent it is part of the product.
MURPHY et al. (2000: 45)	A sum of associations and pieces of information connected to a destination, which would include multiple components of the destination and personal perception.
BIGNÉ et al. (2001)	The subjective interpretation of reality made by the tourist.
KIM/RICHARDSON (2003: 218)	A totality of impressions, beliefs, ideas, expectations, and feelings accumulated toward a place over time
AHMED et al. (2006: 59)	What tourists think or perceive about a state as a destination, its tourism resources, its tourism services, the hospitality of its hosts, its social and cultural norms, and its rules and regulations which influence their consumer behavior.
BIGNÉ et al. (2009: 2)	All that the destination evokes in the individual; any idea, belief, feeling or attitude that tourists associate with the place.

Source: Adapted from MATOS (2012: 109) and MARTIN/BOSQUE (2008: 264).

The term "*destination image*" is frequently described as simply "*impressions of a place*" or "*perceptions of an area*". Simply understanding, destination image is considered as a set of complex mental impressions and total feelings that a potential tourist holds of a product, place or tourism destination (FARIAS et al. 2013: 36). Hence, the image visitors have of a destination is principally subjective because it is based on the perception each

tourist has of a place where they have been to or have heard of (SAN MARTIN/RODRIGUEZ 2008: 267).

Destination image has been one of the fundamental areas of tourism study for more than three and a half decades. To be successful, destinations need to promote their cities, countries, places in a way that communicates the destination image to their potential customers (KAVOURA 2014).

In the decade of 1970's, destination image was first recognized as a critical factor in tourist's destination choice process (MAYO 1975: 15). In recent time, many studies have proved a strong relationship between destination image and tourists' decision-making process. Especially, many researchers have noticed that tourists are probably choosing the destinations which have positive and distinctive images. GOODALL (1992: 3-4) states that when other factors such as prices are similar among destinations, then destination image is the decisive element in holiday choice of visitors. Therefore, destination image is supposed to have a stronger influence on the visitors' choice of destination, as compared with other factors such as behavioral and socio-demographic (LEE et al. 2006: 817-818). HANKINSON (2004: 7) sums up the importance of destination image as follows:

> "*In an increasingly competitive market therefore, destination marketers must seek a fuller understanding of the nature of images held by both individuals and organizations in order to build more favorable brand images and thereby enhance a destination's attractiveness and economic development.*"

Destination marketers are interested in the concept of tourism destination image mainly because it directly links to the visitors' decision-making and the sales of tourist products and services. MAC INNIS/PRICE (1987: 474-475) suggest that destination image appears in the overall consumption experience of a tourist. Before purchasing a vacation, indirect consumption may happen through destination image. During vacation, imagery of a place can add value and increase satisfaction to a tourist. After the trip, destination image can have a reconstructive role in which people recall the experience through memories and local souvenirs. GALLARZA et al. (2002: 56) affirm that *"the importance of the tourist destination's image is universally acknowledged, it affects the individual's subjective perception and consequent behavior and destination choice"*.

2.1.4 Tourist Expectation

Tourists usually have initial expectations on a service before they consume it. Generally, expectation can be defined as performance of establishment, ideal performance or desired performance (TEAS 1994: 134).

For first-time consumer, expectations are formed through information from advertisements and word-of-mouth perceptions from other consumers; meanwhile, expectations of a repeating consumer of service would rely more on the influence of past experience than sources of information (AKAMA/KIETI 2003, cited by LATHER et al. 2012: 6). This proposal fits also to tourism destination as the destination has to distinguish first-time tourists and repeating guests as well.

RODRIGUEZ et al. (2006: 414) argue that tourist expectations are shaped by past experience, the tourist's level of previous satisfaction with the service, communication from the service provider such as promises and the tourist's perceived image of the service. This experience background may come from any other destinations or services – not necessarily from the actual one.

Tourist expectations are important to understand due to the effects on tourists' destination choices, good and service consumption and revisit decision (STEVENS 1992: 46). SIMPSON (2000: 9) points out that expectation may determine tourist experiences because every tourist has a unique plan prior to her/his visit. Accordingly, understanding tourist expectations will give noteworthy suggestions in developing destination attractiveness and improving tourism services. Unfortunately, expectation research is one of the most crucial tools used to collect information regarding tourists' opinions of a destination before they visit. It is defined as not only the visitor's perceptions of individual destination attributes but also the holistic impression made by the destination.

2.1.5 Tourist satisfaction

The extent to which tourist expectations are met or exceeded decides the level of tourist satisfaction (AKAMA/KIETI 2003). This means, if the overall performance of tourism services meets or exceeds expectation, the tourist is considered satisfied; on the other hand, if the performance is below the tourist expectation, satisfaction level is considered

low or non-existent. It is worth mentioning that tourism satisfaction is considered a central concept in tourism (CHEN/TSAI 2007, PRAYAG 2009) since it has power over the tourist's choice of a destination, the consumption of products and services and the decision to return (KOZAK/RIMMINGTON 2000, ARMARIO 2008). Accordingly, tourist satisfaction is a key indicator to measure how good the services are delivered (PREBEŽAC/MIKULIĆ 2008).

Many studies suggested that it is important to differentiate overall destination satisfaction and attribute satisfaction on the destination level (BIGNE et al. 2001, CASTRO et al. 2007, FAULLANT et al. 2008, CHI/QU 2008). Tourist satisfaction with individual attribute of the destination leads to their satisfaction with the overall destination. Satisfaction with various components of the destination leads to overall satisfaction (KOZAK/RIMMINGTON 2000: 266). Overall satisfaction with a hospitality experience is a function of satisfactions with the individual destination attributes that make up the experience, such as cultural attractions, accommodation, weather, people, natural environment, social environment, etc.

Many studies in tourism field confirm that satisfaction has an influence on tourists' future behavioral intention (BAKER/CROMPTON 2000, PETRICK 2004, CHEN/TSAI 2007, CHI/QU 2008, PRAYAG/RYAN 2012). Positive tourism experiences provided by the destination could induce positive word-of-mouth, recommendations as well as visit repetition (OPPERMANN 2000, YOON/UYSAL 2005, CHI/QU 2008).

Although there is a common agreement about the importance of customer satisfaction at the destination level, the definition of the concept still remains diverse. One of the most quoted definitions is given by OLIVER who states that satisfaction is defined as pleasurable fulfillment (GIESE/COTE 2000: 1). This means the tourists feel that the consumption fulfils their needs or desires in a pleasurable manner.

LÜCK (2011) empirically evaluates satisfaction based on the function of two components: the importance of products or services and their performance. At the destination level, an indirect relationship between the importance of destination attributes and their performance is suggested by RYAN/HUYTON (2002) and GRIFFIN/EDWARDS (2013). At the same time tourists may perceive better performance for those attributes which they consider more important. Thus, it is supposed that tourist

satisfaction can be affected directly by the performance of destination attributes and indirectly by its importance. That means, each empirical survey dealing with tourist satisfaction has to record the relevance of individual destination attributes. If tourists do not rate the attributes as relevance to them – lower or just at "average level" – their valuations have to be excluded from the analyses.

Since perspectives of satisfaction and expectation are always based on the individual perceptions and every tourist has their own personal opinion which differs from one tourist to another, expectation and satisfaction level aspects are somewhat hard to predict. It becomes challenging to produce a perfect service where the expectation and satisfaction levels of more than one tourist can be ensured. However, with appropriate marketing strategies and the provision of the suitable tourism services, a destination may attain the success in pleasing different kinds of tourists.

2.1.6 Tourist Loyalty

Loyal customer is defined as a person who is interested in re-buying from the same service provider and recommends it to others by word-of-mouth (LIU et al. 2012). OLIVER (1999: 34) defines loyalty *"...as a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same-brand-set purchasing, despite marketing efforts to cause switching behavior"*.

Loyalty seems to deliver a win-win situation:

- Loyalty is important for customers as it helps them spend minimum time and effort to search, locate, and evaluate alternative purchases.
- Loyalty is extremely important for companies because loyal customers are one of the most crucial factors in achieving business goals with their low sensitivity toward the price and positive word of mouth about the service provider (YANG/PETERSON 2004).

In terms of destination competitiveness, tourist loyalty has been considered one of the most important aspects since it is a very useful promotional tool without paying any marketing costs.

YOON/UYSAL (2005) stress that tourist destinations can be considered as a product which can be resold (revisited) and recommended to others (friends and family who are potential tourists). And loyalty towards a destination is ordinarily understood as the intention for repeat visits by tourists and the degree by which a tourist destination is possibly recommended to friends or family members. Intention to return, actual repeat visitation, and willingness to recommend the destination are behavioral factors that measure tourists' loyalty to a destination (PRITCHARD/HOWARD 1997, OPPERMANN 2000, KIM/CROMPTON 2002, YOON/UYSAL 2005, CASTRO et al. 2007, CHI/QU 2008).

Based on the previous researches in customer loyalty, it is supposed that the determinants of customer loyalty may include: customer satisfaction, customer experience, value, service quality or performance, product superiority, personal fortitude, social bonding and synergy, price, risk, brand name, demographics, habits and history of brand usage.

Several studies have supported the idea that satisfaction leads to loyalty (ZEITHAML et al. 1996, HEITMANN et al. 2007, FRANGOS et al. 2014), and tourist satisfaction towards a destination has a huge impact to destination loyalty. If tourists are satisfied with a destination, they are likely to visit that destination again and spread positive words of mouth to their family members, relatives and friends (YOON/UYSAL 2005, CHEN/TSAI 2007).

Furthermore, it is also confirmed that destination loyalty is also strongly influenced by destination image (MECHINDA et al. 2010).

To date, tourist destinations are facing very tough competition therefore destination's marketing managers need to learn why tourists are faithful to a destination and what determines their loyalty. In addition, the retention and maintenance of existing customers cost less than the acquisition of new customers (REICHHELD 1996, cited by ZHANG 2014: 213). Therefore, managing customer relationship and increasing customer loyalty have been a topic of strategic significance for any organizations and destinations.

2.2 Destination Image: Components and Formation

As destination image decisively affects tourists' destination choice, destinations - with the aim of attaining sustainable competitive advantage for the travel and tourism sector -

have to find out and identify the key distinctive attributes of the tourist destination and build an image that is appealing to visitors (GLINSKA/FLOREK 2013), develop in a way that matches the evolving tourists' preferences and creates a positive impact on their loyalty behavior. (MOREIRA/IAO 2014: 92)

2.2.1 Components of Destination Image

Regarding the internal structure of a destination image, there are several models which have been proposed. MILMAN/PIZAM (1995: 21) start with a simple suggestion: A destination image consists of three components: (1) *the product*; (2) *the behavior and attitude* of the host; and (3) *the environment* such as weather, scenery, and facilities.

Meanwhile, many researchers suggest that destination image is a multi-faceted, composite construct which contains interrelated *cognitive* and *affective* evaluation woven into overall impression (WALMSLEY/YOUNG 1998, BALOGLU/MCCLEARY 1999, STEPCHENKOVA/MORRISON 2006, LIN et al. 2007, MARTIN/BOSQUE 2008). In which, the cognitive component refers to the beliefs and knowledge a tourist hold of the destination attributes while the affective component suggests the feelings and emotions raised by tourist destinations and it is strongly affected by the motivations of tourists. It is also important to note that the cognitive component of the image has a significant impact on the affective component (STERN/KRAKOVER 1993, LIN et al. 2007, RYAN/COVE 2007). The socio-demographic characteristics of tourists also significantly influence the cognitive and affective evaluation of the overall image (BEERLI/MARTÍN 2004).

MATOS et al. (2012: 111) provide the structure of destination image with different wording that destination image has two major components:

- *controllable forces* (induced image) which is represented by variables such as external stimuli, promotion activities, access routes, infrastructure.
- *uncontrollable forces* (organic image) represented by personal factors such as motivation, past travel experience and external stimuli such as residents, time and space distance and service providers.

Both these forces allow tourists to develop the mental construct leading to the formation of induced and organic images and these images let the tourists create and structure the stimulus perceived. The destination image is then formed as a result of the insight that

the tourists absorbed about the destination (cognitive component), the feelings developed towards the destination (affective component) and the tourists' intention or behavior in the future. After that, an overall image comprehending functional and psychological characteristics of destination is created by tourists themselves.

With another approach, destination image is divided into two main dimensions: *attribute-based* and *holistic*; and each dimension contains *functiona*l and *psychological* characteristics (BALOGLU/MCCLEARY 1999: 871, ECHTNER/RITCHIE 2003: 41-43). GOVERS/GO (2003: 15) add that destination images can also "*range from those based on 'common' functional and psychological traits to those based on more distinctive or even unique features, events, feelings or auras*". However, the common/unique dimensions of destination image presented by ECHTNER/RITCHIE (2003: 43) is important but often ignored *(see figure 2.1)*.

In fact, tourists are motivated to visit somewhere unique or at least different to their everyday surroundings. Common functional attributes are comparable traits such as price, climate, and types of accommodation. Unique functional attributes consist of the icons and special events that form part of a destination image, such as cultural heritages and local traditional festivals. For instance, common psychological attributes include the friendliness of the local people, whereas unique psychological attributes include feelings associated holy lands.

According to the theory of ECHTNER/RITCHIE (2003), destination image is not only the perceptions of separate destination attributes but also the holistic destination impression. Destination image includes functional characteristics, which concern to the more tangible aspects of the destination, and psychological characteristics, which in contrast refer to the more intangible aspects.
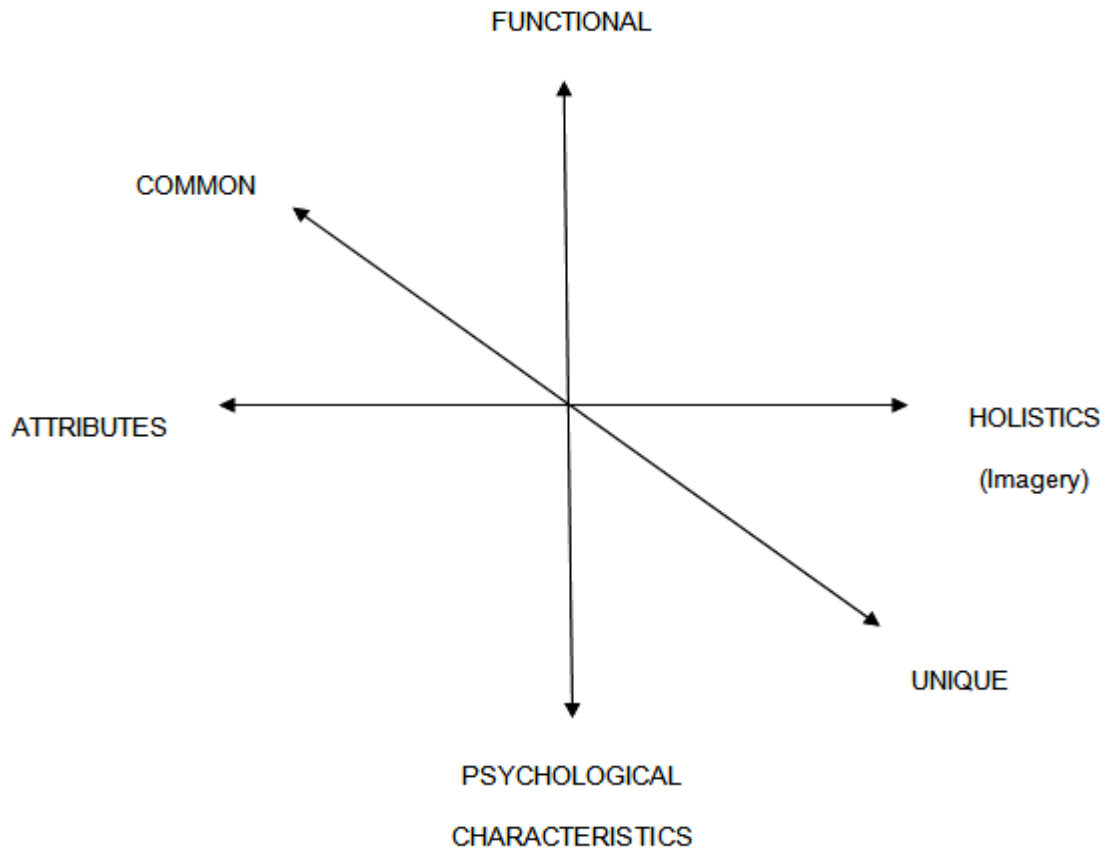
Figure2.1: The components of destination image (Source: ECHTNER/RITCHIE 2003: 40)

In this study, the destination image dimensions of ECHTNER/RITCHIE (2003) are applied in measuring the destination image of Hue, with the combination of scale evaluation and open-ended questions as the sources of information gathered from tourists in Hue.

2.2.2 Destination Image Formation

Many researchers have investigated the factors influencing the formation of destination image. According to ECHTNER/RITCHIE (2003: 38-39), the formation of destination image is not a simple process, in which tourists develop a mental construction based on a few selected impressions recollected from a bunch of impressions.

Destination image can be determined by a wide variety of factors. In the early development stage of building a theoretical framework, GUNN's seven-stage theories (1972: 120) were quite useful. The theories cover a continuous building and modifying of image, which are made up from three types of image: *organic image* formed by naive non-tourist information about the destination, *induced image* formed by promoted

information, and *modified induced image* – the result of personal experience of the destination. GUNN'S seven-stage theories also imply that the images held by potential visitors, non-visitors and returned visitors are different.

Later on, STABLER (1998: 137) confirms that destination image formation is determined partly by *demand* and *supply* factors, in which the demand factors will form the organic image, whereas the supply factors will create the induced image.

Shortly afterwards, BALOGLU/MCCLEARY (1999: 871) design a PATH model to explain the process of forming the image towards a tourist destination. The model shows that *sources of information*, *age* and *level of education* are factors influencing the cognitive and perceptual assessment. BEERLI/MARTIN (2004: 658) agree with these authors, suggesting that personal factors along with the different information sources will impact on the perceived destination image.

Other authors suggest that *psychological factors* such as tourist's motivation and cultural values are powerfully impacting to the formation of the tourist destination image even before the place is visited (MARTIN/RODRIGUEZ 2008: 264). According to ECHTNER/RITCHIE (2003: 39), tourists can still have an image of a destination even if the tourists have never been exposed to any forms of commercial information or they have never visited the destination before. This means that the information gathered from non-commercial sources such as historical, political, economic and social aspects is incorporated into the foundation of destination image. Meanwhile, the information obtained by tourists from a promotional effort of the destination will provide tourists with images of the places (through advertising literature, magazine articles, guidebooks, television promotion, package tours) and these images are considered as induced images (GUNN 1988, MOLINA et al. 2010). In this perspective, promotional activities play an essential role in the formation of the tourist's destination-induced image. It can be concluded that the organic image is beyond the control of the destination, but the induced image is directly formed by the destination's marketing efforts (AHMED et al. 2006).

The process of destination image formation points out two important things:

- Firstly, it suggests that people can have an image of a destination even if they have never visited it before.

- Secondly, as there are changes in destination image before and after visitation, it is desirable to separate the images of persons who have visited and those who have not.

In short, destination image is one of the most important elements of a tourist destination because it influences tourists' travel decision-making, cognition and behavior at a destination as well as satisfaction levels and destination loyalty. It is proved that a destination with a strong image is easier to differentiate from its competitors (SÖNMEZ/SIRAKAYA 2002: 185). However, it is difficult for tourists to obtain a clear image of a destination without having visited it before (GOVERS/GO 2003: 15). In this context, there are three factors that determine the destination image in potential tourists' mind: (1) *tourism motivations*, (2) *social-demographic characteristics* and (3) *information about the destination* (BEERLİ/MARTIN 2004: 626-627). Concerning early information about the destination, GOVERS/GO (2005: 79) indicate that social networks on the internet play a significant role as a source of destination information for potential tourists, making it possible for potential tourists to configure a stronger and lighter image of a destination.

2.3 Tourist Satisfaction Measurement

One of the key objectives of this study is to identify the cultural/heritage destination attributes which influence tourists' satisfaction in Hue. Therefore, this research is based on a consumer behavior model, which hypothesizes that consumer satisfaction is a function of both expectations related to certain attributes, and judgments on the performance of these attributes.

Customer satisfaction measurement is a post-purchase evaluation that involves more than one standard of comparison. Different approaches have been used to measure customer satisfaction and these approaches have also been applied to tourist satisfaction researches. For example, Expectation-Perception Gap Model - SERVQUAL (PARASURAMAN et al. 1985: 41), Congruity Model (SIRGY 1984: 27), and Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory (OLIVER 1981: 460). The Expectancy-Disconfirmation Theory by OLIVER (1981) is one of the most commonly applied approaches used to study the satisfaction of tourists. The core concept of this theory is that consumers develop

expectations about a product or service before purchasing it and subsequently they compare actual performance with those expectations. If the performance is better than the expectations, the tourist will have a positive disconfirmation, which means that they are satisfied and they will be more willing to repeat the purchase. In contrast, if the performance is worse than the expectations, the consumer will have a negative disconfirmation, which means that they are unsatisfied and as a result they might look for alternative destinations for their next trip.

However, there are some critical points in the use of expectations in several tourist satisfaction surveys:

- It is difficult to evaluate tourist expectations in reality (CASARIN/ANDREANI 2003) because: (1) tourists normally build up their expectations before the trip but the evaluation of the expectations at the destination may lead to a distortion of the data and (2) tourists might not remember exactly the expectations they had before the trip.

- The evaluation on the performance perceptions at the destination when the interaction with the services does not finish yet may lead to a misrepresentation of the data as well.

- In empirical analysis, it is very difficult to have two different evaluations of the expectations - before the trip, and performance - after being back (PIZAM/MILMAN 1993).

One suggested solution is to use only the actual perceived performance to avoid any kinds of comparative element (TSE/WILTON 1988, FUCHS/WEIERMAIR 2003). Upon this approach, the assessment of tourist satisfaction with their experience is considered separately from their expectations. In this way, all the methodological problems related to the evaluation of expectations are avoided, but at the same time, it is impossible to interpret high levels of satisfaction as the result of low expectations or superior quality of service provider (FUCHS/WEIERMAIR 2003).

By reviewing related literature, it is noticed that tourist surveys are useful and reliable only if they are carefully designed and managed. In addition to the conceptual framework and the theoretical background, decisions in sample design, interview method, timing and placing are all extremely important issues in tourism satisfaction

surveys. This thesis goes back to an old and official model: Importance-Performance Analysis - IPA (MARTILLA/JAMES 1977) - part of the expectation-disconfirmation branch of literature- as a tool to measure tourist satisfaction.

IPA involves assessment of different aspects of an organization's features in terms of customers' perceptions of the performance and of the importance of that performance. Normally, such features are represented in a 2x2 grid, where each quadrant can be summarized into a specific implication for management *(see figure 2.2)*.
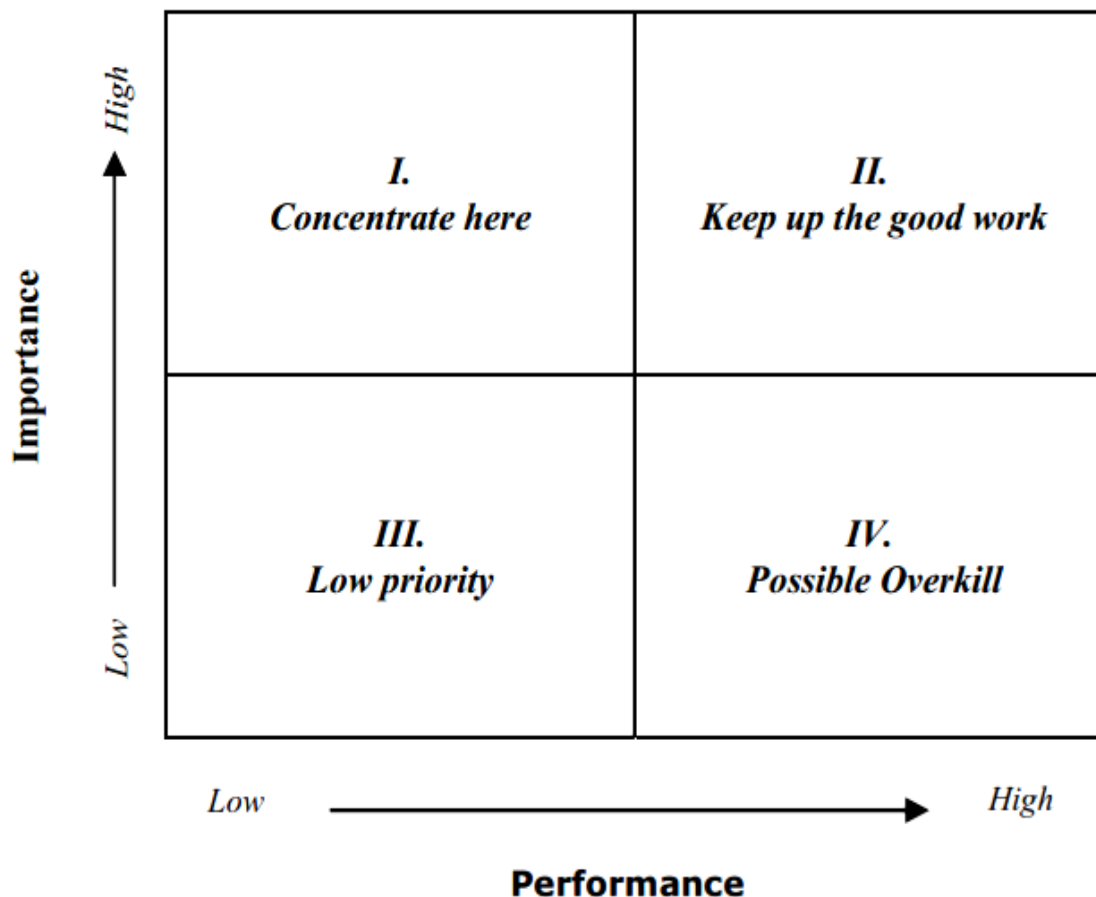
Figure 2.2: The IPA Scheme (Source: Adopted from MARTILLA/JAMES 1977: 78)

In more detailed, each quadrant has specific meanings and implications as follows:

- *"Concentrate here"* quadrant: Poor performance on extremely important dimensions indicates high priority of intervention for improvement.
- *"Keep up the good work"* quadrant: Excellent performance on highly important attributes represents opportunities for gaining or maintaining a competitive advantage.

- *"Possible overkill"* quadrant: Slightly important attributes that are excellent in performance implies that resources should be better employed elsewhere.
- *"Low priority"* quadrant: Fair performance on slightly important features suggests that it may not be necessary to concentrate additional efforts to these attributes.

In this model, the positioning of the vertical and horizontal axes on the grid is a matter of judgment (MARTILLA/JAMES 1977, BACON 2003); especially, the point where placed the quadrant lines cross is unstable: sometimes in the centre of the scale used and sometimes at the centre of data. In this study, the cross-point is located at the mean importance and mean performance values. Such an approach is consistent with ideas given by MARTILLA/JAMES (1977:79) in their seminal work, which argue that *"the value of this approach is in identifying relative than absolute levels of importance and performance"*.

The IPA is well recognized in the marketing literature as a tool in line with the expectations-performance approach to measure satisfaction (MATZLER et al. 2003) and it is usually used to provide solutions for strategic marketing decisions. It has been argued that for tourist destinations with rather little market research experience, the IPA in its purest form can be used as a very powerful tool in marketing planning.

2.4 The Relationship between Destination Attributes and Tourist Satisfaction

There is a need to examine the relationship between destination attributes and tourist satisfaction from the tourist's perspective in order to gain an in-depth understanding of tourists' perceptions after they visit the destinations. A good understanding of tourist satisfaction requires the evaluation of not only the overall satisfaction level, but also of satisfaction with specific attributes. Theoretically, it is important to measure consumer satisfaction with each attribute of the destination since consumer's dissatisfaction/satisfaction with one of the attributes influences the overall satisfaction with the destination. Hence, the role of each attribute contributing to the overall impression should be investigated (PIZAM et al. 1978, KOZAK/RIMINGTON 2000). This

knowledge would enable destination managers to prioritize attributes and distribute resources in an effective and efficient way in order to enhance the overall satisfaction.

It is suggested that there is an indirect relationship between the importance of attributes and their performance (RYAN/HUYTON 2002, GRIFFIN/EDWARDS 2013). The importance of a destination attribute is the result of the its performance (MATZLER et al. 2004) and the performance then influences the overall satisfaction.

Many studies in different contexts were carried out with the aim to discover the attributes that affect the tourist satisfaction, for examples:

- MASTER/PRIDEAUX (2000: 448) examine the role of culture and its influence on Taiwanese tourist satisfaction with South East Queensland. The findings concluded that the culture does not play a major role in determining the satisfaction of Taiwanese tourists. On the contrary, tourism facilities and services are the most important determinants of the holiday satisfaction. Furthermore, the tourists also tolerate the cross-cultural distinction and they do not evaluate the overall satisfaction based on this cross-cultural difference.

- KOZAK (2002: 235) investigates the attributes that affect the satisfaction of German and British backpacker tourists visiting Majorca (Spain) and Mugla (Turkey). The findings suggest that the impact of an attribute on the overall tourist satisfaction is influenced by multiple attributes including accommodation services, local transport services, hygiene and sanitation, hospitality and customer care, facilities and activities, price levels, language and communication and airport services.

- TRUONG/KING (2009: 532) with the research on satisfaction evaluation among Chinese tourists in Vietnam finds that the most important attributes that affect the satisfaction of the Chinese tourists with the destination of Vietnam include scenic beauty, interesting history and culture, friendliness of local people, overall safety and security, quality and variety of restaurants, accommodation, shopping facilities and entertainment facilities, price of food, beverages, souvenirs and gifts purchased.

- HASEGAWA (2010: 94-95) in his study on the satisfaction of the tourists who visited Hokkaido (Japan) concludes that scenic beauty and meals are the two

attributes that have the largest influence on the overall satisfaction of the tourists. In addition, souvenir items, accommodation, services, transportation facilities, and tourist facilities also influence tourist satisfaction.

- HUANG/SARIGÖLLÜ (2008: 944-948) with an investigation on tourist satisfaction in Latin America argue that there are core and secondary attributes of the destination affecting the tourist satisfaction. The core attributes are the fun and sun, ecotourism, outdoor adventure, sea sport and entertainment. Meanwhile, the secondary attributes represent the infrastructure and services, safety, convenience and cost.

- According to ALEGRE/GARAU's study (2010: 59), the negative destination attributes significantly cause the dissatisfaction among the German, Briton and Spaniard tourists in Majorca (Spain) include too much building/destruction of the landscape, too much development/too commercial, too many people, noise, too much traffic, lack of nature, expensive, sports facilities and infrastructure, problems at the airport, dirtiness (beaches, street etc.), signposting on highways and/or places of interest, lack of professionalism in services outside the hotel, and road conditions.

- Recently, ATHULA (2015: 17) with a survey on international tourists visiting Sri Lanka finds that even though the tourists are satisfied and like to behave positively towards the destination, a considerable number of tourists are dissatisfied and developed negative perceptions about certain attributes of the destination such as poor road conditions and traffic, behavior of the local vendors, less entertainment and recreational facilities, poor communication skills of the employees, behavior of the beach boys, price discrimination and behavior of the custom and airport staff.

To date, there have been very few studies that identify the relationship between destination attributes and tourist satisfaction in Vietnam generally and in Hue particularly. Hence, this study, as an effort to explore what attributes satisfy the tourists to Hue, is expected to provide some scientific insights for local tourism planners and marketers to help them develop effective strategies to enhance tourist satisfaction with Hue destination.

2.5 The Relationship among Destination Image, Tourist Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty

The three aspects "*destination image*", "*tourist satisfaction*" and "*destination loyalty*" have been well analyzed and their relevance has also been well discussed by several theories and models, but mostly as isolated aspects. Nevertheless, there are strong interdependences between them.

Studies in the relationship between destination image and tourist satisfaction has bloomed in the last decades. KOTLER et al. (1996) explain the relationship among image and satisfaction by inserting the quality term in the middle. They set up the following sequence: Image - Quality - Satisfaction. In this model, image would affect how customers perceive quality - a more positive image corresponds to a higher perceived quality. In return, perceived quality will determine the satisfaction of consumers (FORNELL et al. 1996, KOZAK/RIMMINGTON 2000), because satisfaction is the result of customers' assessment of the perceived quality.

Previous studies show that the image of a destination has positive influences on the overall tourist satisfaction (CHON 1990, BIGNE et al. 2001, BIGNE et al. 2005, CASTRO et al. 2007, HERNANDEZ et al. 2006, CHI/QU 2008, PRAYAG 2009, XIA et al. 2009, WANG/HSU 2010, PRAYAG/RYAN 2011) and that image is a critical factor in influencing tourism satisfaction (O'LEARY/DEEGAN 2005, CAI et al. 2003, CASTRO et al. 2007).

In addition, a number of other tourism studies also confirm that a positive evaluation of the destination image would bring about higher level of loyalty demonstrated by the tourists (BOSQUE/MARTÍN 2008, CHI/QU 2008, LEE 2009a/b, ZHANG et al. 2014).

The relation between customer satisfaction and loyalty has been well established by former literature (LABARBERA/MAZURSKY 1983, RUST/ZAHORIK 1993, HALLOWELL 1996). In tourism, there are lots of empirical proofs that tourist satisfaction is a strong indicator of their intentions to revisit and recommend the destination to other people (BEEHO/PRENTICE 1997, BRAMWELL 1998, KOZAK/RIMMINGTON 2000, KOZAK 2001, YOON/UYSAl 2005). It is normally supposed that satisfaction leads to repeat purchase and positive word-of-mouth recommendation. This means that if tourists are satisfied

with the product/service, they are more likely to continue purchasing and more willing to spread positive word-of-mouth.

CHI/QU (2008) construct a model which takes into account all three aspects: destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. In this modeling, they split satisfaction in two dimensions: overall satisfaction and attribute satisfaction. The model shows that tourist overall satisfaction is determined by destination image and attribute satisfaction, tourist attribute satisfaction is also directly influenced by destination image while destination loyalty is influenced by overall satisfaction. Destination loyalty is the result of destination image, attribute satisfaction and overall satisfaction *(see figure 2.3)*.
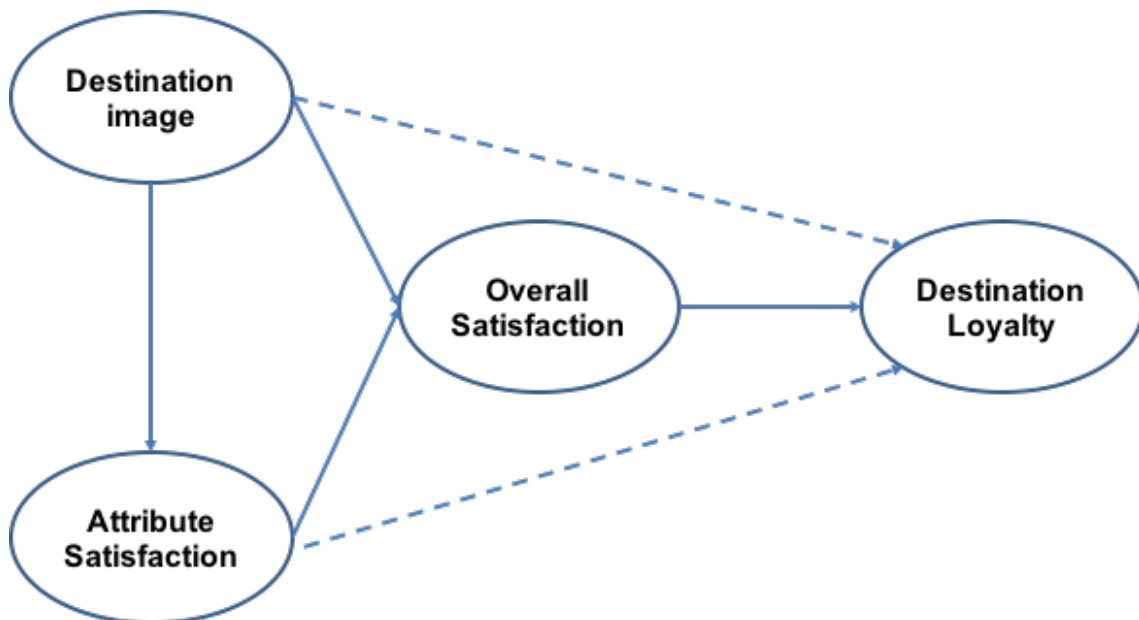
Figure 2.3: Destination Loyalty model (Source: CHI/QU 2008: 631)

Based on this model, the newly proposed direct path from attribute satisfaction to destination loyalty is shown to be significant; therefore, attribute satisfaction is also a direct antecedent of destination loyalty. The findings confirm that tourists' loyalty will be enhanced by positive destination image and high satisfaction. (CHI/QU 2008: 632-633)

3 Research Methodology

This chapter describes the methods and techniques used in the study, the processes of survey design and data collection as well as data analysis procedures.

3.1 Methods and Techniques

As mentioned in chapter 2, destination image and tourist satisfaction are multi-dimensional, ephemeral and not easily evaluated. Hence, a complex and comprehensive methodology needs to be applied.

In general, there are two key different approaches in this study including quantitative and qualitative methods:

- Qualitative research is based on a constructivist epistemology and explores what it assumes to be a socially constructed dynamic reality through a framework which is value-laden, flexible, descriptive, holistic, and context sensitive (YILMAZ 2013: 312). Thus, qualitative research is mainly exploratory research and is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions and motivations. This approach provides insights into the problem or helps develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research. Qualitative data collection is carried out by using unstructured or semi-structured techniques. Some common qualitative techniques include participation/observations, individual interviews and focus groups discussions. STRAUSS/CORBIN (1998: 10-11) state that: *By the term "qualitative research' we mean any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification"*. Qualitative research is typically used to answer questions about the complex nature of phenomena, often with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participants' point of view.
- Quantitative research is used to answer questions about relationships among measured variables with the purpose of explaining, predicting and controlling phenomena (LEEDY/ORMROD 2005: 94). With proper sampling, the quantitative approach allows for the measurement of many subjects' reactions to a set of questions. Because each question has a limited set of answers, the results can be

compared and analyzed statistically and they also can be generalized to a larger population within known limits of error (WARWICK/LININGER 1975, PATTON 1986). Quantitative research methods attempt to maximize objectivity, replicability and generalizability of the findings and are typically interested in prediction with hypotheses. Essential to this approach is the expectation that a researcher will set aside his or her experiences, perceptions, and biases to ensure objectivity in the conduct of the study and the conclusions that are drawn (HARWELL 2011: 149). Quantitative methods are also frequently characterized as assuming that there is a single "truth" that exists, independent of human perception (LINCOLN/GUBA 1985).

The application of a particular research approach might limit the scope of the study and create difficulties in giving out the findings (JONES 1997). GORARD/TAYLOR (2004: 3) emphasize that no methodology is perfect. Hence, in reality, tourism researchers often use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, which allows them to deal with the questions around and to access to various realities associated with the theme (GOODSON/ PHILLIMORE 2004: 10). This approach is called "mixed methods" among the primarily quantitative oriented science community and "triangulation" within the qualitative domain (HUSSEIN 2009: 3; YEASMIN/RAHMAN 2012: 156). ABBAS/TEDDLIE (2003: 15) state that the strong point of using mixed methods in research is that it enables the researcher to simultaneously answer confirmatory and exploratory questions and therefore both verify and generate theory in the same study. In order to triangulate research methods in an effective manner, researchers first need to understand the strengths and the weaknesses of each method (JOHNSON/ONWUEGBUZIE 2004: 18). The common techniques of triangulation consist of literature review, documentary, in-depth interview, focus group discussion, observation, case-study and questionnaire survey (WALLE 1997: 534, RILEY/ LOVE 2000: 182, SALE et al. 2002: 48).

Following the terminology of "triangulation", this study applies the concept of data triangulation as well as methodological triangulation. The methodological triangulation comprises a document analysis, statistical analyses of secondary data sources and standardized surveys as well as semi-structured expert interviews.

3.2 Data Collection

Information can be obtained from various different sources and is normally divided into two kinds including primary information and secondary information *(see figure 3.1).*
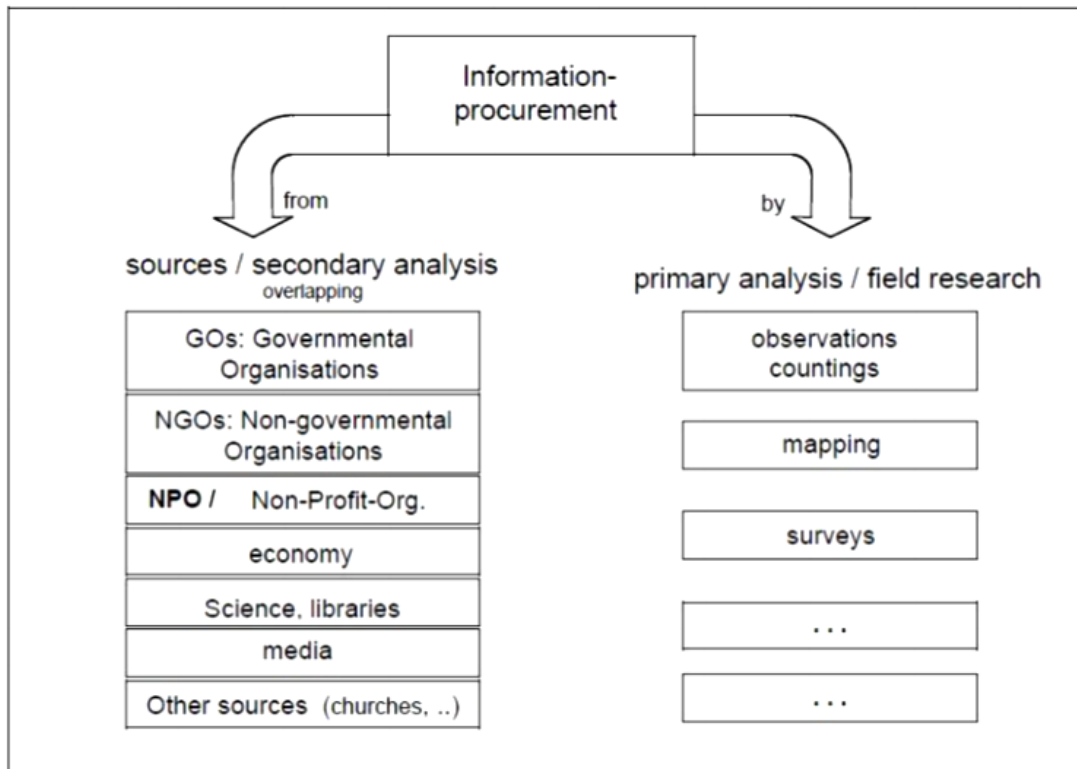
Figure 3.1: Sources of data (Source: STEINGRUBE 2011)

In this study, both primary data and secondary information including literature review, secondary data examination, expert interviews and questionnaire surveys are used in a triangulated manner for data collection and analysis as follows:

- A thorough review of available relevant literature, researches and articles is undertaken to get a comprehensive understanding of destination image and visitor satisfaction concept as well as other related theories.
- An examination of the secondary data is carried out based on the available statistical reports from governmental organizations, enterprises and other sources to get the general knowledge about the tourism development in Hue.
- Two structured questionnaires are developed, tested and distributed to tourists of various nationalities on different tourist sites in Hue city.

- Twenty interviews with tourism experts are conducted to get their professional opinions on addressing the research questions. On the one hand, these interviews are conducted in the early phase of the study as an explorative information gathering method. On the other hand, they are also carried out after analyzing the survey data as feed-back discussions with experts to clarify and verify the results.

3.2.1 Secondary Data Collection

Literature review and secondary data examination are used to gather available information related to the objectives of this study.

3.2.1.1 Literature Review

Document analysis comprises the study of all types of relevant printed media and the basis is always a comprehensive literature review. In any research, the researchers must draw on and place their new findings within the context of previous studies (DEPOY/GITLIN 1998: 19). In this research, the purpose of literature review is to identify and explain theories conceptualizing the destination image foundation and the process that influence visitor satisfaction of a tourist destination. The literature review for this study focuses on the destination attributes, the concepts of destination image, expectation and satisfaction, and techniques for measuring destination image and visitor satisfaction.

Besides, scientific literature from all available sources (grey literature) such as journals, reports and planning documents are searched for relevant information. The sources vary from individual researchers and international/domestic tourism organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations to public web pages. Thus, the documents are presented either in paper or in digital form.

The languages of this review are limited to Vietnamese and English only.

3.2.1.2 Secondary Data Examination

Secondary data are existing statistics that have been collected, analyzed and discussed by previous researchers or organizations in the related fields. In other words, secondary data is *"information which already exists in some forms or other but which was not*

primarily collected for the purpose of the consultancy exercise at hand" (LANCASTER 2005: 66).

Secondary data helps to contextualize current research in the field. On the one hand, the advantages of using secondary information are the fast availability of the data and even if you pay fees for getting them, it is much cheaper than any own data collection. On the other hand, secondary data are sometimes unreliable, not perfectly suitable to the need of the study, or not up-to-date enough to work with (SMITH 2010: 48-49, BAGGIO/KLOBAS 2011: 7, cited by HOANG 2013: 19). In order to minimize such shortcomings, the researchers should use officially published and updated documents from reliable sources and cross-check them if possible.

It can be stated that the secondary data is adequately reliable as long as they come from up-to-date national and provincial surveys that were officially published by VNAT, GSO and HDCST or from other researches published by reputable universities and organizations. The data are mostly public information but it is not always easy to collect these documents because many of them are not available on the internet but in hard copies at some storing place. During the time conducting this study, the author sometimes has to come directly to the responsible persons to get needed information for her research.

In this study, secondary data are collected from the published statistical data about the tourism industry such as tourist arrivals, tourist's average length of stays, tourist expenditure, tourism investment, tourism infrastructure, tourism supply and demand, destination image and tourist satisfaction. The objective of secondary data review is to generate an overview of the tourism development in general and visitor satisfaction in particular in Vietnam and in the city of Hue.

3.2.2 Primary Data Collection

As secondary data obtained are insufficient to achieve the objectives of this thesis, the author's own surveys have been conducted in order to collect relevant information.

Surveys are the most common method to gather "hidden" and "not public" information. There are also different techniques to conduct a survey *(see figure 3.2).* Expert

interview and questionnaire survey are the two techniques used in this study to collect required information that help address the research questions.
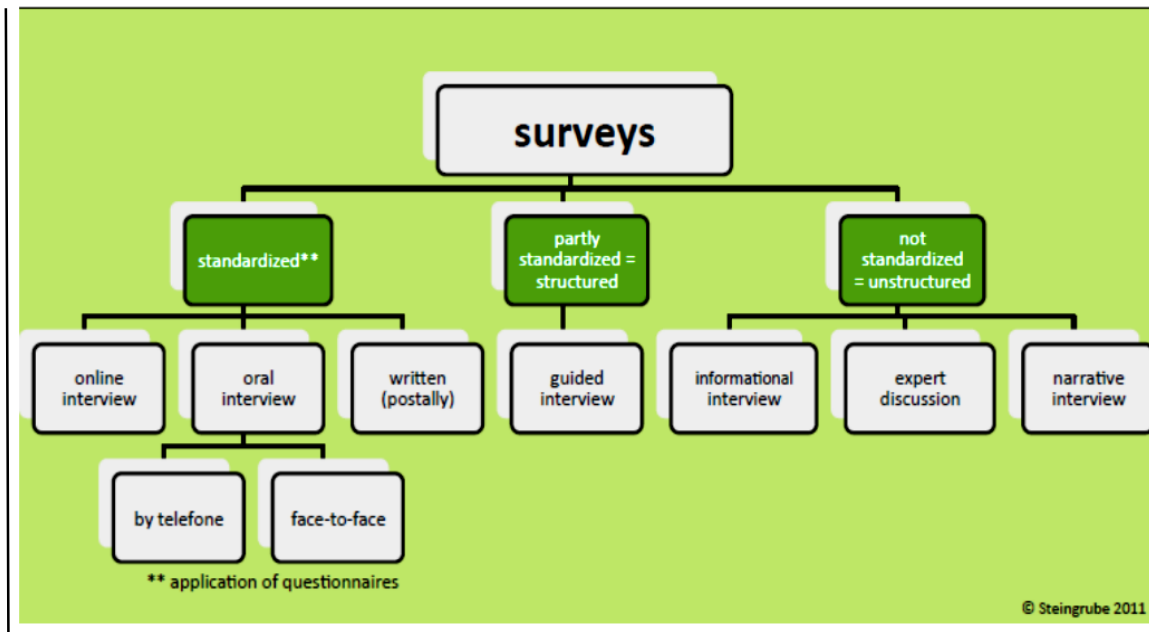
Figure 3.2: Forms of surveys (Source: STEINGRUBE 2011)

3.2.2.1 Expert Interviews

Expert interviews are carried out at the beginning of the research in 2013 and after finishing the questionnaire surveys in 2014/15. Throughout the whole study, ten tourism experts are approached for interviews, twice for each. Table 3.3 provides the information concerning the source of experts and number of interviews conducted *(detailed information of interviewees, time of interviews are shown in Appendix 1)*.

Table 3.3: Sources of experts

Source of experts	Number of experts	Number of interviews
Faculty of Tourism - Hue University	3	6
Thua Thien Hue DCST	4	8
Tour operators	2	4
Local NGO	1	2
Total	**10**	**20**

Right from the beginning of the study, expert consultancy is considered extremely essential as it helps shape the entire frame of this research. After the documentary step

i.e literature review and secondary data examination and before deploying the fieldwork for questionnaire survey, the researcher should consult the tourism experts for their advices in developing the questionnaires and identifying the most suitable attributes of Hue. This first explorative phase consists of semi-structure interviews based on the method suggested by JENNINGS (2001:165). The intent of this job is to find out the most common ideas from the experts in order to build the questionnaires in line with the reality and research objectives. All the interviews employ the same questions starting with basic questions about the background of the interviewees such as their position in the organization or company and their work experience. These questions are also considered to be the 'warm-up' part of the interview as they make the interviewees feel free before diving into the main subject. The following questions cover qualitative information about the interviewees' perceptions of the current situation of Hue tourism, its supply and demand, etc. And the most important question to be addressed during the whole conversation is to identify the destination attributes which are considered important or very important to tourists in Hue. The role of the interviewer is to maintain the focus of the interviewees and get them back on the right track whenever they are going astray.

In addition, expert interviews are also conducted one more time at the final stage of the study. The information gained from these unstructured interviews, in combination with the findings from the questionnaire analysis helps establish the primary foundation for addressing the question of building suitable destination images and enhancing the visitors' satisfaction towards the destination of Hue.

It is critical to note that providing a detailed introduction about the interviewer and their research objectives is one of the most important determinants contributing to the success of an interview. In other words, the researcher should clarify all issues related to the researcher and the study. This helps the interviewer and interviewees get to know each other and creates a friendly conversational environment (KITCHEN/TATE 2000: 30, BOWLING 2002: 320, cited by BUI 2009: 74). On the other hand, one of the most common problems in gathering information through interviews is that researchers can sometimes use ambiguous and unfamiliar terms and vague concepts (TOURANGEAU et al. 2000: 34, cited by Bui 2009: 77). Therefore, interviewers should keep the questions simple, specific and concise, as well as provide examples when concepts are used. The

researchers should also avoid double-barreled questions and complicated syntax (Bui 2009: 77).

All the interviews are carried out face-to-face in Hue with the duration lasting from 90 minutes to 120 minutes. As these are long interviews, creating a friendly environment through out the interviews is vitally necessary to keep the interviewees focused and motivated. The interviewees are also consulted for their permission to tape record the interview.

3.2.2.2 Questionnaire Surveys

The questionnaire surveys are used as they are the most convenient way to collect information from a large number of respondents. Based on the results of literature review, secondary sources of information and expert interviews, the questionnaires are designed to capture visitors' perceptions on the destination image as well as visitors' satisfaction towards the destination of Hue. For this purpose, two questionnaire surveys are conducted in parallel from March 2013 to July 2014.

3.2.2.2.1 Questionnaire Design

The design of destination image questionnaire and visitor satisfaction questionnaire are carried out at the same time from January to February 2013.

Destination Image Questionnaire Design

According to the literature of the destination image, especially the theoretical basis of destination image formation, destination image is proposed to be evaluated on two perspectives including attribute-based image and holistic image. Therefore, the questionnaire design should address the following questions:

- To identify the attributes of Hue destination image in order to assess the attribute-based image of Hue; and
- To determine the open questions to be used in the questionnaire to identify the holistic image of Hue destination image.

As a result, the destination image questionnaire is divided into four parts *(see Appendix 2a/b)*:

- The *first part* consists of questions regarding the personal information about respondents such as nationality, age, gender and education.

- The *second part* is about respondents' travel experience in Hue.

- The *third part* includes 19 statements about Hue with multiple-choice questions that visitors are asked to rate their agreement level on the performance and importance of Hue attribute images. This part aims to understand what visitors think about the attributes that may characterize Hue, such as historical - cultural attractions, friendliness of local people, peaceful atmosphere, unique lifestyle of local people, good foods, special costumes, quality of tourism staff and services, etc.

- The *fourth part* contains two open-ended questions which help explore further opinions of visitors on what kinds of attributes or attractions are most important for them as well as most suitable for Hue. In which, the first question is designed to enable visitors to think and answer freely about the destination image of Hue. However, with this question visitors are likely to focus on the functional and psychological holistic image of Hue. Thus, the second question is to drive the visitors to the identification of unique components which definitely distinguish Hue from other destinations. In the end of the questionnaire, the author also attempts to summon up the recommendations or suggestions on improving the destination image of Hue from the respondents.

Satisfaction Questionnaire Design

The satisfaction questionnaire comprises four parts *(see Appendix 3a/b)*:

- The *first part* is constructed of questions about the personal information of respondents such as nationality, age, gender, occupation and education.

- The *second part* is about respondents' travel experience in Hue.

- The *third part* has 13 multiple-choice questions allowing visitors to rate the level of their expectation and the level of the attributes' performance. This part aims to understand visitors' perceptions on the destination attributes of Hue such as historical and cultural attractions, friendliness of local people, local foods, tourism service quality, etc.

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- The *fourth part* contains 3 questions which attempt to explore: (1) visitors' ratings on the destination image of Hue before and after their trip; (2) visitors' overall satisfaction towards the destination; and (3) visitors' loyalty. There is also a space that visitors can give their comments or recommendations which contribute to improving the current tourism situation of Hue.

Both questionnaires are designed in English and Vietnamese. The English version is used to collect empirical data from international English-speaking visitors while the Vietnamese one is used for domestic tourists. Besides, a German version of the questionnaire is prepared, but in reality most Germans are able to use the English version. The preparation and use of other language versions like Thai, Chinese or Korean would be beyond the scope of this thesis.

In order to capture quantitative information about the importance and the performance of the destination attribute-images of Hue, 4-point Likert scale (1 = totally unimportant, 2 = unimportant, 3 = important, 4 = very important; or 1 = totally disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = totally agree) is used in the destination image questionnaire.

Similarly, to measure visitor's expectation and satisfaction towards the destination attributes of Hue, 4-point Likert scale (1 = totally unimportant, 2 = unimportant, 3 = important, 4 = very important; or 1 = totally unsatisfied, 2 = unsatisfied, 3 = satisfied, 4 = very satisfied) is used in the visitor satisfaction questionnaire.

Surveys normally use 5-point or 7-point Likert questions to gather quantitative information (WEAVER et al. 2007: 341, cited by BUI 2009: 78-79).. However, in reality respondents are likely to select the centered point for questions that they are not sure about the answers. Hence, the application of 5-point or 7-point questions might result in wrong findings (DAWES 2008: 63). In order to avoid this weakness, this study uses 4-point Likert questions instead which enable the respondents to choose the most accurate answer.

Depending on the questions three different wordings are used to describe the answer categories *(see table 3.4).*

Table 3.4: Answer categories

Interval scale	Categories wording		
1	totally unimportant	totally disagree	totally unsatisfied
2	unimportant	disagree	unsatisfied
3	important	agree	satisfied
4	very important	totally agree	very satisfied

Source: MONASH UNIVERSITY 2011

As this is a rating scale which is usually treated as an interval scale the arithmetic mean can be calculated.

3.2.2.2.2 Questionnaire Pre-testing

It is indispensable to run a pre-test for the questionnaire to get rid of impurities and to eliminate potential difficulties in implementing and analyzing it. PETERSON (2000: 23) argues that the design of questionnaires should follow widely accepted procedures used in social studies and one such procedure is pre-testing before carrying out the official survey (BUI 2009: 79).

The pilot surveys of this study are conducted by the researcher from the beginning of March 2013 and last for two weeks. Both of the questionnaires are pre-tested with a convenience sample of fifty tourists including twenty two females and twenty eight males. All are above the age of sixteen years old, both international and domestic. These surveys are implemented using the collaborative participant pre-testing method explained by COOPER/SCHINDLER (2006: 396). Each tourist is asked to fill out two kinds of questionnaires and it normally takes around 20 minutes for them to complete the forms. Based on the results of the pilot test, the questionnaires are revised accordingly and then are used for the whole samples. The modifications are not significant which are mostly to clarify some slightly confusing words to visitors.

3.2.2.2.3 Standardized Surveys

One week after pre-testing, the official surveys are deployed and last for more than one year, from April 2013 till July 2014.

The surveys are conducted as face-to-face-interviews and carried out by the author and two other colleagues from Hue University. The limited number of interviewers is to prevent the distortion of the data collected by using too many interviewers. However, this somewhat prolongs the survey.

Sample Selecting

BRADLEY (2007:519) describes sampling as *"the process of selecting parts from a defined population in order to examine these parts, usually with the aim of making judgments about the parts of the population that have not been investigated"*. There are two important components in determining who will be interviewed.

The first one is to make a decision on what kinds of visitors to interview who is so-called 'target population'. *"If you do not interview the right kinds of people, you will not successfully meet your goals"* (CRS 2015). The target population for this study consists of all tourists aged sixteen and above who visit Hue in the period of March 2013 to July 2014. A convenience sample of respondents is selected because they are *"in the right place, at the right time"* (DÖRNYEI 2007). Convenience sampling is the most feasible sampling method because it is difficult to use another method to draw a sample at a tourist destination, due to the undefined availability of the target population. The interviewees are chosen randomly regardless genders, ages and countries or regions of origin. However, the balance between the numbers of international and domestic tourists, males and females is intentionally taken into account to ensure the objectives of the research.

The second thing to decide is how many visitors need to be interviewed. *"The larger the sample, the more precisely it reflects the target group"* (CRS 2013). Nevertheless, the sample size is often dependent on factors such as size of the entire population, time availability, budget and also on required precision of the study. Based on the number of visitors to Hue in 2012, with more than 95% confidence level and ±3% confidence intervals (CRS 2013), the adequate sample number for each questionnaire survey is 1039 participants. In practice, a total of 1039 completely filled questionnaires on visitor satisfaction and 1003 on destination image are collected and analyzed after the surveys.

Places to Interview

Concerning visitor satisfaction survey, as the visitor satisfaction is strongly influenced by the experience of the current stay, this survey targets the visitors who have spent already at least one day in Hue and had some time to experience the city.

The places to conduct visitor satisfaction survey are categorized as follows:

- *Famous tourist attractions* such as the Citadel, Tu Duc Tomb, Khai Dinh Tomb, Thien Mu Pagoda, etc. In these sites, the tourists are easily approached while they are taking a short rest finishing sight-seeing.

- *Famous streets for tourists* with lots of restaurants, café, shops, hotels such as Pham Ngu Lao Street, Chu Van An Street, Le Loi Street, etc. In these places, the tourists have more time to talk to the interviewers and they are mostly willingly to fulfill the questionnaires.

- *Bus stops and Hue train station*. The tourists leaving Hue for home or other destinations are interviewed when they are waiting for the shuttle buses to the airport or buses to other destinations in Vietnam. Train station is also a good place to conduct the survey as the tourists have a lot of free time when waiting for delayed trains.

Regarding destination image survey, as the image of a destination in the visitors' mind is strongly influenced by the knowledge from their previous visits and even by the experience of the current stay, this survey tries to exclude this impact by splitting the tourists into two groups:

- Group 1: visitors who have just arrived and have no chance to experience anything in Hue. Those who visit Hue not the first time are identified by a question and will be assigned to the other group later.
- Group 2: visitors who have spent already at least one night in Hue and had sufficient time to get some experience of the city.

Table 3.5: Balance between group 1 and group 2

	Frequency	Percent
Group 1 ("just arrived")	483	48.2
Group 2 ("with sufficient time for experience")	520	51.8

Table 3.5 shows the balance of these two groups in terms of number of respondents.

Due to these two groups of visitors, the selected interview places of the destination image survey are quite varied. For the first group, the visitors are caught at the key entrances to Hue when they have just arrived in Hue, such as Phu Bai airport, Hue train station and bus stops. For the second group of visitors, the interviews are conducted at the same places where the visitor satisfaction survey are implemented, such as famous tourist attractions (the Citadel, Tu Duc Tomb, Khai Dinh Tomb, Thien Mu Pagoda, etc), famous streets for tourists with many restaurants, café, shops, hotels (Pham Ngu Lao Street, Chu Van An Street, Le Loi Street, etc.), airport, bus stops and Hue train station.

Table 3.6 shows a review of the questionnaire surveys' design. In summary, the questionnaire surveys provide very reliable quantitative data for further statistical analysis in the research.

Table 3.6: The design of surveys

Survey technique	Face-to-face interviews with standardized questionnaire
Pilot surveys	50 respondents/each survey in March 2013
Main survey period	April 2013 till July 2014
Basic population	1,729,540 arrivals (HDCST 2013: 8)
Sample size	• 1039 respondents/tourist satisfaction survey >95% confidence level; ±3 % confidence interval (CRS 2013) • 1003 respondents/destination image survey >95% confidence level; ±3 % confidence interval (CRS 2013)
Duration of interview	10 minutes
Places to interview	Hue City, Vietnam (primarily at tourist attractions, tourist walking streets, Phu Bai airport, bus stops and Hue train station)

3.3 Data analysis

"Data analysis concerns the identification of meaningful patterns in the data" (BRADLEY 2007: 315). This is absolutely an important step which contributes to the success of the study. After finishing the questionnaire surveys, the invalid copies of questionnaire are removed and discarded. With regards to the visitor satisfaction questionnaire survey, 1039 out of the 1050 copies of questionnaire collected are

correctly fulfilled by the respondents. For destination image questionnaires, 1003 faultless copies are qualified for analysis selecting from a total of 1026 collected questionnaires. In analyzing quantitative data, the major data preparation techniques used include data editing, data coding, and data input (BRADLEY 2007: 328). These steps are processed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

"Content validity means that the measurement instrument adequately covers the most important aspects of the construct that is being measured" (CHURCHILL 1996: 402). In this study, the data validity is consolidated through literature survey and secondary data review. Also, the validity is obtained by consulting experts in tourism to formulate the questionnaire. Furthermore, pre-test questionnaire surveys are done to make the questionnaire content become more consistent with reality.

Reliability is considered as consistency in measurement. The reliability of the instrument is measured by using Cronbach's Reliability Test. In this study, the reliability tests on the selected destination attributes are completed with the correlation values above 0.8. This means that there is a high reliability in scale measurement.

Finally, depending on the research objectives, statistical analyses such as frequencies, descriptive, crosstabs, T-Test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), correlation analysis, and multiple regressions are used for the analyzing purposes.

4 Investigation Area: The City of Hue

This chapter presents an overview of the city characteristics as well as the current tourism situation in Hue, with a glance on the destination image of Hue and a special emphasis placed on the challenges regarding to the visitor satisfaction and promotional activities.

4.1 An Overview

Hue, the central city of Thua Thien Hue Province, used to be the prosperous capital of the country under Nguyen dynasty from 1802 to 1945. When mentioning 'Hue city', people usually think about the whole province rather than the capital alone (NGUYEN 2010)

The city is about 700 km south of the current national capital of Hanoi and about 1100 km north of Ho Chi Minh City – the biggest city of Vietnam. It is a medium-sized city with a population of 350,345 inhabitants and an area of 71.69 km^2 (HUE PORTAL 2015). The common terrain of the city is flat land of the river downstream basin, covering most surface of the city.

Located in central Vietnam and just about ten kilometers inland from the East Sea, Hue is a well-known city for its cityscapes and cultural heritages inherited mainly from the last feudal state of Vietnam.

4.1.1 Climate

Hue city lies in the area of tropical monsoon climate. The average temperature during the year is 24.5^{0}C, in which June and July are the hottest months *(see figure 4.1)*. There are two main seasons: hot dry season and wet rainy season. The dry season is fairly hot lasting from April to August with the south-east monsoon, while the rainy season begins from September to March with the north-east monsoon which is cool and wet. Typhoons usually occur from August to September.

The peaks of precipitation are in October and November. The most special point is that the short spring lasting from January till February, with a cool and fresh atmosphere and green purity of new tree leaves and flowers everywhere. This period offers the best tourism time for visitors who do not like burning or drenching weather. *(see figure 4.2)*
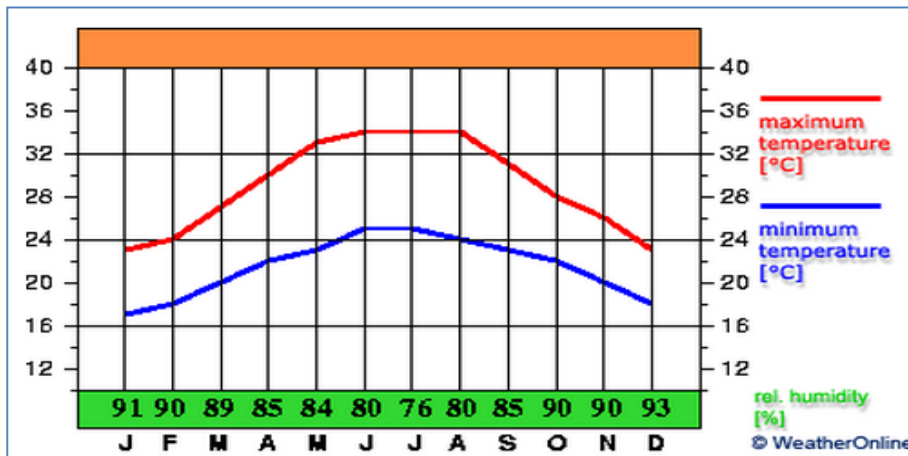
Figure 4.1: Average temperatures in Hue (Source: WEATHERONLINE)
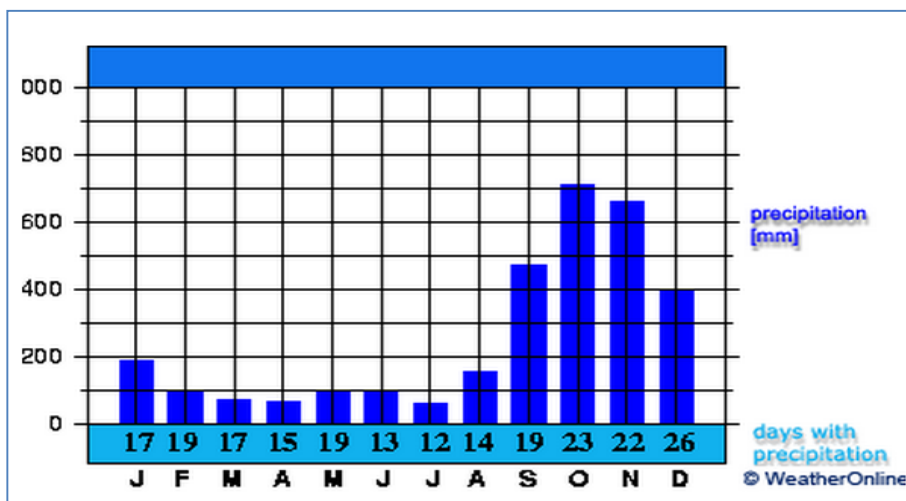
Figure 4.2: Precipitation in Hue (Source: WEATHERONLINE)

4.1.2 History and Culture

The city has gone through seven centuries of establishment and development, from the formation of Thuan Hoa (1306) to the founding of Phu Xuan (1687) until the last feudal dynasty of Vietnam (1945). From the 15th century onwards, Hue became the center of the Kingdom of Dai Viet. During nearly 400 years (1558-1945), Hue was the capital city of nine kings of Nguyen dynasty in Dang Trong, the capital of the Tay Son dynasty and the capital of a united nation under the ruling of thirteen Nguyen Dynasty Kings until the August Revolution of 1945(TTH PORTAL 2010, cited by NGUYEN 2010: 18). Thanks to this long history, Hue has integrated material and spiritual values which turned into its own unique culture. Although being damaged by time and above all by American war, Hue complex of monuments still remains great and is considered an

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amazing cultural heritage of the country and the world. Architecture in Hue is the combination of royal, folk, religious, traditional and modern styles. Remarkably, the Complex of Hue Monuments and Royal Court Music were recognized as World Cultural Heritage Site in 1993 and Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2003 by the UNESCO respectively.

The architecture of the city and the marvels of the Creator harmoniously combine to make Hue so beautiful that everyone seems to forget human contributions to its splendor. In addition, Hue people still preserve traditional, cultural, and spiritual values of this land and of the country, for instance, delicate habits and customs, folk and royal arts including music, dances, festivals, food, costumes, and crafts. (NGUYEN 2010)

Hue is also a major center of Buddhism. Today, in Hue and its surroundings still exist hundred of temples and pagodas built in the early centuries. Festivals are also attractions of Hue. Royal festival which reflects the activities of Nguyen Kings, almost focus on the formal ceremonies. In contrast, folk festivals focus more on fun activities. The city is self-considered as the festival city of Vietnam which has successfully hosted nationally and internationally famous Hue Festivals since 2000 and attracted millions of tourists (TTH PORTAL 2014).

The cuisine of Hue includes traditional and royal gastronomy. One of the most striking differences is the popularity of vegetarianism in the city. Vegetarian restaurants which serve the needs of local people, especially the Buddhists are easily found in the city.

It is said people in Hue are very kind, friendly and hospitable. They have a strong connection with the history of the city where a great number of cultural values of golden days are well conserved (PHAN 1995).

Generally, Hue seems to be a destination for those who not only expect to enjoy lovely landscapes but also seek for cultural exchange opportunities in this land of rich and lifelong history of culture and education. The natural beauty, friendly people, peaceful and quiet life with convenient living conditions are attractive features of the city. The harmonious combination of natural, architectural and human factors has made Hue a typical traditional and cultural center of the country (NGUYEN 2010).

4.1.3 Demographic and Socio-economic Structure

Vietnam is divided into 58 provinces and 5 municipalities at the same level as provinces. The provinces are divided into provincial cities and districts and Hue is a provincial city belonging to Thua Thien Hue Province. Nowadays, there are 350,345 people living in Hue, occupying 31.0% the population of the whole province (HUE PORTAL 2015). Hue is the 6th biggest provincial city in Vietnam regarding the population. In the period 2009-2014, the population witnessed a slight increase with an annually growth rate of 1.05% *(see figure 4.3)* and this speed is totally in line with the average rate of Vietnam (1.06%; GSO 2015)
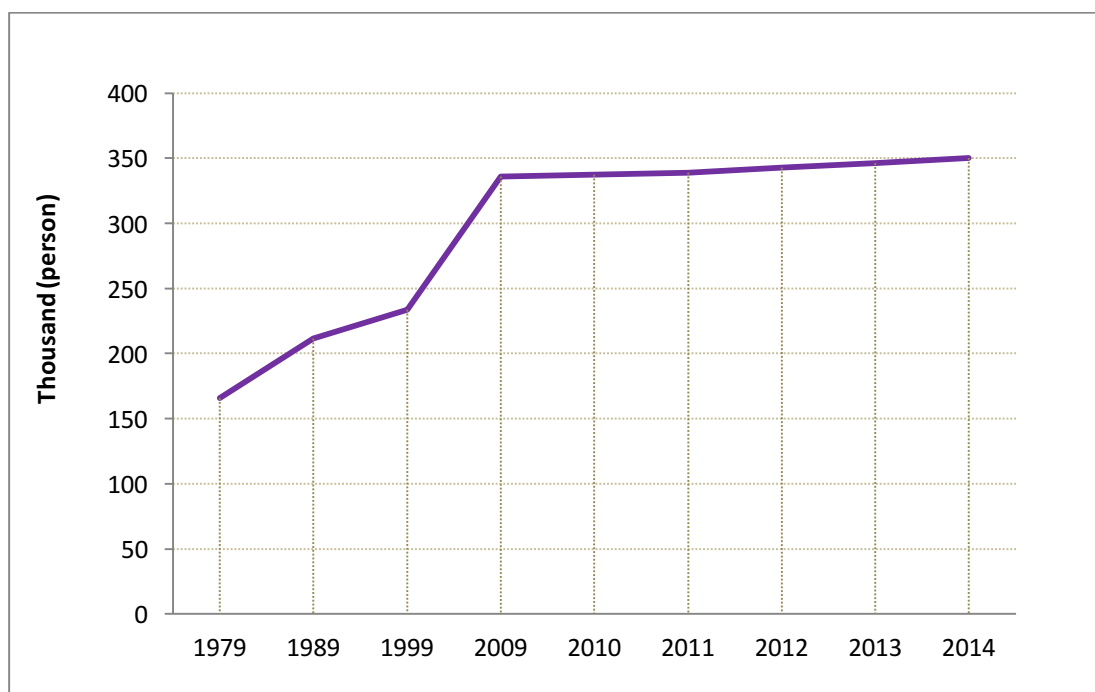
Source: GSO 2015

Figure 4.3: Population development in Hue 1979-2014

The proportion of men and women are always stable over years with 48.1% for male and 51.9% for female whereas the sex ratio of Vietnam in 2014 is 51.1% women and 48.9% men. (GSO 2015)

Hue possesses a rather young population compared to that of Vietnam. In 2014, the group of under-labor-age accounts for 31.6% of the population, whereas in Vietnam only 23.9% are in this age group *(see figure 4.4)*.
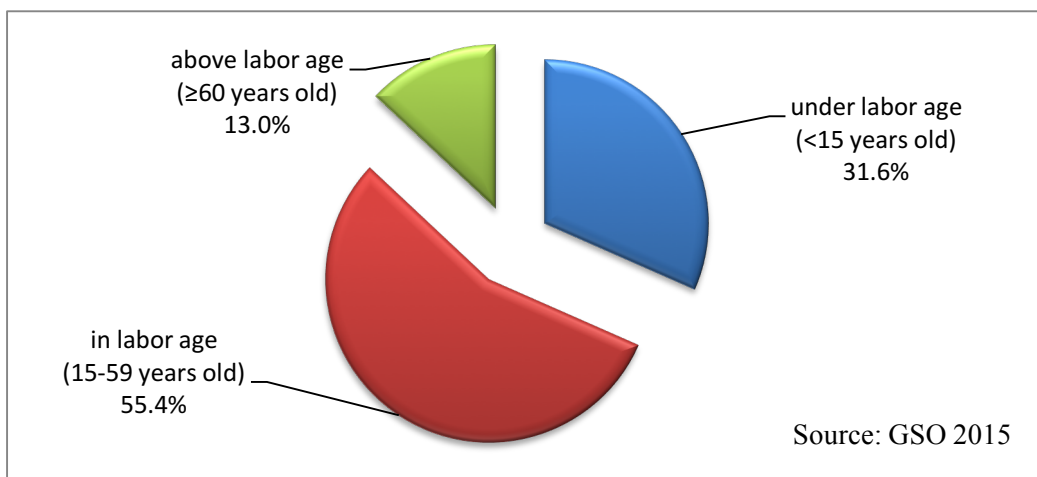
Figure 4.4: Age structure of population in Hue

In the last few years, in combination with remarkable economic achievements at the national level, Hue has reached a stable economic development with an average annual GDP growth rate of about 14.1% in the period of 2010-2014, more than two times higher than the growth rate of Vietnam (5.8%)

Concerning the economic structure, figure 4.5 shows that services and tourism contribute mostly to the local economy (74.9% in 2012; HSO 2015). Tourism created a large number of direct jobs with 9810 employees in 2014 compared to 8100 employees in 2010 (HSO 2015).
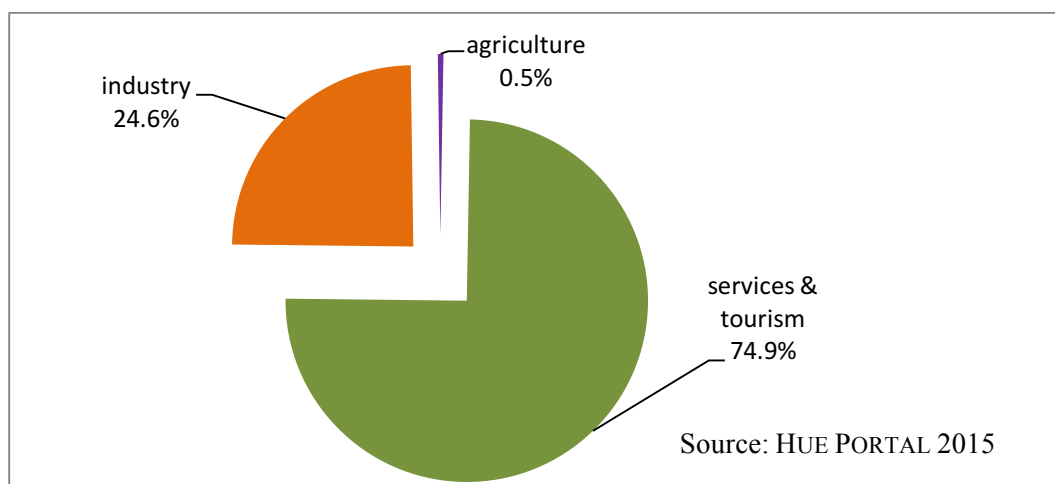
Figure 4.5: Economic structure of Hue in 2014

In 2014, the average annual income of Hue people was US$ 2.250 (HUE PORTAL 2015), slightly higher than the number of Vietnam (US$ 2.028; GSO 2015).

Tourism income in 2014 reached US$125.9 million and the contribution of tourism to local GDP is 57.0% local, more than 10 times higher than the average number of Vietnam. Social revenue from tourism in 2014 was US$285.6 million (HDCST 2015).

Despite the high economic growth rate in recent years, the unemployment rate of Hue is always higher than the national average. For example, in 2014, the unemployment rate of the country was only 2.08% while this rate in Hue was up to 7.03% (HUE PORTAL 2015).

As for the land use, currently most spaces in Hue are in use, in which agricultural land accounts only for 27.8% of the natural area, non-agricultural land 70.7% and unused land 1.5% (HUE PORTAL 2015).

4.2 Tourism in Hue

Over the last few years, tourism has achieved a rapid and strong development in Hue and become the leading economic sector with the highest contribution to the city GDP. The "Master Plan for Hue Tourism Development Stage 2013-2030" has set out a target for the tourism development in Hue that:

> *"Focusing on developing tourism as a leading economic sector, striving to make Hue becomes a leading destination in the region in 2020; building Hue as a tourist destination on par with world's cultural heritage cities in 2030"*

(HDCST 2014: 4)

4.2.1 Touristic Attractions

Possessing competitive advantages of cultural heritage resources, cultural and heritage tourism have always been the main tourism segments in Hue since the decade of 1990s. Particularly, after the recognition of UNESCO on the Complex of Hue Monuments as a World Heritage Site in 1993, the city was strongly converted into a famous cultural and heritage destination of Vietnam.

Currently, the cultural heritages in Hue are being administered by the two offices of Cultural Heritage Office (hereafter CHO) and Hue Monuments Conservation Centre (hereafter HMCC):

- The CHO belonging to Thua Thien Hue Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism was established in January 2009 and acts as a counselor and assistant for Thua Thien Hue Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism in administrative management and professional guidance of all tangible and intangible cultural heritages in Thua Thien Hue Province (HDCST 2009, cited by NGUYEN 2010: 19).

- HMCC was established in June 1982 by the authority of Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee and of the National Cultural Heritage Department. This organization is responsible for the management, preservation, restoration and promotion of the Complex of Hue Monuments and Hue Court Music. (HMCC 2006, cited by NGUYEN 2010: 19)

This ancient capital of Vietnam has plenty of historically significant places to visit (the location of key heritage monuments is shown in *Appendix 4*). The first places are the **Citadel City**, **Imperial City** and **Forbidden Purple City**, located in the central part of the complex of Hue monuments which represent and demonstrate the power of the Nguyen monarchical dynasties. In which, the Citadel City includes official administrative buildings, the Imperial City contains royal palaces and shrines, and the Forbidden Purple City which is used to be the royal residences for decades.

To the west of the Citadel City are the **Tombs of the Emperors**, which were designed and built during the emperor's lifetime. Each tomb is designed as a royal living place before turning into a mausoleum after the king's death. The three most visited tombs nowadays are Minh Mang, Tu Duc and Khai Dinh.

Apart from the buildings of the Citadel, palaces and tombs, Hue also preserves a system of defensive buildings and many other monuments and temples such as Nam Giao Esplanade, Xa Tac Esplanade, the Royal Arena, the Temple of Confucius, the Temple of Military Generals, Hon Chen Shrine, Thien Mu Pagoda, An Dinh Palace and garden houses. In addition, Hue garden houses are well-known because of their architecture such as Ngu Vien, Thu Quang, Thuong Mau, Truong Ninh and Thieu Phuong. About three kilometers from the Imperial City locates **Thien Mu Pagoda**. It is one of the most charming and ancient pagoda in Hue and now becomes one of the destination images of the city (TRAN 2014).

Currently, the entrance tickets are only applied to ten royal monuments and the prices are listed in table 4.1, the other places in the complex of Hue monuments still open for free to visitors.

Table 4.1: Entrance fees at royal heritages

Name of heritage	Entrance fee in 2015 (US$)*	
	Adults	Children (7-12 years old)
Imperial City	6.8	1.4
Tombs: Minh Mang, Tu Duc, Khai Dinh	4.5	1.0
Tombs: Gia Long, Thieu Tri, Dong Khanh	1.8	free
Hon Chen Shrine	1.8	free
Nam Giao Esplanade	1.0	free
An Dinh Palace	1.0	free

Source: HMCC 2015   *(*): for both international and domestic visitors*

The complex of Hue monuments comprises a lot of items but tourists often pay more attention to the four main attractions including Imperial City, Tu Duc Tomb, Khai Dinh Tomb and Minh Mang Tomb. Besides, Linh Mu Pagoda also attracts a very large amount of visitors. However, there is no official statistics about the number of tourists visiting this monument annually since this is a free-entrance ticket attraction. Among the ticketed monuments, the Imperial City is the most visiting destination (43%) probably due to its centered location. With their unique architecture, Tu Duc and Khai Dinh tombs also attract lots of visits from tourists with 21% and 20% respectively. Figure 4.6 shows the share of visitor arrivals at the complex of Hue monuments in the period of 2006-2013.

Together with tangible heritages, the most famous intangible cultural heritage in Hue namely Hue's Royal Court Music was recognized as the Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2003 by the UNESCO. It used to be the official royal music during Nguyen dynasty (1802-1945). This kind of music was performed in the in royal special events such as coronation ceremonies, funerals or the reception of the ambassadors.
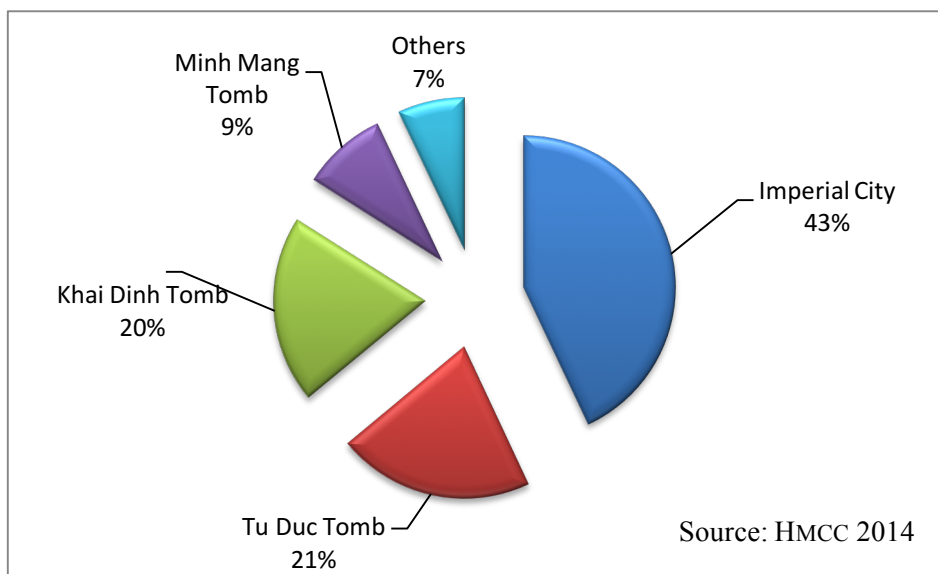
Figure 4.6: Share of visitor arrivals at heritage attractions 2006-2013

Along with the complex of Hue monuments from Nguyen Dynasty, Hue and its surroundings have a lot of other historical and cultural relics from different periods such as the ruins of Champa Kingdom, the monuments of Tay Son dynasty, the revolutionary historical relics related to President Ho Chi Minh, religious monuments, museums, galleries, etc. Tourists are also very interested in visiting traditional handicraft villages such as Phuong Duc bronze casting (in Hue city), polygraphic painting (in Phu Vang district), Thanh Tien paper flowers (in Phu Vang district), Phuoc Tich pottery (in Phong Dien district). Many cultural legacies in rural villages such as temples, shrines dances, traditional handicraft villages, folk festivals and traditional cuisine are being visited, enjoyed and experienced by lots of visitors. The places to visit are no longer confined only in the citadel, palaces, and royal tombs of the Nguyen dynasty in the inner city but also covered many places in Hue and its surrounding areas.

A highlight which needs to be mentioned in this section is Hue Festival, an international cultural event organized in Hue every two years to honor the priceless heritages of Hue. Originally, the first Hue Festival was called Vietnamese-French Festival and celebrated in 1992. In 2000, the festival got its official name "Hue Festival". Since then, Hue Festival has been held in Hue every two years in the summer time. The Festival reconstructs the whole city with many community-based events which are organized both inside and outside of the city to rejuvenate the traditional values of Hue. These events include The Night of the Palace, Nam Giao Worshiping

Ceremony, Truyen Lo Ceremony, Ao Dai Festival, Sea Festival, Kite Competition, Human Chess, etc. The city also re-organizes many traditional festivals and recovers many traditional handicraft villages.

Normally, the festival attracts the participation of more than 20 Vietnamese arts groups and 20 international arts delegations. Thousands of artists from several places all over the world come to Hue and perform about 200 shows in as many as 40 venues throughout the city. Competitions, fairs, science conferences and exhibitions are hold consecutively during the festival time, attracting millions of visitors. In 2014, Hue Festival welcomed 220,000 visitors, in which over 100,000 international visitors came from 115 countries and territories. (HMCC 2015)

In addition to cultural and historical attractions, Hue city and its neighboring areas also have diverse natural resources such as the Perfume River, Ngu Binh Mountain, Tam Giang – CauHai Lagoon, beautiful beaches (Lang Co, Canh Duong), Bach Ma National Park, Phong Dien Nature Reserve, etc. Today, tourists tend to choose Hue not only for experiencing the cultural heritages but also for the natural attractions.

4.2.2 Tourism Statistical Data

The tourism in Hue has developed impressively since the 1990's. The official tourism statistics of Hue show that the number of tourist arrivals has increased from approximately 100,000 in 1990 to over 2.8 million in 2014 (HDCST 2015).

In 2012, the destination had 552 accommodation establishments in total *(see table 4.2)*. The number of guesthouses occupies the largest proportion with 62.8 % of all establishments. But these facilities offer only 30.1% of all rooms in Hue. This suggests that guesthouses are usually very small in size with the average number of rooms is 8.7. Among 1-5 star hotels, the 4-star hotels provide more rooms than others. The data also show that the higher the price (corresponding to the number of stars) the bigger the hotels.

Table 4.2: Lodging establishments in Hue in 2014*

	Number of establishments	Number of rooms	Average hotel size (rooms)
5-star hotel	4	648	162.0
4-star hotel	10	1,352	135.2
3-star hotel	12	822	68.5
2-star hotel	28	1,004	35.8
1-star hotel	52	972	18.7
Mini hotel	99	2,239	22.6
Guesthouse	347	3,040	8.7
Total	**552**	**10,077**	

Source: HDCST 2015   *(*): categorized by TCVN 4391: 2009 STANDARD*

Not surprisingly tourism in Hue has recorded significant increases. In 2014, Hue welcomed about 2.8 million arrivals; of which 1,032,181 internationals and 1,786,427 domestics. Increasing number of tourist arrivals, revenue, room occupancy and direct employees in tourism are good signs for the tourism sector in Hue. However, taking into account the correlation of tourism supply and demand, the hotels in Hue are in an oversupply situation with a relative low percentage of room occupancy. *(see table 4.3).*

Table 4.3: An overview of Hue tourism industry 2010-2014

	Total arrivals	Overnight arrivals	Overnight stay (days)	Income (mil. US$)	Room occupancy (%)	Labor (person)
2010	1,745,243	1,486,374	3,002,595	62.7	52.0	8,100
2011	2,054,370	1,604,350	3,304,961	77.6	57.0	9,600
2012	2,544,762	1,729,540	3,486,620	103.5	54.0	9,550
2013	2,599,000	1,763,472	3,542,493	116.9	55.0	9,621
2014	2,818,618	1,850,293	3,554,400	125.9	58.0	9,810

Source: HDCST 2015

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The data show that the number of tourists has been growing dramatically in the last five years *(see figure 4.7)*. Recently, most visitors in Hue are overnight guests, which occupied 85.2% in 2010 and 78.1% in 2011. Nevertheless, the share of same-day visitors – people who come and leave in the same day and normally do not stay in any accommodation lodge - in the entire arrivals is significantly increasing, with only 14.8% in 2010 up to 34.4% in 2014. Many tourists still consider Hue as a one-day stopover rather than a holiday destination. The main tourism product of Hue is cultural/heritage tour and guests can visit all the famous heritages attractions in Hue within one day. According to interviewed experts, Hue lacks good tourism products and services that are able to allure guests to stay overnight. Especially, close neighbors of Hue – Hoi An and Danang – is becoming more and more appealing to tourists, mostly to international guests. Visitors' length of stay in Hoi An is longer almost twice than in Hue (4 days; ESRT 2014). And there exists an ugly truth for Hue tourism: Many tourists during their stay in Hoi An take a day trip to Hue and then come back Hoi An in the same day without any overnight stay in Hue. Furthermore, a number of Hue same-day visitors coming from cruise ships anchored in Chan May Sea Port (Thua Thien Hue Province) is also partly contributing to the high number of one-day visitors in Hue (36,000 visitors in 2014; HDCST 2015).
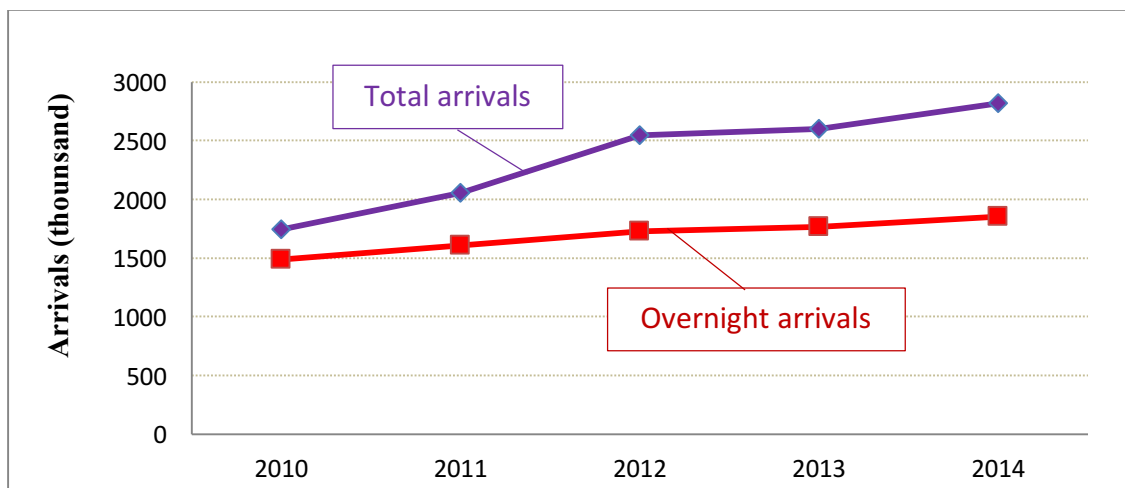
Source: HMCC 2015

Figure 4.7: Number of total arrivals and overnight arrivals in Hue 2010-2014

There is a steady increase in the number of international arrivals in Hue since 2010, with an average annual growth rate of 9.2%. But the growth rate of domestic tourists is much higher than that of international visitors. In 2010, 1.04 million domestic visitors

came to Hue but by the end of 2014 this number increased by 74.7% to 1.81 million visitors, achieving an average annual growth rate of up to 15.8%. Vietnamese arrival figures increased rapidly between 2011 and 2012 (34.4%) but the rate of growth has eased recently. *(see figure 4.8)*
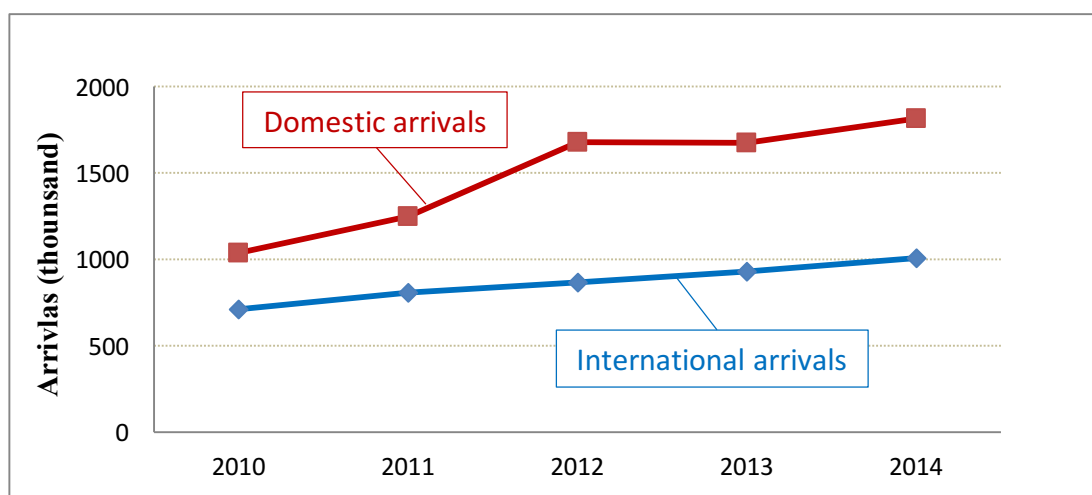
Source: Hmcc 2015

Figure 4.8: Number of international and domestic arrivals in Hue 2010-2014
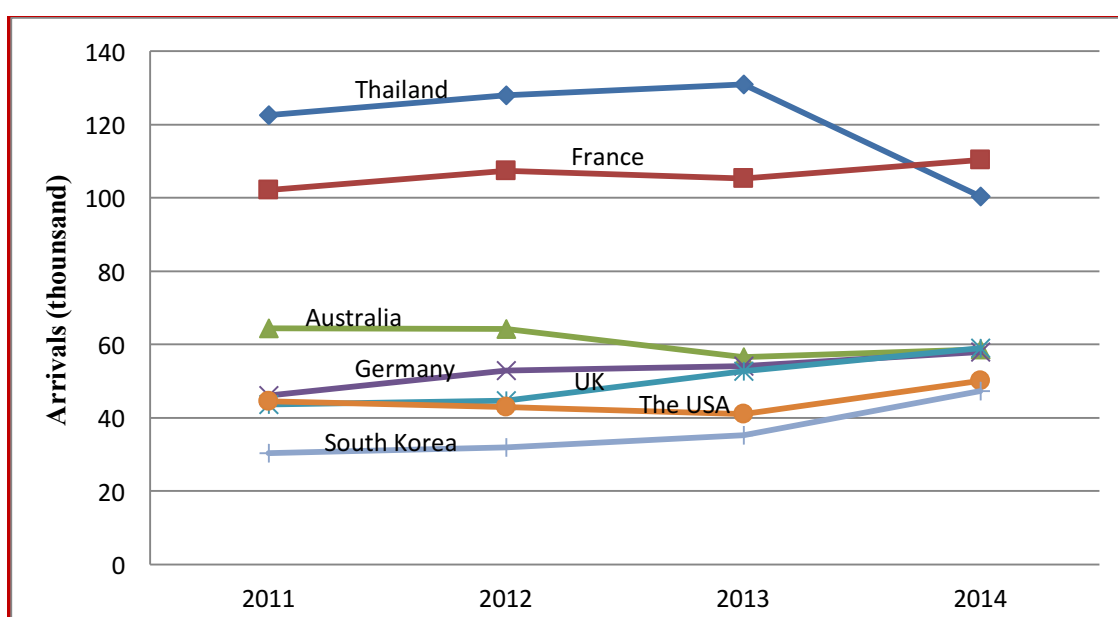
Source: Hdcst 2015

Figure 4.9: Key international visitor markets of Hue 2011-2014

Hue's international visitors come from over 65 countries. In 2014, France is the leading international market for Hue (14.18%), followed by Thailand (12.90%), England (7.59%), Australia (7.54%), Germany (7.45%), the USA (6.44%) and South Korea

(6.09%) *(see table 4.4)*. In 2014, these seven markets account for 60.5% total international share with the dramatical decrease of Thai visitors *(see figure 4.9)*.

Table 4.4: Market shares among international visitors in Hue in 2014

	Number of arrivals	**Percentage (%)**		**Number of arrivals**	**Percentage (%)**
Europe			**Asia & the Pacific**		
France	110,361	14.18	Thailand	100,372	12.90
England	59,070	7.59	Australia	58,639	7.54
Germany	57,965	7.45	South Korea	47,381	6.09
Spain	28,153	3.62	Japan	34,009	4.37
Netherlands	20,974	2.70	China	17,813	2.29
Italy	15,489	1.99	Laos	12,420	1.60
Denmark	14,533	1.87	New Zealand	9,543	1.23
Ireland	12,915	1.66	Taiwan	4,544	0.58
Switzeland	10,176	1.31	Malaysia	4,319	0.56
Belgium	9,920	1.27	Israel	4,179	0.54
Sweden	5,429	0.70	Singapore	2,978	0.38
Austria	4,914	0.63	**Oversea Vietnamese**	7,870	1.01
Russia	4,006	0.51	**Others**	25,299	3.25
Poland	3,870	0.50			
Norway	3,449	0.44			
America			**Total**	**778,158**	**100**
United States	50,091	6.44			
Canada	18,642	2.40			

Source: HDCST 2015

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In the years 2013 and 2014 there are significant increases in the South Korean market, which has replaced the Japanese in the top seven international markets of Hue with the percentages from 4.72% in 2013 up to 6.09% in 2014 (HDCST 2014/2015).

Table 4.5: Average length of guests' stay in Hue 2010-2014

Year	Average length of stay
2010	2.02
2011	2.06
2012	2.02
2013	2.00
2014	1.92

Source: HDCST 2015

Despite the steady growth rate in tourist arrivals and income, the length of stay is still fairly short. It was around 2 days since the 90's and this number has remained almost unchanged until today. Unexpectedly, the data show that there was a slight decrease in the length of stay in recent years *(see table 4.5)*. It is needed to add that the tourist arrivals are calculated mostly by the number of guests staying in tourist accommodations. For that reason, there are a missing number of tourists, mostly domestic guests visiting Hue for VFR purpose who do not stay in hotels or guest houses but in their relatives or friends' houses.

There is no significant difference between the length of stay between international and domestic tourists. In 2013, the average length of stay for international visitors was 2.02 days while the average for Vietnamese travelers was slightly lower at 1.97 days.

Concerning the tourism seasonality, the period of May – August is the most popular time for travelling to Hue, with nearly 40.7% of all visitors arriving during these four months in the period 2010-2014 (HDCST 2015). September and October are the lowest months with the fall in both international and domestic guests.

The summer peak is caused only by domestic tourism. Vietnamese tourists love to travel in the summer time (May –August) as this is the school vacation time in Vietnam,

whereas the number of international visitors coming to Hue is pretty stable year-round. *(see figure 4.10)*
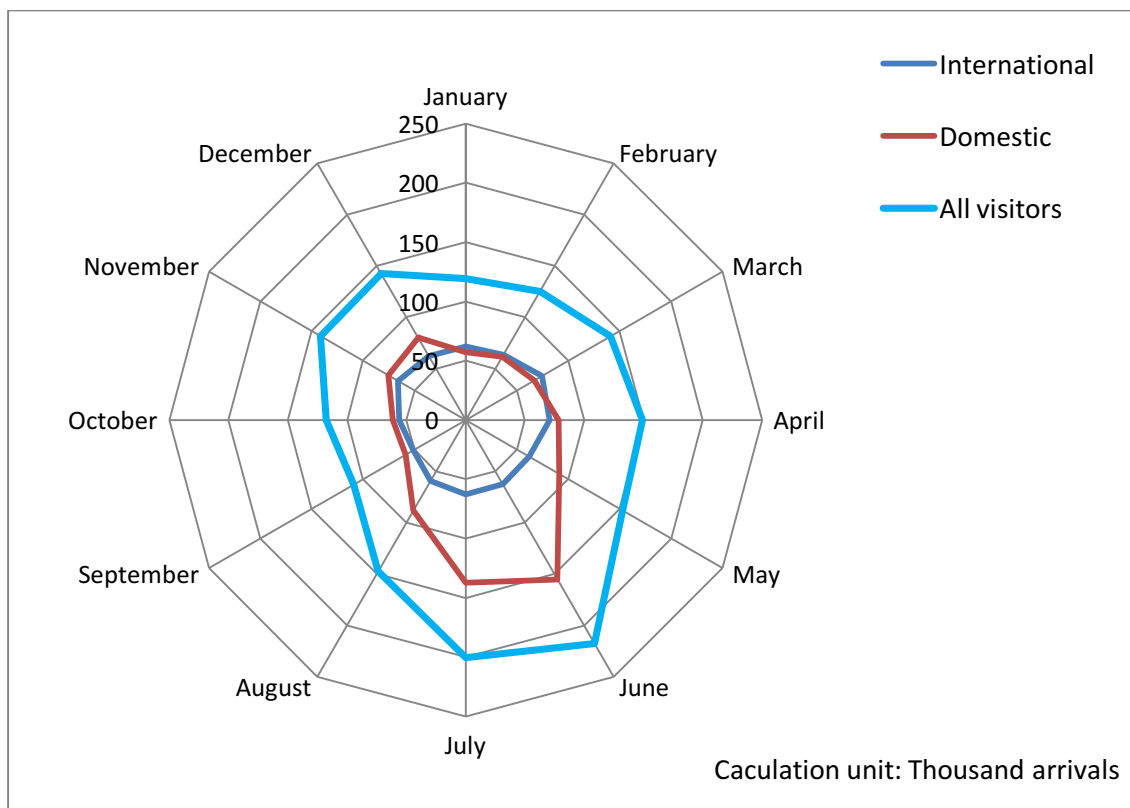
Figure 4.10: Tourism seasonality in Hue 2010-2014

These statistics above are calculated for the entire Thua Thien Hue province. At the moment, separate tourism statistics for the city of Hue is still much insufficient. Nevertheless, there is almost no difference between the provincial and city tourism statistics as most of the tourism activities are concentrating on the city and 99% of visitors travelling to the province stay and spend their money there (HDCST 2015).

4.2.3 Hue Tourism – Beyond the Numbers

In addition to the statistical data of Hue tourism presented and discussed in the previous section, this part reveals some more crucial points of tourism situation in Hue related to the study objectives.

4.2.3.1 Hue's Destination Image in the Mind of Visitors

The city of Hue is often praised in literature for its beauty of being the Vietnam's former capital city and for its natural settings. For many tourists, Hue is a romantic and elegant city with kind people and lots of ancient monuments. Unlike other bustling and dynamic cities in the central region such as Da Nang and Nha Trang, Hue preserves a difference and an aura of mystery which arouses the curiosity of visitors. (HUE PORTAL 2015)

Until now, there have been few studies on image measurement of the destination of Hue. A recent research found that, to domestic travelers, the top images of Hue in them are peaceful and non-hustle city, traditional dresses, sweet voice and local food (NGO 2014). NGUYEN (2014) discovered the other aspects of Hue imagery including ancient historical monuments, delicious cuisine and beautiful scenery.

Most of the interviewed experts in this study confirm that for domestic travelers the image of Hue is positioned quite well in their mind as Hue is a well known place for every Vietnamese with many unique tourism attractions and friendly people. Nevertheless, for international visitors the image of Hue is pretty faint and only at the first stage of shaping. This is the consequence of a lack of effective tourism promotion strategy which has created confusion and vagueness about the destination images of Hue to travelers. Along with the poor promotion, the limitation in tourism services has not yet created good impression in the mind of visitors.

4.2.3.2 Visitor Satisfaction with the Destination

In recent years, the local government has focused on upgrading the infrastructure such as wharf and airport and consolidating the local transportation system as well as recreating institutional system and all-inclusive plans that will motivate and boost tourism development (BUI 2009: 127).

Despite the local government's efforts and the advantages of being a city of cultural heritages, tourism development in Hue in the past years has not been commensurate with the resources that this destination possesses. To achieve the goals set out for the tourism industry in the coming years is really a challenge for the destination. Among the other necessary actions, the mission to increase the tourist satisfaction would be the crucial foundation for achieving a practical and effective tourism management strategy.

To understand and satisfy the tourists is the most important task of any successful destinations and this has not ever been the subject of any large-scale research in Hue. A study on the visitor satisfaction with a survey sample of 313 international and domestic tourists in Hue verifies that visitors are relatively satisfied with cultural and historical attractions and local cuisine. However, they are somewhat dissatisfied with the accommodation services, festivals, souvenirs, etc. There still exist the problems of cheating prices and annoying vendors and beggars in Hue. In addition, the destination image of Hue in the minds of visitors after their trip to Hue is more negative than that before their journey (TRAN 2013).

One of the core objectives of sustainable tourism development is to meet the needs of the visitors and bring high satisfaction to them. A high proportion of visitors are not satisfied with what they have experienced in Hue. The main reasons for this are the lack of guided tours and recreational activities, poor tourism services with unskilled staff. (TRAN/TRUONG 2014)

Interviewed experts agree that visitors' expectations in their trip to Hue have not fully met so far. Accordingly, the destination should pay much more attention to improving the quality of its tourism services, tourism staff, recreational activities and better utilizing the cultural and historical heritage values. It is easy to see that Hue tourism products are still poor and the quality of tourism services is still insufficient. Many tourists feel disappointed after the trip because the tourism products as well as the quality of tourism services in Hue did not meet their tastes and their expectations.

4.2.3.3 Master Plan for Tourism Development in Hue

A tourism master plan has been widely considered as a roadmap for destination success. It is a crucial first step that will address the following three important questions "*Where are we?", "Where do we want to go?"* and *"How do we get there?".*

Tourism master plan provides a comprehensive look at all of the destination's assets by answering "where are the biggest opportunities for growth", "what are the main barriers", and "how can they be overcome". The plan employs a collaborative approach that engages the public and private sector and encourages their participation and commitment to achieve a shared vision for the destination. The master planning process

will secure local buy-in, define the actionable steps needed to achieve common goals, and provide destination with the ability to track results and adapt to changes when needed. With the orientation of the master plan, destinations will have a 10-to 20-year strategic vision, strategy, and action plan for developing tourism in a sustainable manner for the harmonious benefit of local residents, investors, tourism operators, tourists and other stakeholders.

Back to the context of Hue, there has been obviously no specific tourism plan that guided the tourism development in Hue until 2013, when Thua Thien Hue People's Council issued the Resolution on the "Master Plan for Tourism Development in Thua Thien Hue Province Period 2013 – 2030" aiming at "developing tourism as a leading economic sector, striving to put Hue become a leading destination in the region in 2020, building Hue as a tourist destination on par with world's cultural heritage cities in 2030" (HDCST 2014: 4). However, the 331-page-plan with many various planning contents has still stayed almost on the table and there has been no sign of implementation of the plan up to now.

The too late issuance of the tourism master plan in Hue is supposed to be one of the key reasons that have slowed down the development of tourism in Hue during the last time.

4.2.3.4 Destination's Marketing and Promotion

In spite of many efforts in destination marketing and promotion activities, the destination has not yet been introduced effectively to the targeted markets due to the lacks of funding, human resources and experience (Expert NGUYEN 2013).

The most challenge for the destination marketing and promotional activities is the financial issue. Due to the insufficient marketing and promotion budget, the destination image of Hue has not been adequately developed and introduced to the targeted markets. Tourism experts suggest that the fund for destination promotional activities can be raised from local government and tourism businesses. Nevertheless, in reality it is extremely difficult to call for the contribution from the local tourism businesses to the common promotional fund.

In addition to the question of financing for promotional activities, another challenge needs to be addressed as soon as possible is the insufficiency of the human resources in

destination's marketing and promotion jobs in terms of both quantity and quality, with an emphasis on the weakness of professional skills and foreign languages.

It can be said that there have not been any effective marketing strategies for the destination of Hue so far. The tourism destination image and slogan have not determined yet. Several destination slogans such as "The Charm Discreet of Hue", "A Land of Happiness" used by the destination in the past time seem not impressive enough to tourists and not as effective as expected.

The timely introduction of the "Master Plan for Tourism Development in Thua Thien Hue Province Period 2013 – 2030" with comprehensive marketing guidelines is hopefully a positive sign for the destination promotion.

It is true that Hue is a well-known destination, especially for domestic tourists. Though almost every Vietnamese knows Hue, making decision to pay a visit to Hue is another story. Instead of visiting Hue, tourists might prefer Hoi An - a neighbor of Hue - as their vacation destination, for instance. This is probably the consequence of the weak promotional activities and the monotonousness of tourism products in Hue as well as the low quality in tourism services. (Experts NGUYEN, NGUYEN, BUI 2013)

5 Visitors' Profiles and Trip Characteristics

Understanding the characteristics of the respondents is helpful when exploring the connection between tourists' characteristics and their perceptions on destination image and satisfaction. In this study, two questionnaire surveys are conducted from a population of 1567 international and domestic tourists who visited Hue in 2013 and 2014. This chapter presents structural characteristics of the surveyed respondents including tourists' socio-demographics features, their origins as well as the characteristics of their trips.

5.1 Socio-Demographic Features

The sample comprises 49.8% male and 50.2% female visitors. In general, the gender distribution among the tourists in this research is balanced.

The ages of the interviewed tourists range from 16 to 74 years and children are not included in the survey. Visitors aged 31-45 years old represent the most proportion of the whole sample with 40.5% while the group of elderly people (above 60 years old) is only 4.5% *(see figure 5.1).*

> >60 years old 4.5%
> 46-60 years old 19.4%
> 31-45 years old 40.5%
> 16-30 years old 35.6%
> % of visitors
> n = 1527
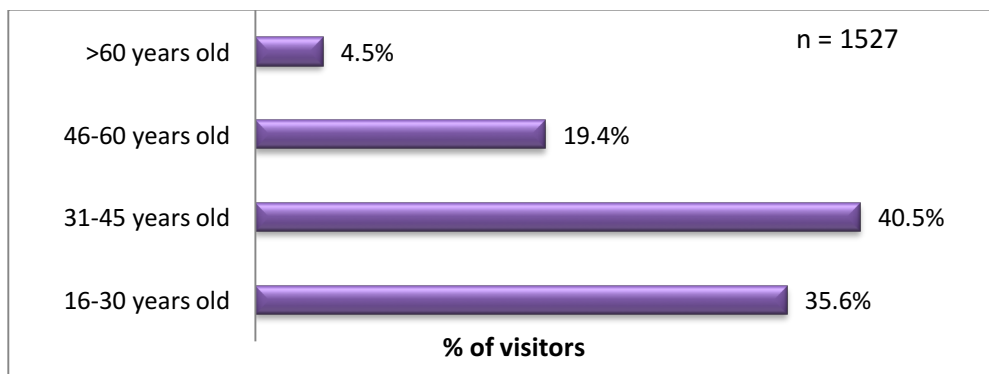
Figure 5.1: Age of visitors

The statistical average age of the respondents is 37.2 years and the mean value is similar among male (38.1 years) and female (36.3 years). However, Vietnamese visitors are younger than the international guests with the mean value of age is 36.1 and 38.3 respectively. Distinguished by sex, the differences are greater among male visitors with

the average age of 39.2 years for the internationals and 36.9 years for the domestics *(see figure 5.2)*.
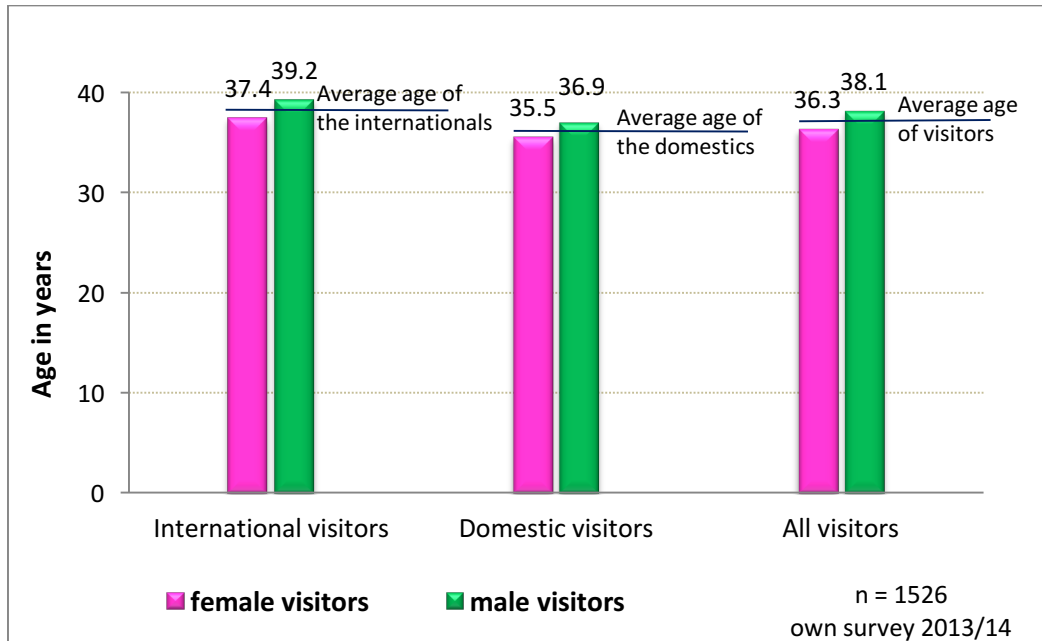
Figure 5.2: Average age of visitors

Regarding the visitors' level of education, it can be stated that most tourists coming to Hue are well educated with 80.8% of the sample holding a bachelor or higher degree (*see figure 5.3*). In which, the international visitors often hold more than a university degree (86.4%) compared to the domestic guests (75.1%).
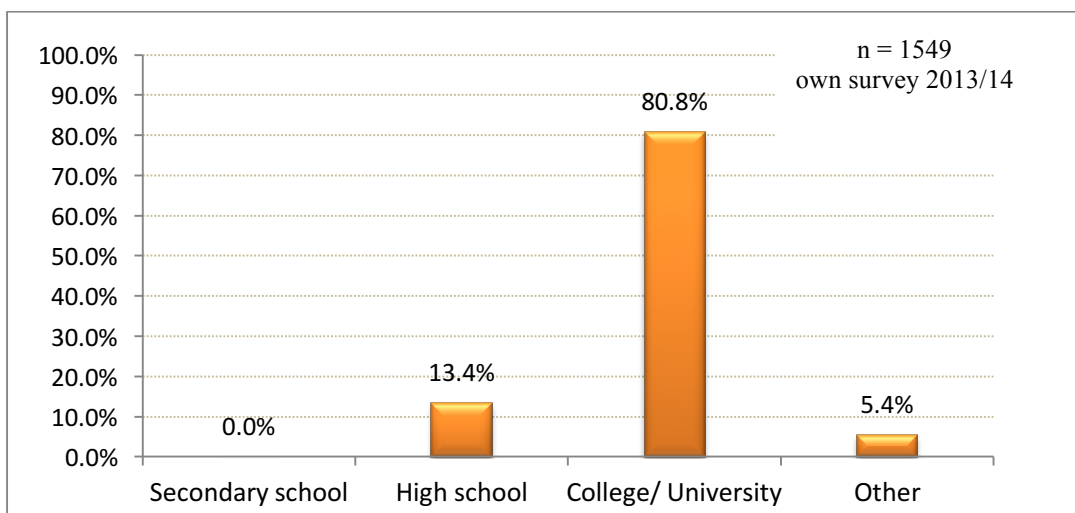
Figure 5.3: Education of visitors

A multi-choice question is used to ask the visitors about their occupation and the results are shown in figure 5.4. Full-time employed people are the biggest group (50.7%) and followed by the part-time employed (18.3%). Meanwhile, unemployed people occupy the smallest share with only 4.7%.
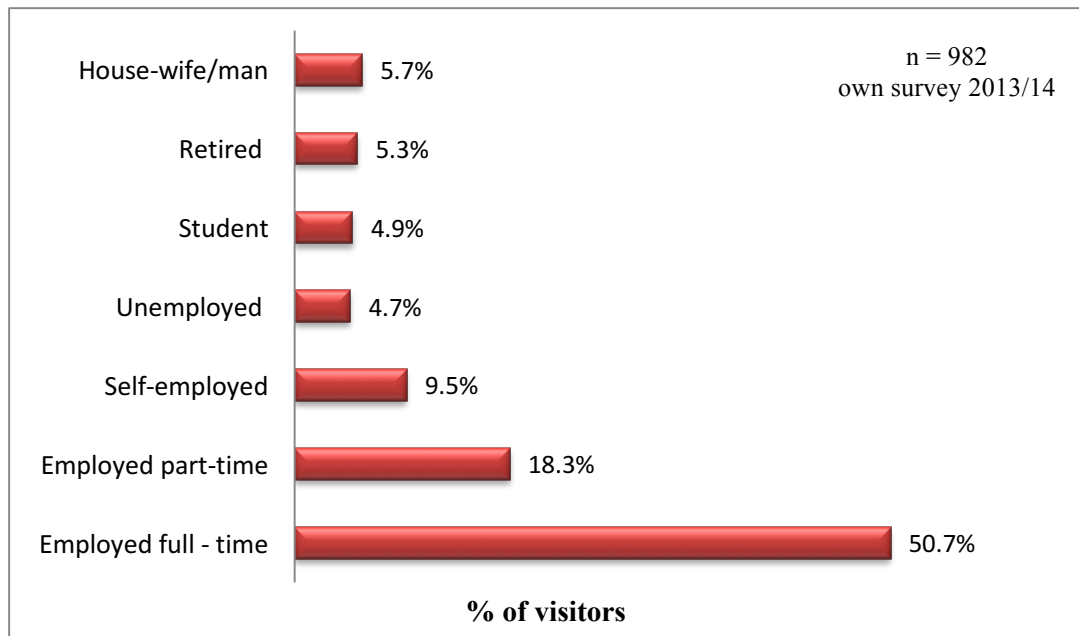
Figure 5.4: Occupation of visitors

5.2 Visitors' Origins

There are 49.8% domestic and 50.2% international visitors in the surveyed sample. According to the statistics of HDSCT (2015), the average number of international visitors to Hue annually is equal to approximately a half of the domestics (34.8% compared to 65.2% in 2014). It means that this study does not represent the current structure of visitors in Hue concerning the share of domestic and international tourists. Thus, nearly all the following analyses in this paper will distinguish between these both groups.

5.2.1 Domestic Visitors' Origins

The Vietnamese respondents come from 48 provinces/cities nationwide which represent nearly all areas of the country. In which, most tourists come from the neighboring province (Central Vietnam) with 48.5%. Furthermore, figure 5.5 confirms that more people from the North (30.5%) than from the South (14.7%) make their visits to Hue.
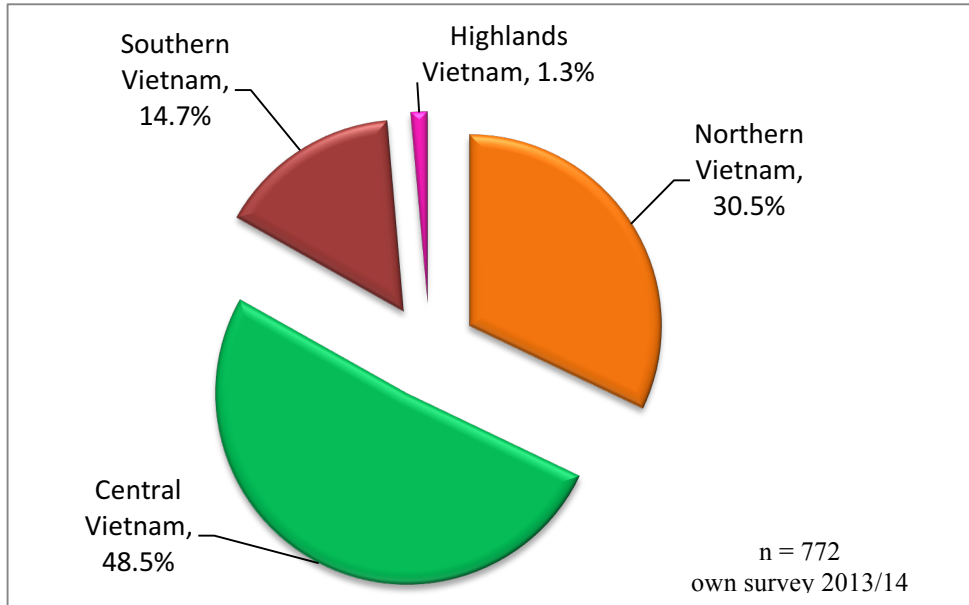
Figure 5.5: Original regions of domestic visitors

5.2.2 International Visitors' Origins

More than half of the international respondents come from European countries (52.0 %), followed by the visitors from the USA and Canada (19.3%), Asia (18.8%), Australia and New Zealand (11.3%) (*see figure 5.6*).
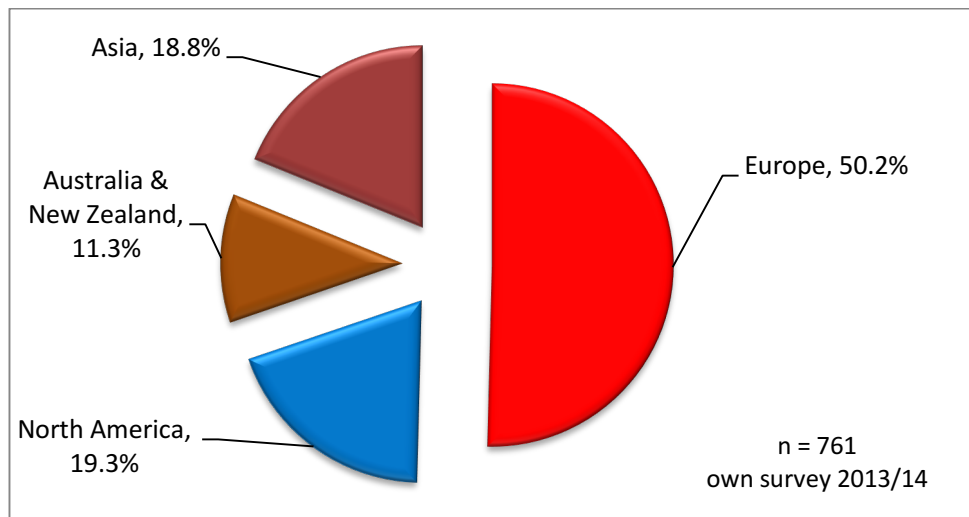
Figure 5.6: Original regions of international visitors

Among the European visitors, the French (14.0%) is the biggest group, followed by the British (11.8%) and the German (8.1%) (*see figure 5.7*).
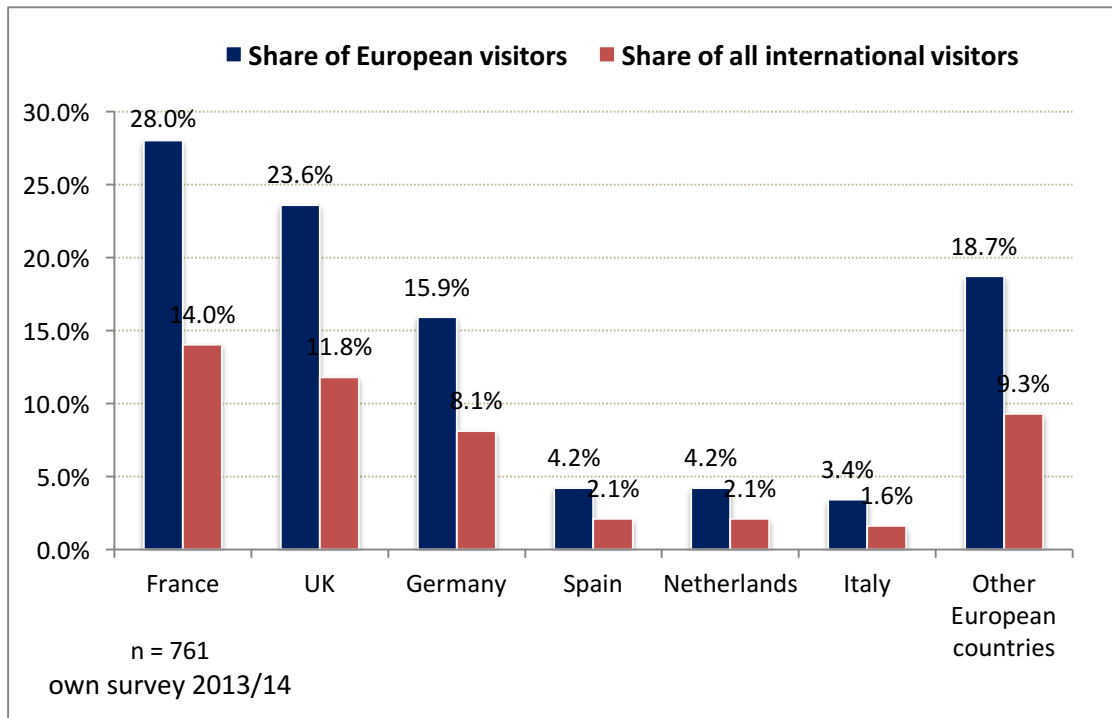
Figure 5.7: Shares of European visitors

Among the Asian nations, visitors from Thailand and Japan are the biggest groups in this survey with the shares of 30.1% and 27.3% respectively. Since the application of only English questionnaires, many of foreign guests fail to give responses. As a result, this survey does not completely represent the reality of all the foreign market shares in Hue.

Nevertheless, the result finds that that respondents' origins are fairly well in line with the official statistics from HDCST *(see table 4.1)* which reports that France, UK, and Germany are the main sources of European visitors in Hue. Besides, the guests from Thailand and Australia are also covered by this study.

5.3 Features of the Trips

The analysis finds that 82.3% of international guests are in Vietnam for the first time and only 17.7 % of them are returning visitors. These data are consonant with the results of a scale research carried out in 2010 which mentioned a similar rate of first time visitors at 86.0% (BUI 2010: 39) and slightly in line with the official statistics of Hue Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism with 82.4% first time visitors and 17.6% repeated visitors (HDCST 2015).
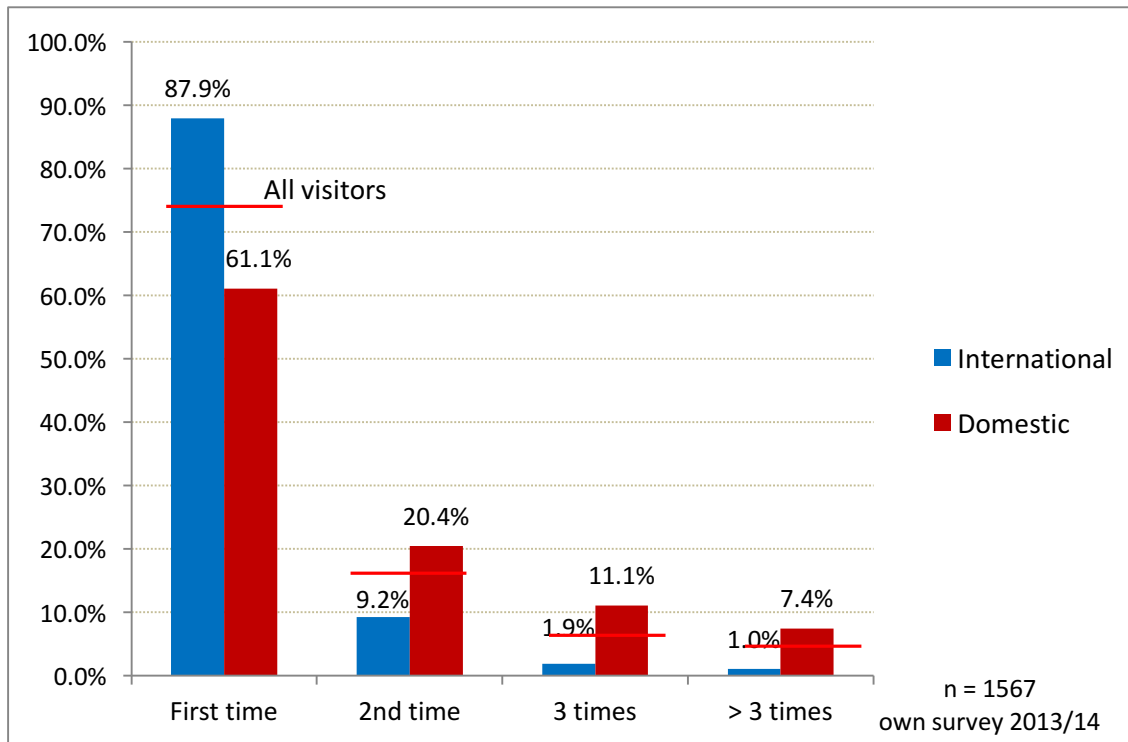
Figure 5.8: Number of visits to Hue before

Therefore, it is not surprising that nearly all international tourists (87.9%) visiting Hue for the first time *(see figure 5.8)*. However, the survey also reveals that 38.4% of the returning international visitors to Vietnam who come to Hue this time have never been in Hue before. In other words, more than one third of international tourist does not come to Hue at their first trip to Vietnam. This suggests that Hue seems not to be the "first-choice cities" in Vietnam for foreigners.

The study also shows that the average length of stay of international visitors in Vietnam is 15.7 days, in which the first-time visitors stay 16.1 days and the returning visitors stay shorter with 13.9 days.

In Hue, foreigners stay only 2.79 days on average *(see table 5.1 - this value is a higher than the official data from HDCST (2014) which indicates only 1.93 days)*. In which, the international tourists who have already been in Vietnam at least one time earlier spend only 2.0 days on average. This implies that:

- Hue is not really a long-stay destination for international tourists; and
- Hue is more interesting for first-time visitors of Vietnam than for returning tourists.

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Table 5.1: Duration of stay in Hue

Duration of stay in Hue	International (%)	Domestic (%)	All visitors (%)
1 day	6.1	2.5	4.3
2 days	47.3	39.0	43.2
3 days	32.5	37.0	34.7
Above 3 days	14.1	21.5	17.8
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Average duration of stay	**2.79 days**	**3.17 days**	**2.98 days**

Own survey 2013/14

With regard to sources of information about the destination of Hue used by visitors, internet is used as the most powerful source which has formed the initial image of Hue destination in the visitors' minds *(see figure 5.9)*.
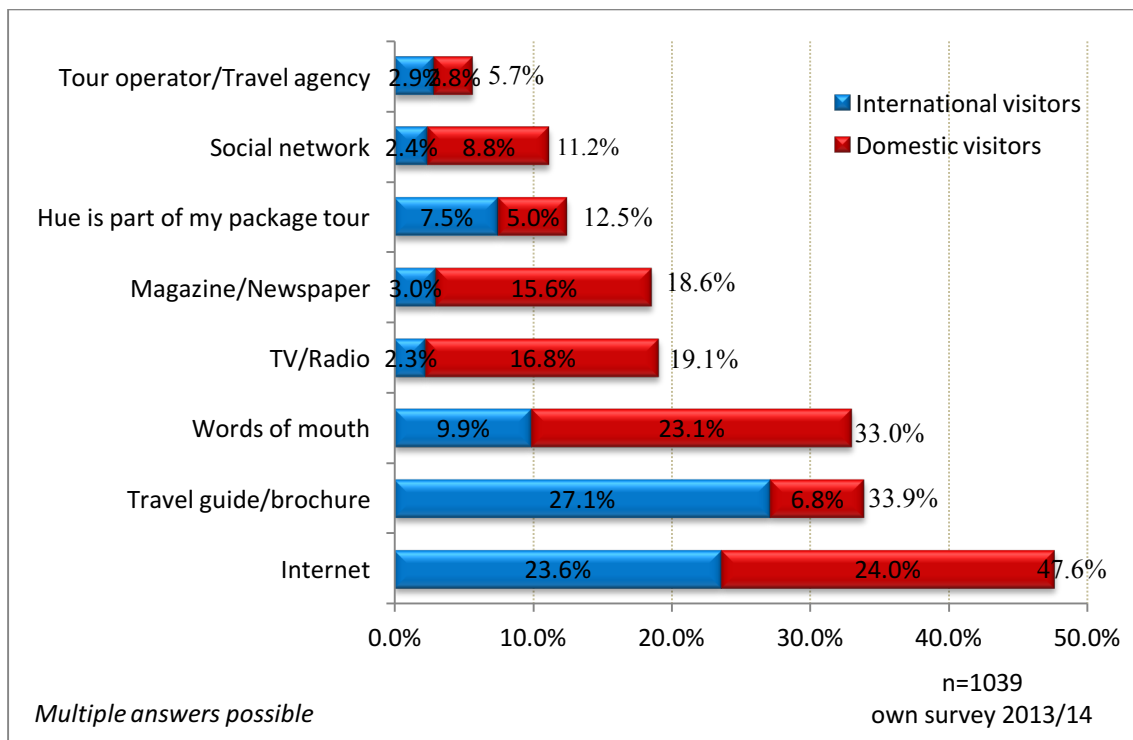
Figure 5.9: Sources of information about Hue used by visitors

The data also confirms that there are significant differences between the international and domestic visitors in using sources of information to learn about Hue. Travel guide/brochure is highly used more by the international visitors than by the domestics. On the contrary, the Vietnamese visitors prefer TV/Radio or magazine/newspaper more than the internationals in searching for information about the destination of Hue. Especially, word-of-mouth is the second influential source behind the internet for the Vietnamese tourists in finding out the destination information.

About the trip purposes, 87.7% of the respondents are in Hue for their holidays and the rest are for business, seminar/workshop, study/research and other reasons *(see figure 5.10).* This implies that Hue is really selected as a holiday destination for tourists.
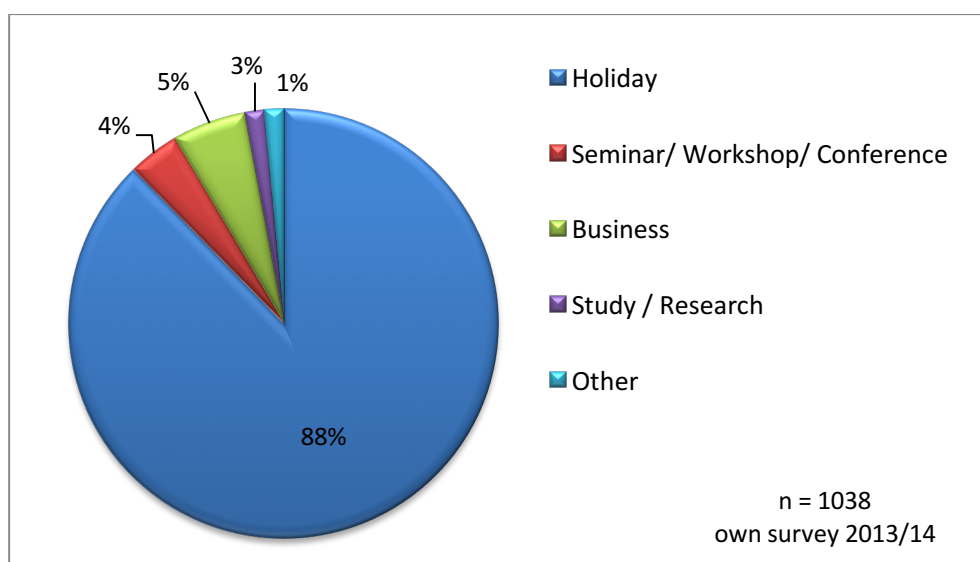
Figure 5.10: Main purposes of visit to Hue

However, there is a slight difference between the international and the domestic visitors that up to 96.1% of the international visitors choose Hue as a holiday destination while the proportion of the domestics is 78.8%. On the contrary, the other purposes such as seminar/workshop, business and study/research are preferred more by the domestics than the internationals.

Concerning the means of transport to Hue, 40.6% of the visitors travel by plane. Followed are by coach (25.4%), by bus/train (24.4%), by car (6.8%) and by other means (2.7%). For international visitors, plane is the dominant means they choose to get to Hue (52.1%), and followed are bus/train (24.5%), coach (20.2%) and car (1.7%).

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However, for the domestics, plane is not their prior carrier to Hue (28.5%) but coach (30.1%). The percentage of visitors using bus/train to travel is not very different by nationality (with 24.5% for the international and 24.3% for the domestic). Finally, car is normally used to travel more often by the Vietnamese visitors (12.2%) than by the internationals (1.7%). *(see figure 5.11)*
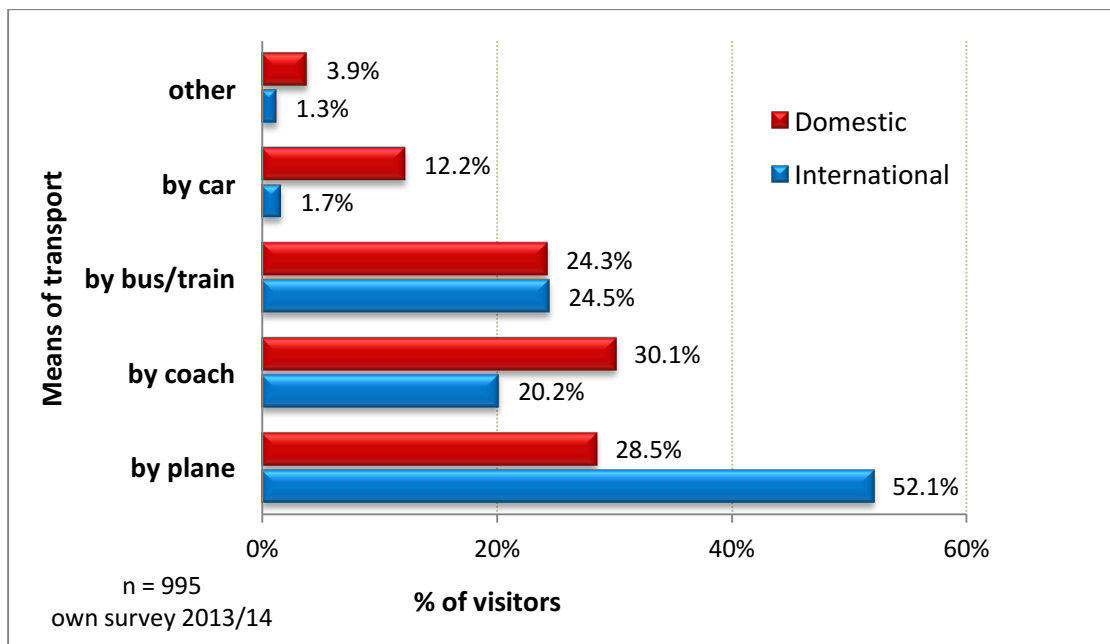
Figure 5.11: Means of transport to Hue

The survey learns that visitors traveling to Hue are highly diversified in modes of travel. More than half of the respondents come to Hue together with their family (50.1%), followed are those who travel in group (30.2%) and go alone (19.7%) *(see figure 5.12)*.
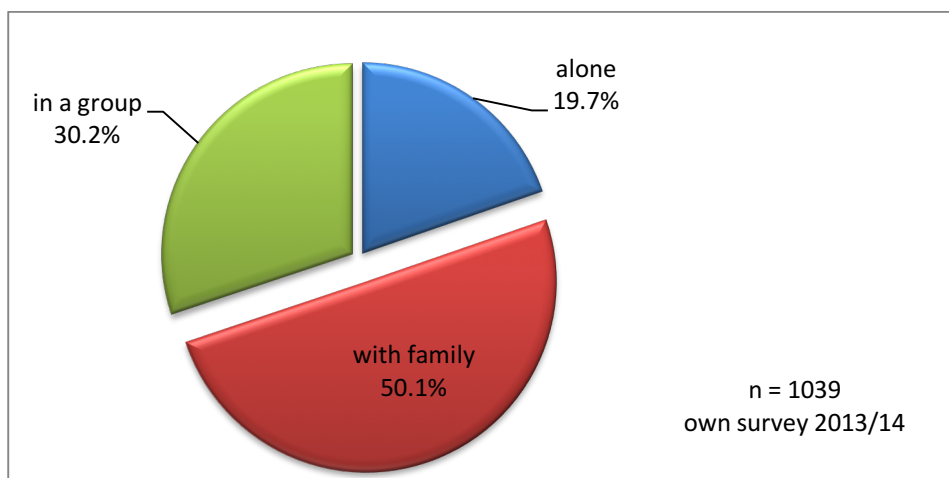
Figure 5.12: Travel pattern of visitors

The data underline that most international visitors go on holiday with their family with 57.7% while 22.2% confirm that they go in group and 20.1% travel alone to Hue. This structure is quite similar to that of domestic visitors, specifically 42.2% Vietnamese people travel with their family, 38.4% in group and 19.4% alone. The results also show that the percentage of Vietnamese visitors traveling in groups is always higher than that of international ones. This phenomenon reflects a reality that a majority of Vietnamese employees are involved in group incentive tours offered by their employers every year, normally in summer. *(see figure 5.13)*
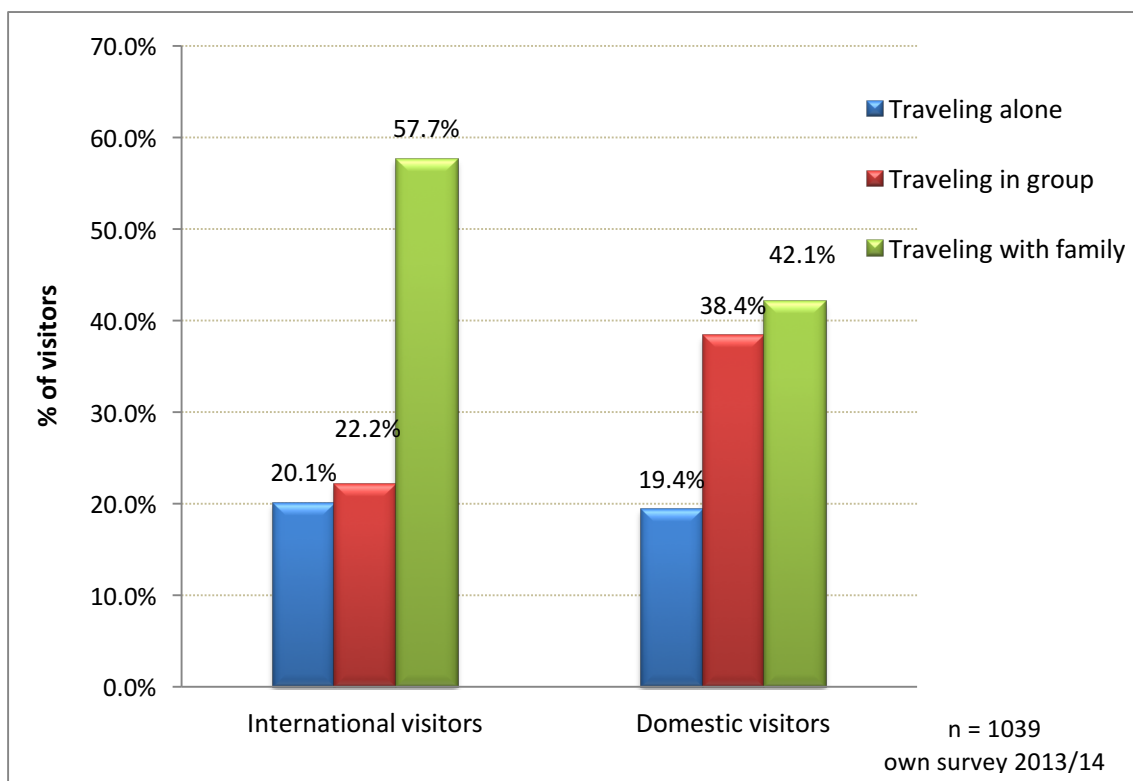
Figure 5.13: Travel pattern by nationality

There is a simple relationship between age and travel pattern of tourists that the older the people are the more they prefer to travel with their family *(see figure 5.14)*. Also, the single travelers show a plausible behavior that: The "independent" guests - young people with 24.7% and the elder ones with 21.0 % - visit Hue more often as single travelers than the other groups who are in their typical "family phase of life".
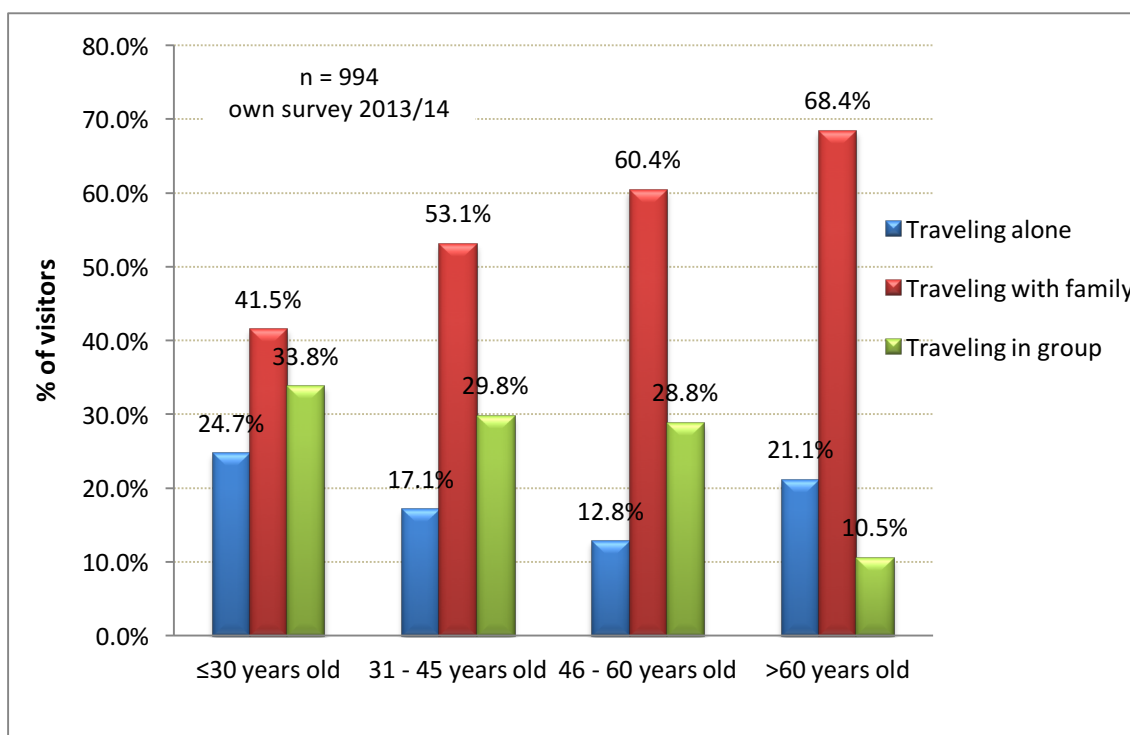
Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig.=0.000

Figure 5.14: Travel pattern by age

Excitingly, when being asked about the trip organization, there is a relatively high proportion of self-organized trips responded (76.9%; *see table 5.2*) suggesting that the tourists are quite proactive in their schedule and so the elements that constitute the trip like destination selection and logistics preparation are highly flexible. The most autonomously active tourists are the single travelers (87.1%) whereas the group travelers often use more support from professional agents or agencies (29.7%).

Table 5.2: Trip organization

	Nationality (%)		Travel with (%)			Total (%)
	International	**Domestic**	**Alone**	**Family**	**Group**	
By myself	73.2	80.9	87.1	77.0	70.3	76.9
By tour operator /travel agency	26.8	19.1	12.9	23.0	29.7	23.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Own survey 2013/14

Specifically, 42.4% of the respondents have a flexible trip and there is no substantial difference between international and domestic tourists in this regard, in which 31.9% are flexible in means of transport, 31.0% in destination choice and 18.5 % in accommodation *(see figure 5.15, 5.16)*. These numbers shows some positive signs for Hue tourism. If exists an efficient and effective marketing strategy, the opportunity to extend the length of stay and the spending of visitors in Hue would be very promising.
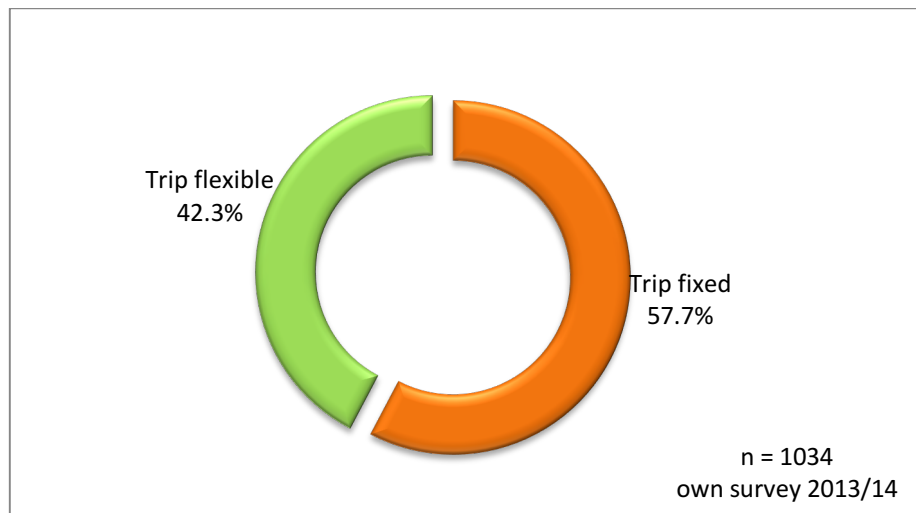
Figure 5.15: Trip flexibility
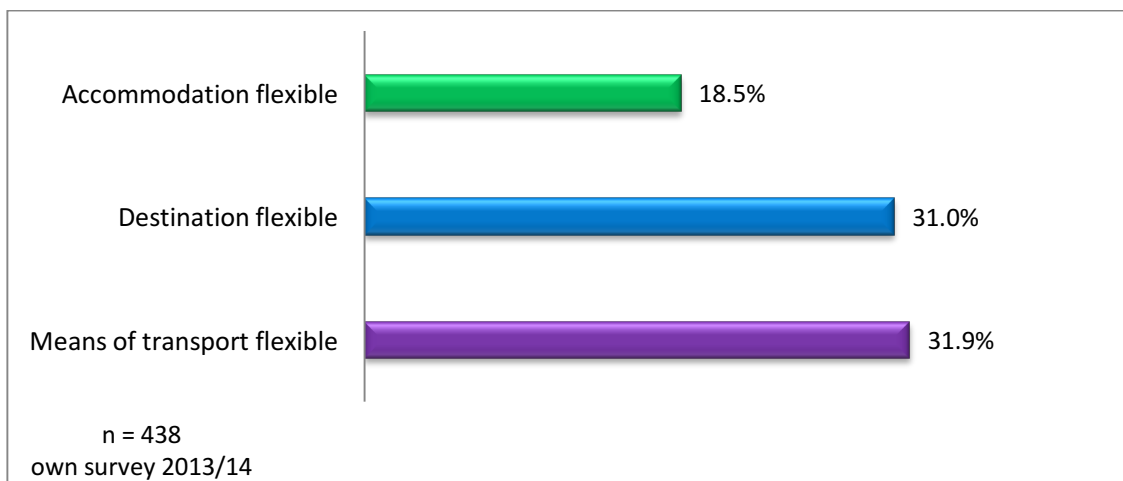
Figure 5.16: Kinds of trip flexibility

Among the respondents who have the trips organized by tour operators and completely fixed, the group of visitors traveling with family occupies the highest share (50.9%), followed by those who travel in group (38.9%) and the people traveling alone at the lowest share (10.2%).

Accommodation in Hue varies from cheap guesthouses up to luxury 5-star hotels. However, 3-4 star hotels appear to be more preferable with 40.3% of the visitors choosing for their lodging *(see figure 5.17)*.
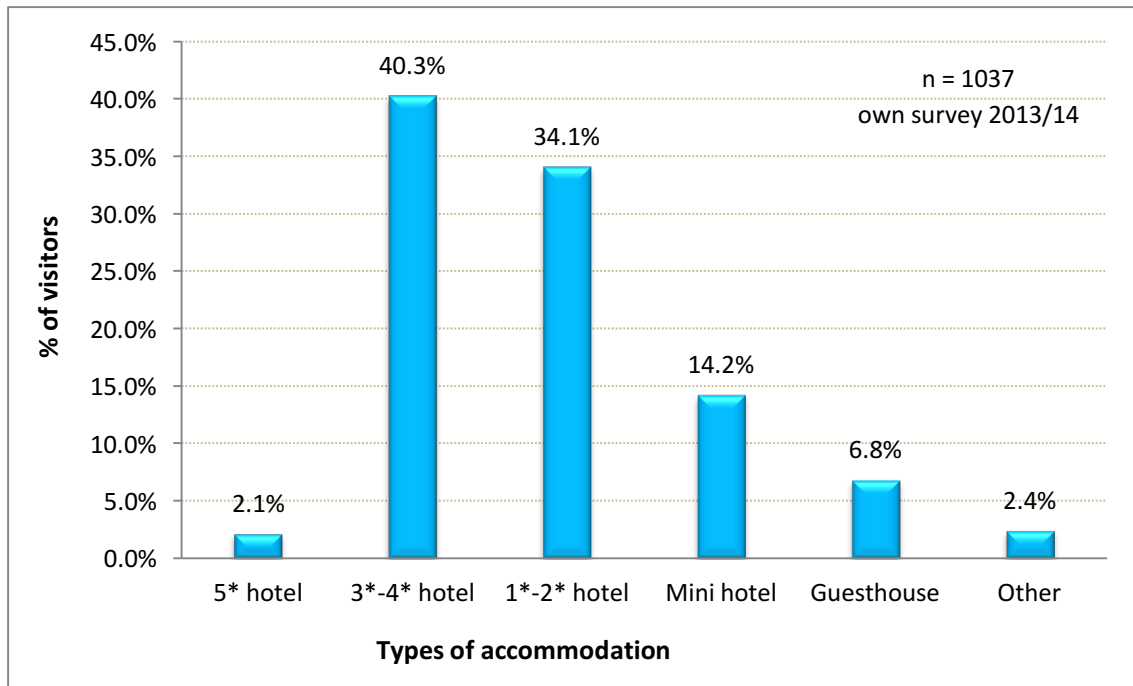
Figure 5.17: Accommodation of tourists
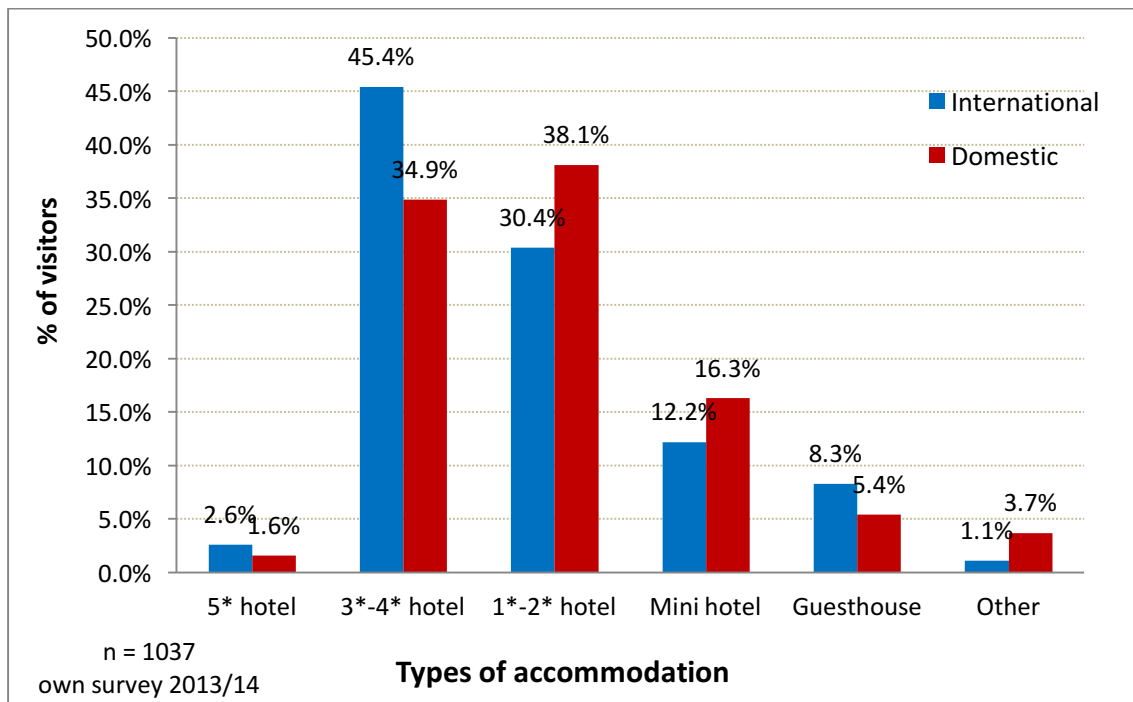
Figure 5.18: Accommodation of tourists by nationality

The differences in accommodating between international and domestic visitors are visibly shown in figure 5.18. To be specific, more international visitors prefer to stay in 3-4 star hotels whereas the Vietnamese tourists mostly choose the cheaper 1-2 star hotels or mini hotels. For those who choose guesthouse for their lodging, it is a little bit surprising that the share of international tourists is higher than that of the domestics.

6 Tourism Destination Image Measurement

As tourism has become a buyer's market, the tourists have many options on the choice of their vacation destination. To gain the competitive advantage, a destination must be favorably differentiated from its competitors and positively positioned in the minds of the buyers. Thus, making a destination visible, distinctive and appealing to the tourists is a very crucial and urgent task for the destination marketers, of which building an appealing destination image is the first priority.

The findings of visitor survey on tourism destination image in this chapter will unveil the visitors' perception about the destination image of Hue. The visitors' ratings on the general image, the importance and performance of the attribute-images as well as their opinions on the holistic and unique images of Hue will be adequately presented in this part of the thesis.

6.1 General Impression with the Destination

This section presents the visitors' general impression about the destination of Hue. Table 6.1 indicates that Hue has a fairly positive image in the minds of visitors (mean=8.25/10).

As explained in chapter 2 (see 2.2.2 Destination Image Foundation), the image formation of a destination actually depends on many influencing factors. The image of a destination where the visitors have not been in before is dependent on second and third-hand information (WOM, media, etc.) as they have no experience on their own. For those who have just arrived but already gone to Hue earlier, their image of Hue is mostly influenced by their previous experiences.

People who have never been in Hue before and who have just arrived in Hue have much more positive opinions about the city than other groups with the average value of 8.76 *(see table 6.1)*.

Table 6.1: General impression by different groups of visitors

	N	Average value of evaluation
All visitors	1000	8.26
Visitors who just arrived	482	8.62
Visitor who just arrived and have never been in Hue before	351	8.76

Own survey 2013/14

Table 6.1 reveals a negative result for Hue that the image of the city is very positive only if the tourists have no earlier experience of the city on their own. For those who have stayed at least one day in Hue before and then come back to Hue for the second time or even more, their assessments on Hue's image become poorer.

Table 6.2: General impression by visitors' demographic and time arrival

		Mean*	p value
Nationality	International	8.29	0.176**
	Vietnamese	8.21	
Gender	Male	8.24	0.729**
	Female	8.26	
Age	≤ 30 years old	8.05	**0.000***
	31 - 45 years old	8.31	
	46 - 60 years old	8.33	
	>60 years old	8.50	
Time arrival	Today	8.62	**0.000***
	Yesterday	7.88	
	2 days ago	7.91	
	3 days ago or more	8.00	

Own survey 2013/14

(*): 1: extremely negative – 10: extremely positive
(**): result from Independent-Samples T Test
(***): result from One-way ANOVA

In general, the international visitors' evaluation on the general image of Hue is pretty similar to the domestics' (8.29 and 8.21 respectively). With regard to the gender, there is no significant difference between men and women in their ratings. The data also show that the impression is significantly different among visitors' age and time of arrival in Hue. Concerning the time of arrival in Hue, the group coming to Hue just "*today*" has

the most positive rating (mean=8.62) for Hue general image compared to the remaining groups. *(see table 6.2)*

6.2 Visitors' Opinions on Five Specific Features of the City

Alongside with the question of general impression about Hue, five general features of this destination including "tourism service quality in Hue", "public safety in the city", "overall cleanliness in the city", "price cheating" and "annoying vendors and beggars" are suggested to get the evaluation by the visitors.

These features are measured by a 5-level ordinal scale (from "1 = very bad" to "5 = very good"; see chapter 2). However, in the analysis of this section, the ordinal scale is treated as a metric scale.

Generally, the respondents have moderately positive ratings on these five general features of Hue and the highest appreciation goes for "tourism service quality" (mean = 3.84). "Price cheating" (mean = 3.39) and "annoying vendors and beggars" (mean = 3.50) which used to be considered main problems of Hue tourism in the past years are no longer the main troubles for most visitors in this survey. However, these problems still remain in Hue since part of the survey respondents rated them as bad experience.

As mentioned in chapter 3, nearly half of the respondents in the survey sample are interviewed within their first hour of arrival in Hue (48.2%; *see chapter 4*). Thus, the data show a high percentage of visitors who "can't rate" their opinions on these five features of Hue *(see figure 6.1)*.
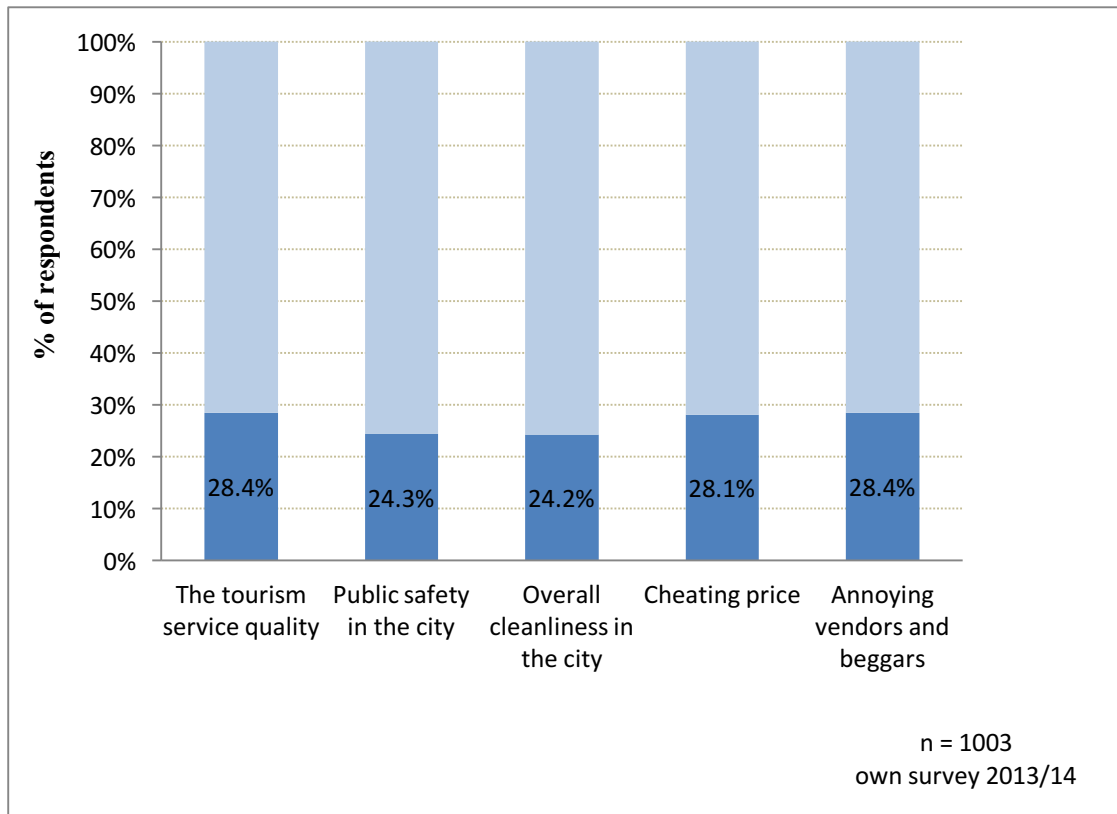
Figure 6.1: Proportion of respondents with no rating on five features of Hue

6.2.1 Tourism Service Quality

As mentioned in chapter 2, tourism service quality depends totally on visitor's perception as it is the comparison result of visitors between their expectations and their feelings after using the service. Undoubtedly, a service is excellent when customers identify no gap between their expectation and their satisfaction. In fact, different visitors may have varied perceptions on the same service.

In this study, the analysis indicates that there are significant differences in the assessment on the feature "tourism service quality" among different groups of gender and time arrival in Hue. Generally, for most visitors the quality of tourism services in Hue is somewhat acceptable for their needs and wants. *(see table 6.3)*

Table 6.3: Visitors' evaluation on tourism service quality

Feature 1: Tourism service quality

		Mean*	p value
Nationality	International	3.81	0.179**
	Vietnamese	3.87	
Gender	Male	3.89	**0.048****
	Female	3.80	
Age	≤ 30 years old	3.87	0.087***
	31 - 45 years old	3.78	
	46 - 60 years old	3.90	
	>60 years old	3.87	
Time arrival	Today	3.92	**0.048***
	Yesterday	3.84	
	2 days ago	3.76	
	3 days ago or more	3.88	

Own survey 2013/14

(*): 1: very bad – 5: very good
(**): result from Independent-Samples T - Test
(***): result from One-way ANOVA

6.2.2 Public Safety in the City

Concerning the evaluation on the "public safety in the city" (mean = 3.76), the survey finds that there are significant differences in the opinions of the respondent groups categorized by nationality, education and time arrival in Hue. Specifically, international visitors feel less safe in Hue than the domestic. This finding sounds reasonable because the public daily environment in the city is more familiar with most of the Vietnamese than with the foreigners. In addition, visitors who have just arrived in Hue "today" feel safer than those who have already stayed for one or two nights in the city. On the contrary, visitors staying "3 days and more" in Hue give the highest appreciation in response to the question of public safety. (*see table 6.4*)

Table 6.4: Visitors' evaluation on public safety in Hue

Feature 2: Public safety in the city

		Mean*	p value
Nationality	International	3.52	**0.000****
	Vietnamese	3.99	
Gender	Male	3.76	0.935**
	Female	3.76	
Age	≤ 30 years old	3.84	0.136***
	31 - 45 years old	3.69	
	46 - 60 years old	3.79	
	>60 years old	3.67	
Time arrival	Today	3.82	**0.009*****
	Yesterday	3.77	
	2 days ago	3.65	
	3 days ago or more	3.91	

Own survey 2013/14

(*): 1: very bad – 5: very good
(**): result from Independent-Samples T -Test
(***): result from One-way ANOVA

6.2.3 Overall Cleanliness in the City

The study finds that the attitude of visitors on the feature "overall cleanliness in the city" is significantly different by their nationality and time of arrival. Domestic visitors feel more satisfied with the overall cleanliness of the city than the international guests. Especially, the group of visitors who have just arrived in Hue give the most positive evaluation about the cleanliness of the city than the visitors who have already stayed overnight in the destination. *(see table 6.5)*

Table 6.5: Visitors' evaluation on overall cleanliness in the city

Feature 3: Overall cleanliness in the city

		Mean*	p value
Nationality	International	3.35	**0.000****
	Vietnamese	3.69	
Gender	Male	3.50	0.280**
	Female	3.56	
Age	≤ 30 years old	3.60	0.090***
	31 - 45 years old	3.50	
	46 - 60 years old	3.47	
	>60 years old	3.53	
Time arrival	Today	3.64	**0.007****
	Yesterday	3.52	
	2 days ago	3.43	
	3 days ago or more	3.51	

Own survey 2013/14

(*): 1: very bad – 5: very good
(**): result from Independent-Samples T -Test
(***): result from One-way ANOVA

6.2.4 The Problem of Price Cheating

Vietnam in general and Hue in particular are considered friendly and safe places for travelling. At the moment, Hue is a premier tourist destination mostly in theory. Notwithstanding that it is a beautiful and exciting city with great places to stay and delicious food as well as a number of other interesting things to do, there are still several issues needed to be addressed indeed.

The "buyer-based pricing" is quite common in all shops, markets and services in Hue. This mean that the selling price is normally based on visitors' face, for instance the strange visitors to Hue normally buy things with higher prices than the local people. It can be stated that the problem of such a "price cheating" practice is still popular in Hue. Remarkably, the survey discovers that domestic tourists encounter this problem more often than international visitors. Besides, young visitors (≤ 30 years old) and the visitors who have spent at least 3 nights in the city think that "price cheating" is more common in Hue than the remaining groups. *(see table 6.6)*

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Table 6.6: Visitors' evaluation on the problem of price cheating

Feature 4: Problem of price cheating in the city

		Mean*	p value
Nationality	International	3.53	0.000**
	Vietnamese	3.25	
Gender	Male	3.37	0.568**
	Female	3.41	
Age	≤ 30 years old	3.18	0.003***
	31 - 45 years old	3.44	
	46 - 60 years old	3.56	
	>60 years old	3.66	
Time arrival	Today	3.67	0.000***
	Yesterday	3.36	
	2 days ago	3.26	
	3 days ago or more	3.04	

Own survey 2013/14

(*): 1: very bad – 5: very good
(**): result from Independent-Samples T -Test
(***): result from One-way ANOVA

6.2.5 The Problem of Annoying Venders and Beggars

Similar to the problem of "price cheating", the trouble of "annoying venders and beggars" is not so strange to tourists in Hue. Hue is a beautiful city with lots of greenery, but taking a walk on the street has ever never been a sense of comfort for the tourists because they are normally bothered by cyclo drivers, street venders or beggars. The beggars and street venders - from children to elderly ones are sometimes very over-aggressive to tourists. This situation can be easily captured almost everywhere in the city. Although this nuisance has been much remedied by the local government in the recent time, it still exists in the city so far. This problem negatively affect to the tourism image of Hue and its visitor satisfaction. In this study, it is also interesting to figure out that male tourists often find this problem more annoying than female tourists. Futhermore, the longer the stay of the visitors, the more annoyances they get from the street venders and beggars. *(see table 6.7)*

Table 6.7: Visitors' evaluation on the problem of annoying venders and beggars

Feature 5: Problem of annoying venders and beggars in Hue

		Mean*	p value
Nationality	International	3.52	0.551**
	Vietnamese	3.47	
Gender	Male	3.37	**0.004****
	Female	3.61	
Age	≤ 30 years old	3.34	0.078***
	31 - 45 years old	3.61	
	46 - 60 years old	3.52	
	>60 years old	3.69	
Time arrival	Today	3.87	**0.000****
	Yesterday	3.35	
	2 days ago	3.36	
	3 days ago or more	3.26	

Own survey 2013/14

(*): 1: very bad – 5: very good
(**): result from Independent-Samples T -Test
(***): result from One-way ANOVA

6.3 Importance – Performance Analysis

Importance–performance analysis is used in this research with the aim to find out the gaps between the importance and performance of every single attribute and provide a visual overview of these gaps through IPA grid – which is the basis for the implications to improve the destination image of Hue.

6.3.1 The Importance of Destination Attribute-Images

It is true that not all the features, attributes or offers are relevant for all tourists. Therefore, the personal opinions about the importance (relevance) need to be captured. Through this initial analysis of importance of Hue attributes, the study is expected to provide interesting and useful information to the destination planners and marketers.

The importance of destination attribute-images is measured by a 4-level interval scale which ranges from 1 (= "totally unimportant") to 4 (= "very important").

6.3.1.1 Attribute-Images' Importance Ranking

Reliability analysis is applied to test the goodness of all variables with the use of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Cronbach's Alpha is taken to analyze the degree of consistency among the items in a construct. NUNALLY/BERNSTEIN (1994: 620) mentions that the Cronbach alpha should be at least 0.7 for the results to be deemed as reliable. In this study, the value for each variable is above 0.8 so they are valid for the analysis *(see appendix 5)*.

The ranking of the attribute-images used in this study and their achieved importance share are shown in figure 6.2.

	Very important	Important	Total
Specific traditional dress for women	41.9%	34.5%	76.4%
Specific conical hats for women	34.3%	42.5%	76.8%
Specific performances of Hue's folk songs	33.0%	45.4%	78.4%
Traditional means of transport	35.2%	49.3%	84.5%
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	51.2%	34.6%	85.8%
A unique lifestyle of local people	43.9%	47.8%	91.7%
Interesting traditional festivals and events	50.5%	41.7%	92.2%
A peaceful atmosphere	49.0%	43.6%	92.6%
A wide range of cultural activities	50.3%	44.9%	95.2%
Featured architecture	54.1%	42.1%	96.2%
Well skilled and hospitable tourism staff	73.9%	22.9%	96.8%
Delicious food and cuisine	69.7%	27.9%	97.6%
Many unique historic attractions	58.4%	39.3%	97.7%
Friendly and welcoming people	53.5%	44.5%	98.0%

% of respondents

own survey 2013/14

Figure 6.2: Importance ranking of attribute-images

"Friendly and welcoming people", "many unique historic attractions" and "delicious food and cuisine" are three attributes getting the highest relevance for Hue visitors. However, "well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff" needs to be noticed because this

feature receives the uppermost proportion of visitors (73.9%) who declare it as "very important".

The attribute-images that visitors consider to be least important in their trip are "specific conical hats for women", "specific performance of Hue's folk songs, "Specific traditional dress for women" and "traditional means of transport". This makes sense since these specific attributes of a locality hardly pop up in the visitors' mind for consideration at the time of making destination choices. Visitors can only perceive these local features when they have already been in the destination or they have heard about them before.

However, figure 6.3 shows that many tourists are unable to rate on these features. Unhappily, "the performance of Hue's folk songs" and "specific conical hats for women" have long been very popular images of Hue, but these attractions have gradually lost their power in the mind of visitors over time. "Specific traditional dress for women" and "traditional means of transport" are the next attributes getting the low interests from the visitors.
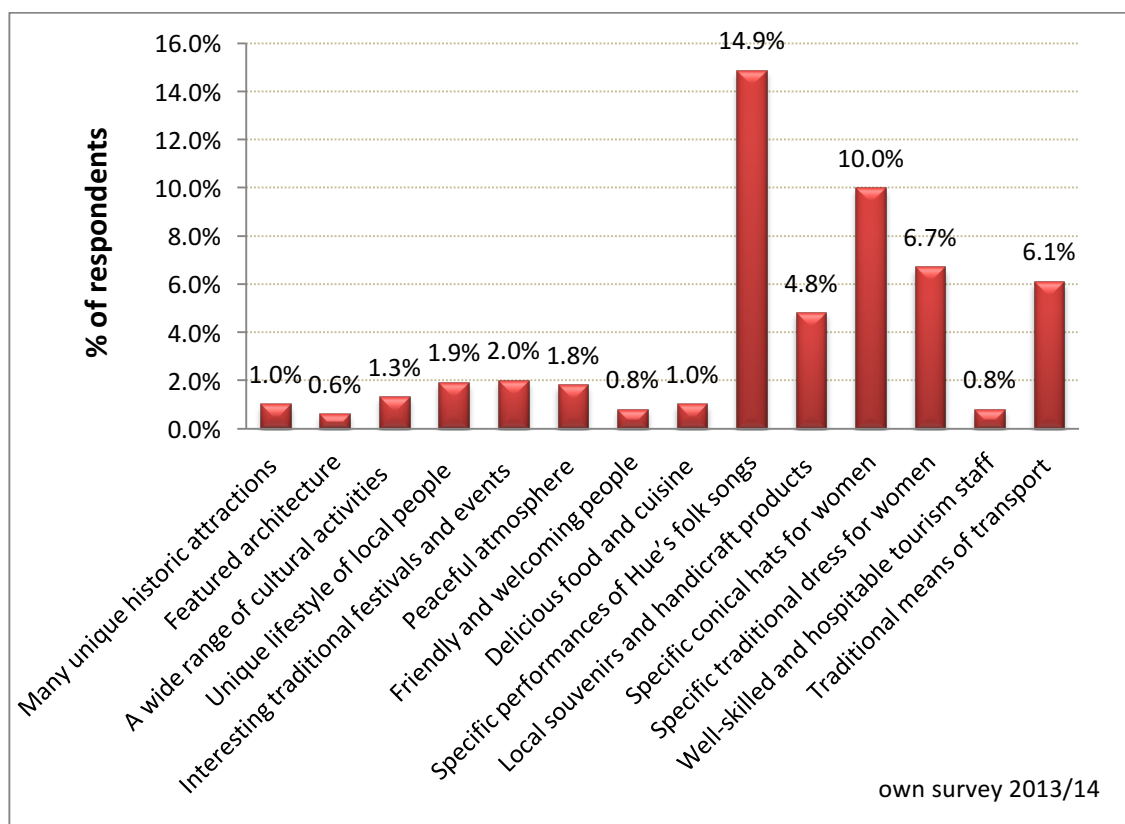
Figure 6.3: Proportion of respondents with no rating on the importance

6.3.1.2 The Importance of Attribute-Images by Different Groups of Visitors

Visitors with different nationalities, genders, ages and times of arrival in Hue may have varied preferences on the importance of Hue attribute-images. The following findings will concisely clarify this question.

Nationality

The result of the Independence Sample T-Test reveals that there are significant differences in the opinions of the respondent groups categorized by the nationality on nine attributes (*see appendix 6, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05*). In general, the gaps in the evaluation between international and domestic visitors are quite slim.
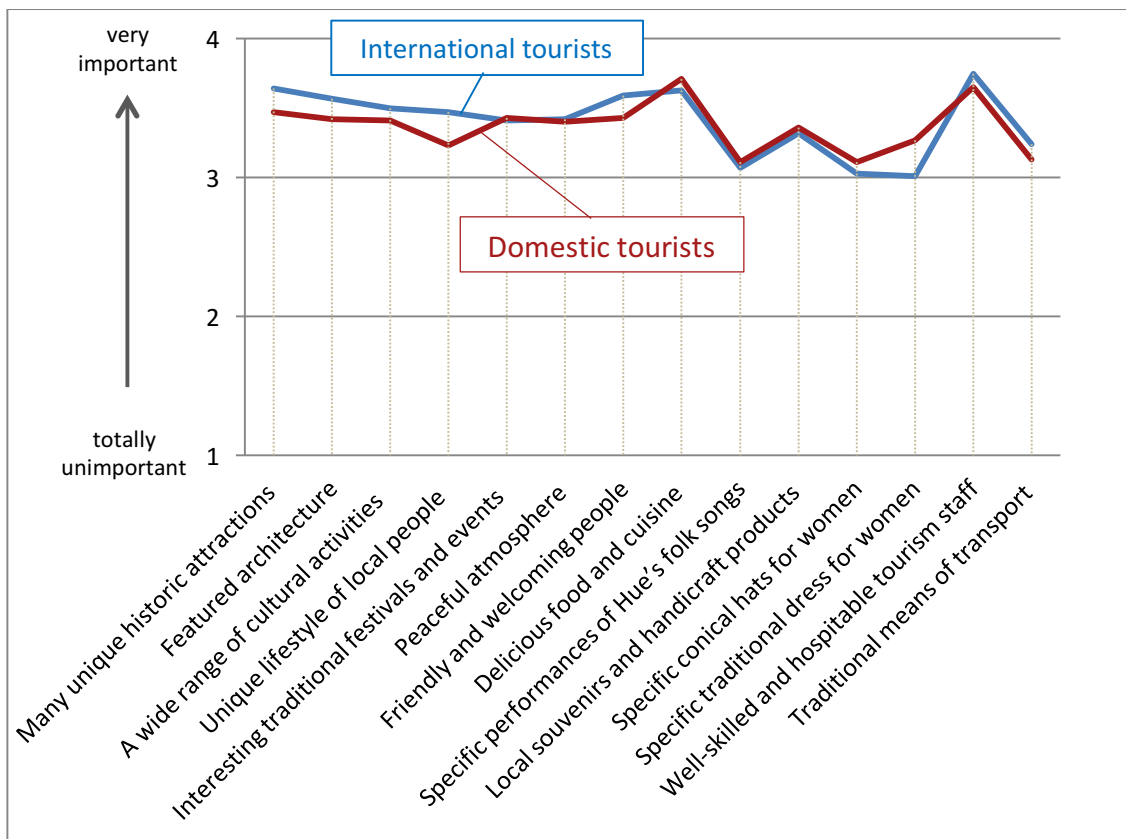
Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 4 (=very important) down to 1 (=totally unimportant)*

Figure 6.4: The differences in importance by visitors' nationality

Statistical differences are concerning the following attribute-images *(see figure 6.4)*:

- "Unique lifestyle of local people" is more important for foreigners; whereas
- "Specific traditional dress for women" is more preferred by domestic visitors.

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Foreigners:

- focus on "well-skilled and hospitable staffs" (mean = 3.75) with highest relevance; and

- "specific traditional dress for women", "specific conical hat for women" seem not so important for them (mean = 3.01 and 3.03 respectively).

Vietnamese visitors:

- highest priority is for "well-skilled and hospitable staffs" (mean = 3.65) and

- they are less interested in "specific performance of Hue's folk songs" (mean=3.11) and "specific conical hat for women" (mean = 3.11).

Gender
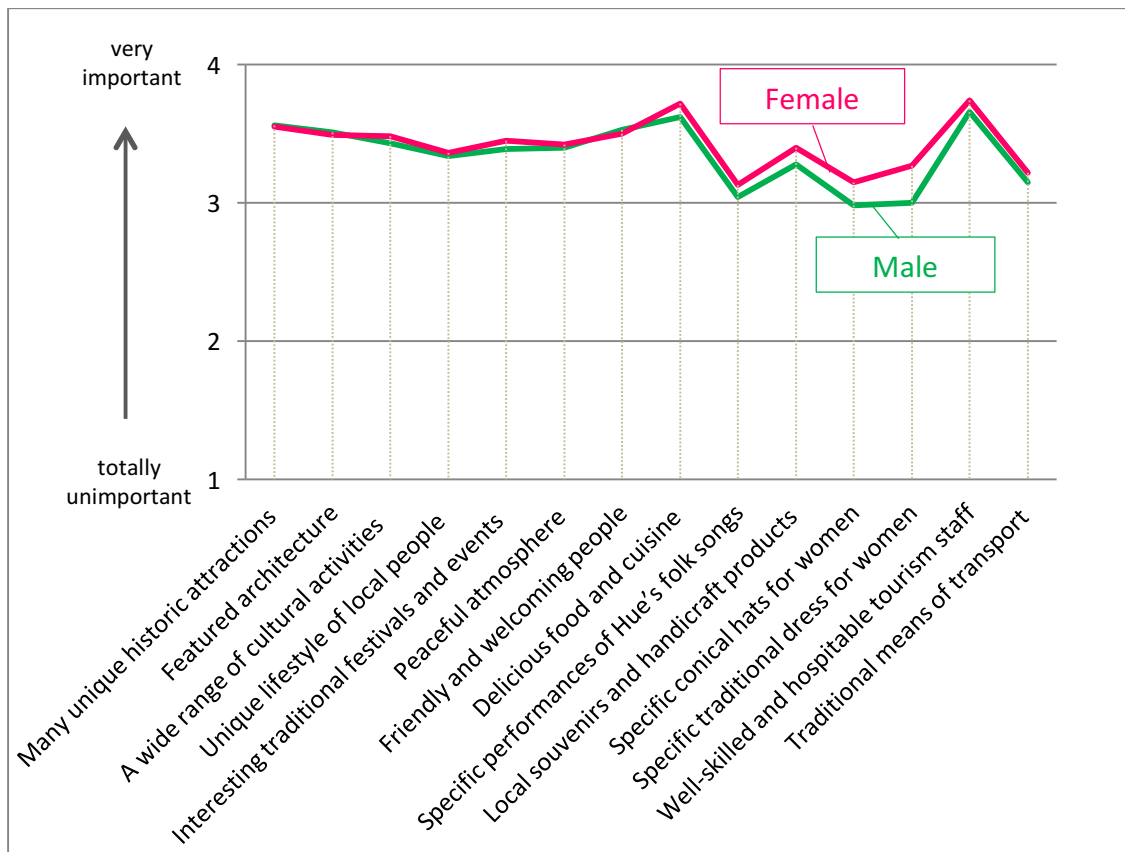
Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 4 (=very important) down to 1 (=totally unimportant)*

Figure 6.5: The differences in importance by visitors' gender

The analysis discovers that five out of fourteen attribute-images receive the significantly different assessment between male and female respondents. These attributes include "delicious food and cuisine", "specific local souvenirs and handicraft products", "specific conical hats for women", "specific traditional dress for women" and "well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff" (*see appendix 7, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05*). Women normally evaluate the surveyed attribute-images with higher importance than men *(see figure 6.5).*

For both men and women, the top concern is "well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff". The attribute which receives the lowest ranking from men is "specific conical hats for women" whereas women are least interested in "specific performance of Hue's folk songs ".

Age
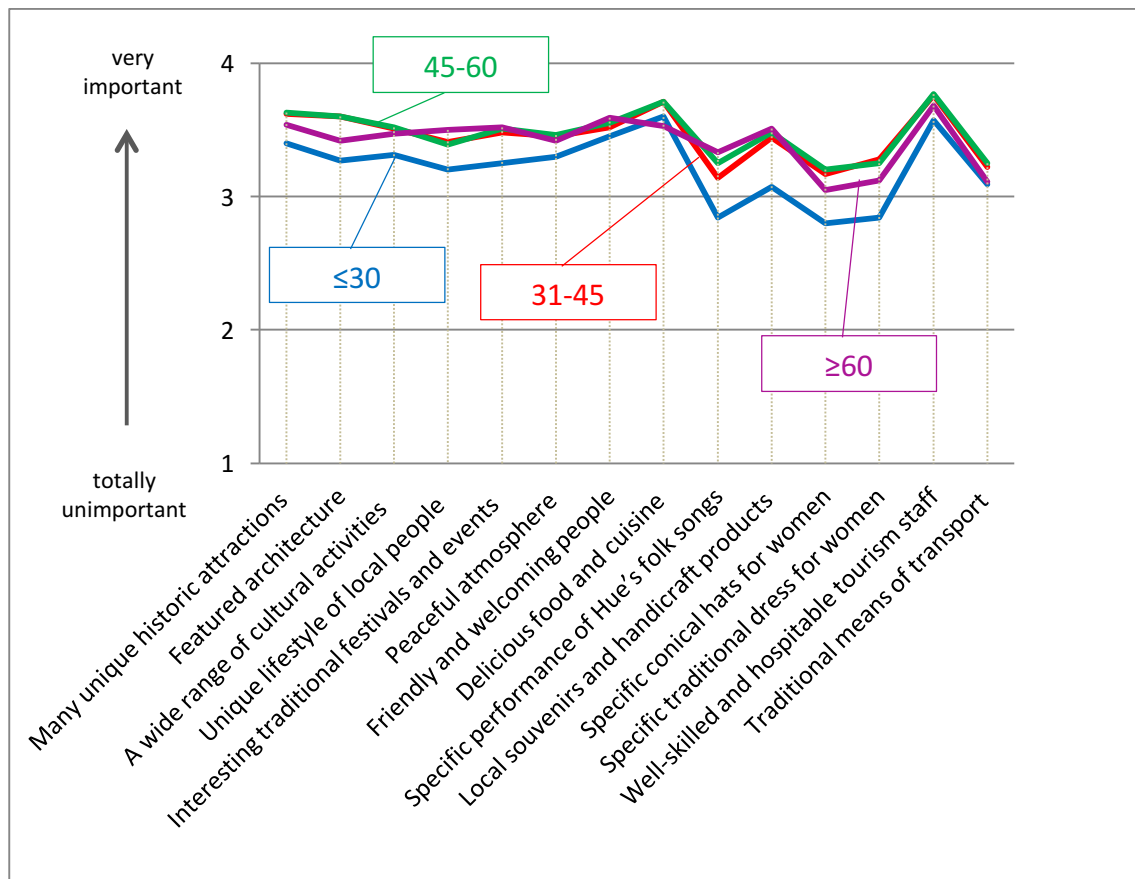
Own survey 2013/14   *Scale* from 4 (=very important) down to 1 (=totally unimportant)

Figure 6.6: The differences in importance by visitors' age

The opinions of the respondents in different groups of age are considerably dissimilar among the five attribute-images of "a wide range of cultural activities", "unique lifestyle of local people", "interesting traditional festivals and events", "delicious food and cuisine" and "specific performance of Hue's folk songs" (*see appendix 8, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05*). In general, the attribute-images are more important for the respondents of above 45 years old than for the people of 30 years old and younger *(see figure 6.6)*.

Time of Arrival in Hue

There are substantial differences in assessment on ten attribute-images by visitors with different times of arrival in Hue (*see appendix 9, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05*).
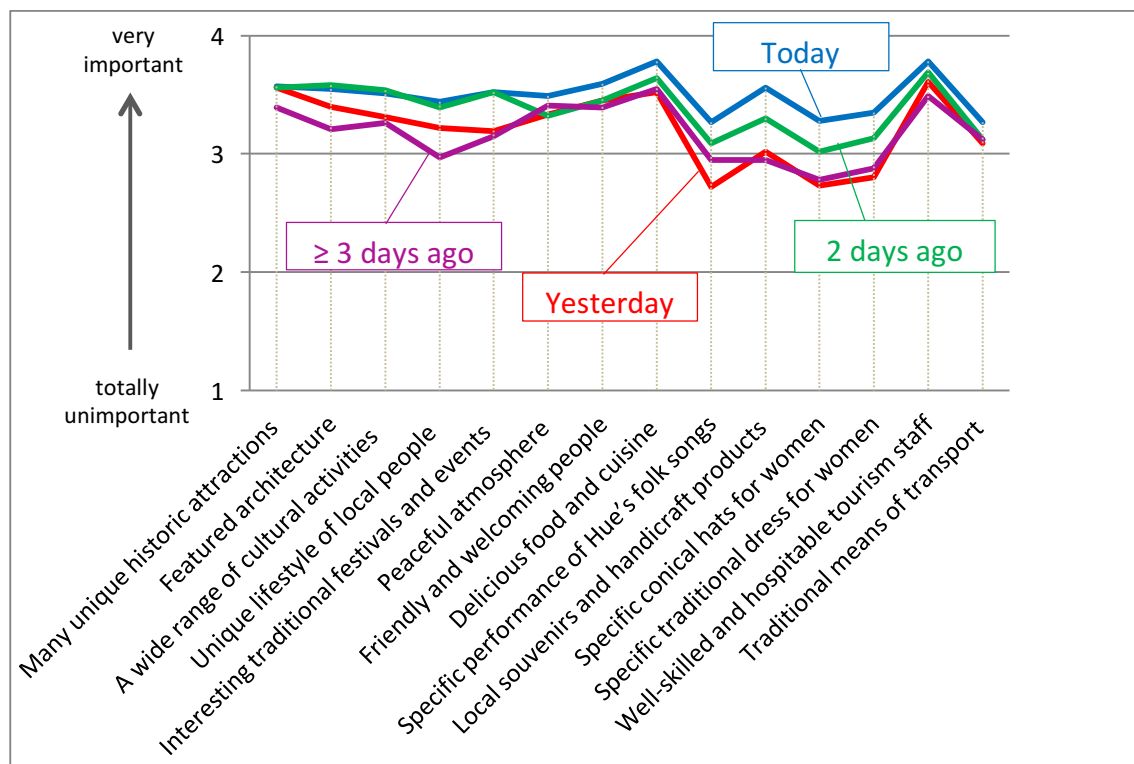
Own survey 2013/14   *(*) scale from 4 (=very important) down to 1(=totally unimportant)*

Figure 6.7: The differences in importance by visitors' time of arrival

The interesting finding is that the group arriving in Hue "*today*" evaluates the attribute-images more important than the other groups. The group arriving in Hue *"≥ 3 days ago"* gives the least importance on ten attribute-images in comparison with the other groups. Especially, the evaluation gaps between the group *"today"* and groups *"≥ 3*

days ago" are rather big. It seems that the expectation of tourists becomes lower along with their stay duration. *(see figure 6.7)*

Throughout the initial analysis of tourist perceptions on the importance of Hue attribute-images, the study provides a plentiful source of interesting and useful information to the destination marketers in Hue. Results from data analyses indicate that, all of the mean scores of the thirteen attributes in terms of their importance level are higher than 3.0, which is the value of high importance level. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the fourteen attribute-images are significantly important to the visitors' decision on choosing Hue as their destination. In addition, further analyses with different groups of nationality, gender, age and time of arrival in Hue also reveal a lot of important information which helps the destination to develop its tourism images consistent with the market demand.

6.3.2 The Performance of Destination Attribute-Images

The assessment of visitors on the performance of Hue attribute-images will be presented in this section. Besides, the significant differences in the assessment of Hue attribute-images among different groups of visitors divided by gender, nationality, age and time of arrival in Hue are also revealed.

6.3.2.1 Attribute-Images' Performance Ranking

Initially, a reliability test with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is used in the satisfaction analysis. In this section, the value for each of every variable is above 0.8 proving that the variables are reliable. The result of reliability analysis is given in appendix 10.

Figure 6.8 displays the ranking of attribute-images based on the share of respondents who state that they are "excellent performed" or "good performed" with the surveyed attribute-images in Hue. "Many unique historic attractions" is the attribute getting the most positive feedback from the visitors, whereas "specific performance of Hue's folk songs" is ranked at the bottom.
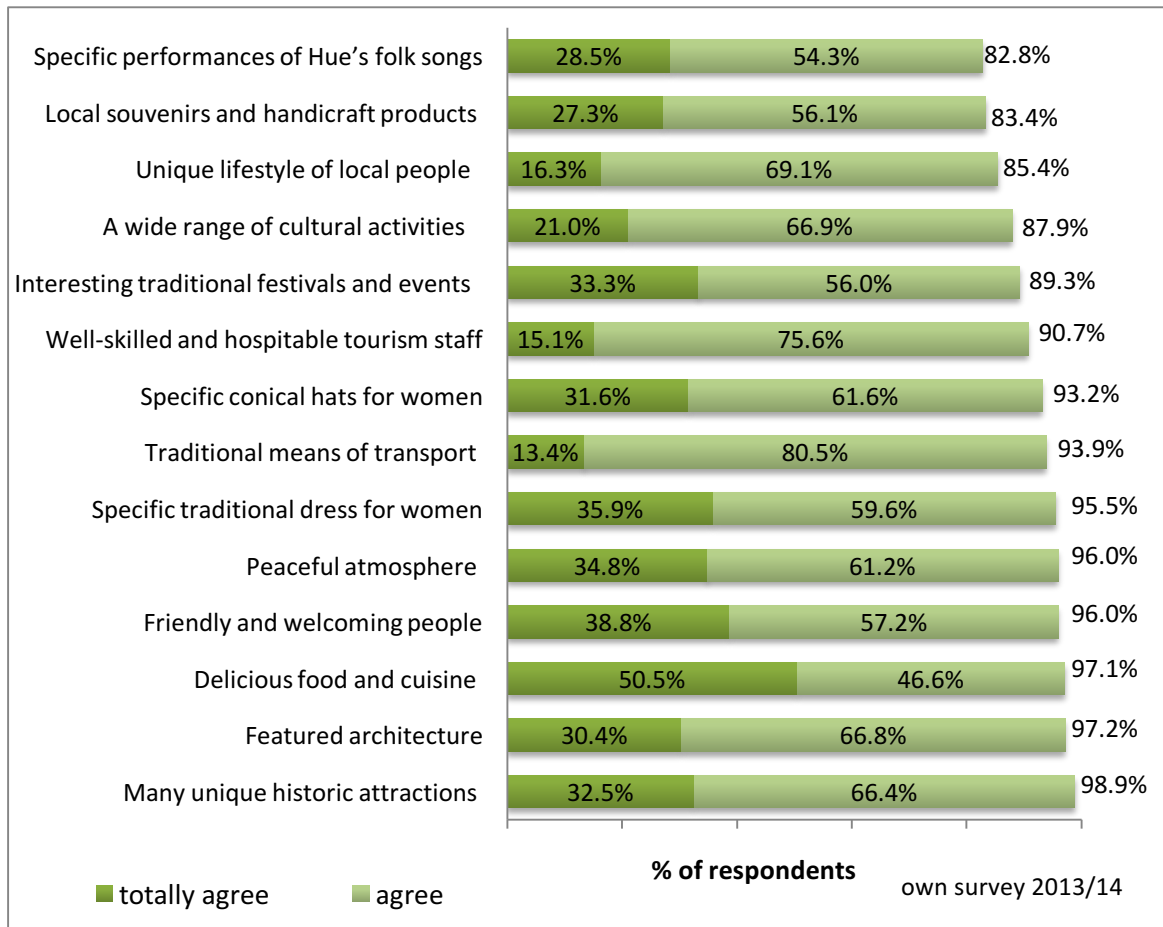
Figure 6.8: Performance ranking of attribute-images

Considering the four levels of answer possibilities as an interval scale (see chapter 3), there are a couple of more detailed results which are noticeable. The interval ranking by the interval mean *(see table 6.8)* delivers a little bit different order compared with the previous ranking shown in figure 6.8 - attributes with a higher share of "very important" are ranked higher by the interval scale. Table 6.8 demonstrates the average values of performance and the statistical variation.

"Delicious food and cuisine", "friendly and welcoming people", "many unique historic attractions", "peaceful atmosphere" and "specific traditional dress for women" are five attributes performing the best to tourists.

"Peaceful atmosphere" and "specific traditional dress for women" get the same appreciation value by the visitors. This is understandable since Hue is a destination with slow living pace, not too noisy and crowded like other bigger cities in Vietnam. Moreover, the locals are quite friendly and gentle. These elements help create a relaxing

and peaceful atmosphere for the visitors in Hue. "Specific traditional dress for women" which is considered a symbolic image of Hue women and also a rich inspiration for many poets and writers is highly appreciated by the visitors.

Table 6.8: Performance of attribute-images

Hue offers:	Rank	Mean*	Std. Deviation
Many unique historic attractions	2	3.31	0.491
Featured architecture	5	3.27	0.514
A wide range of cultural activities	11	3.08	0.587
Unique lifestyle of local people	14	3.01	0.569
Interesting traditional festivals and events	8	3.22	0.649
Peaceful atmosphere	3	3.30	0.559
Friendly and welcoming people	6	3.34	0.576
Delicious food and cuisine	1	3.48	0.554
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	9	3.10	0.697
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	10	3.09	0.687
Specific conical hats for women	7	3.24	0.597
Specific traditional dress for women	4	3.30	0.594
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	13	3.05	0.509
Traditional means of transport	12	3.07	0.455
Valid N (listwise): 345			

Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree)*

Of the total fourteen attribute-images, "unique lifestyle of local people" gets the lowest appreciation from the visitors. Hue is well known as a place which still reserves lots of traditional and religious rituals of the ancient natives. In addition, Hue people are also famous for their bashful and reticent characteristics, especially for women. The local people's characteristics have remarkably influenced their typical lifestyle which could be described in single word "unique". However, in this study visitors seem not to realize fully about this typical attribute of Hue. This is possibly due to the lack of tourism products for tourists and promotional activities that expose the locals' lifestyle.

The performance evaluation of respondents on Hue attribute-images has been presented in this section. In addition, the performance analyses in different groups of visitors divided by gender, nationality, age and time of arrival in Hue are also examined.

Honestly, a high number of visitors do not give their opinions on the performance of Hue attribute-images (with the answer of "can't rate"). Figure 6.9 shows a big variety among the fourteen attributes which do not get any ratings from the visitors. "Specific performance of Hue's folk songs", "unique lifestyle of local people", "local souvenirs and handicraft products" and "interesting traditional festivals and events" receive the highest shares of "can't rate" because tourists need to experience these offers before they assess them. However for the attributes "many unique historic attractions" and "featured architecture", tourists still rate their opinions although they have not experience them yet. This might be explained that these two offers are quite familiar to tourists since they are considered as typical images of Hue and often employed to promote the destination.
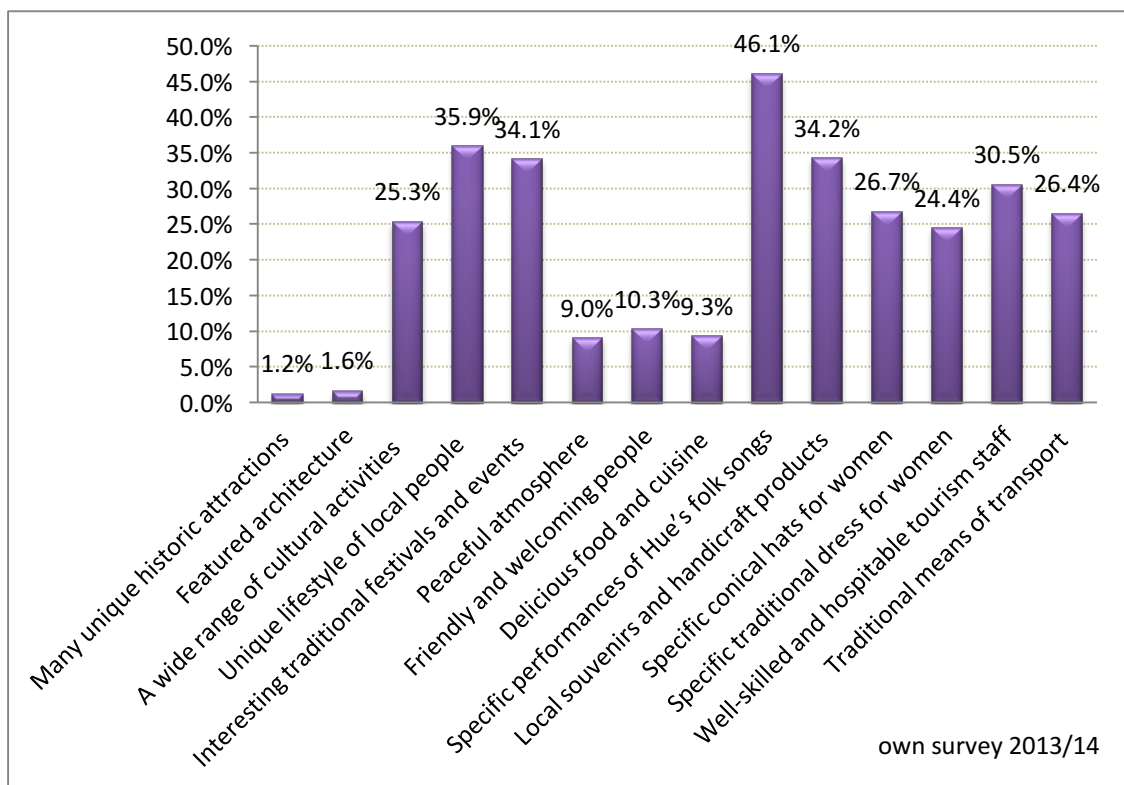
Figure 6.9: Proportion of respondents with no ratings on the performance of Hue attribute-images

6.3.2.2 Performance of Attribute-Images by Different Groups of Visitors

Visitors with different nationalities, genders, ages and times of arrival in Hue may have significant differences in assessment on the performance of Hue attribute-images. The following findings will be the answer for this question.

Nationality

The data show that the evaluation of the international respondents and the domestics on seven attribute-images are considerably different *(see appendix 11, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05)*. These attributes include "many unique historic attractions", "featured architecture", "peaceful atmosphere", "delicious food and cuisine", "specific performance of Hue's folk songs", "specific conical hats for women" and "specific traditional dress for women". Domestic tourists seem to be a little bit more pleasant than the international guests. The most difference belongs to the attribute-image "specific traditional dress for women". *(see figure 6.10)*
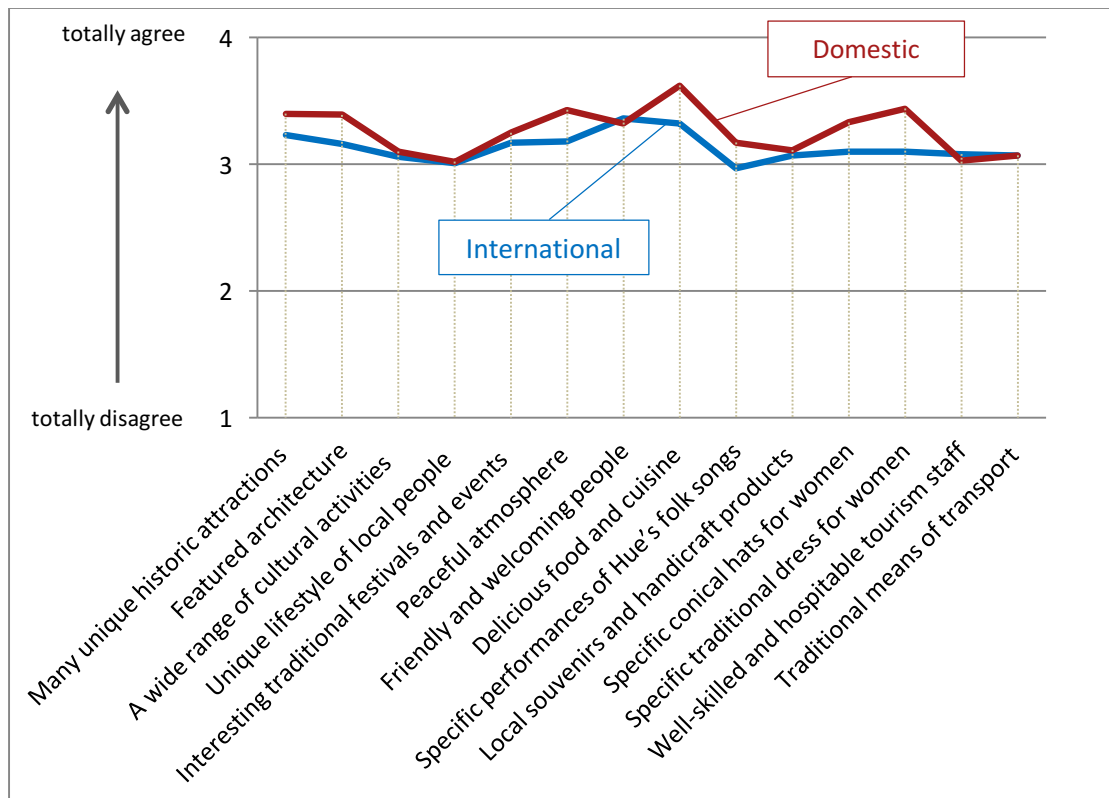
Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree)*

Figure 6.10: The differences in performance by visitors' nationality

Gender

When categorizing the respondents by sex, the answers look very similar between female and male visitors. However, statistically noteworthy differences in assessment are found on the four attributes of "many unique historic attractions", "unique lifestyle of local people", "local souvenirs and handicraft products" and "specific traditional dress for women" *(see appendix 12, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05*). In which, the biggest gap falls into the attribute "specific traditional dress for women"

The male respondents express their better evaluation than the female on nine attributes *(see figure 6.11).* This might prove that the assessments of male visitors are a little bit more facile than the women's.
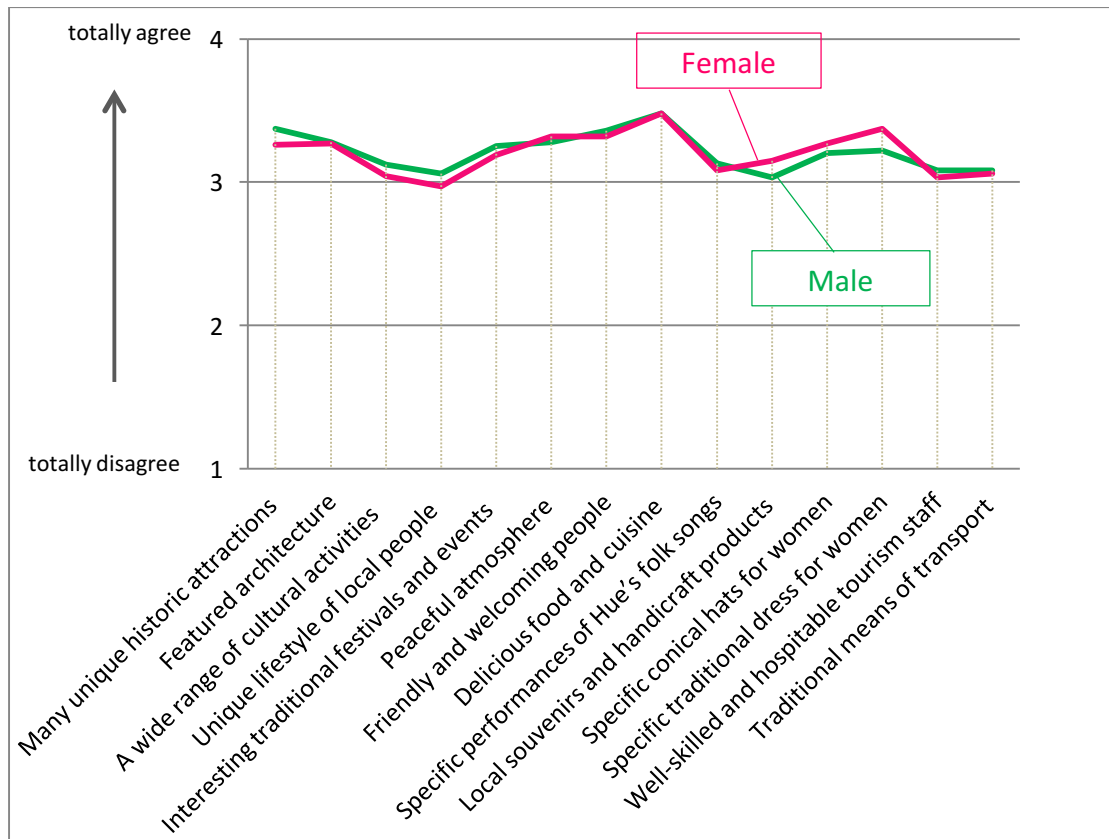
Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree)*

Figure 6.11: The differences in performance by visitors' gender

Age

The results of one-way ANOVA test show that there are five attributes received remarkably different opinions by different groups of age, including "a wide range of

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cultural activities", "unique lifestyle of local people", "interesting traditional festivals and events", "delicious food and cuisine" and "specific performance of Hue's folk songs" *(see appendix 13, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05)*. The result not only shows the differences but also reveals a tendency that the younger the tourists are, the lower their evaluations on the attribute performance and this can be clearly seen on the attributes of "A wide range of cultural activities" and "Interesting traditional festivals and events" *(see figure 6.12)*.
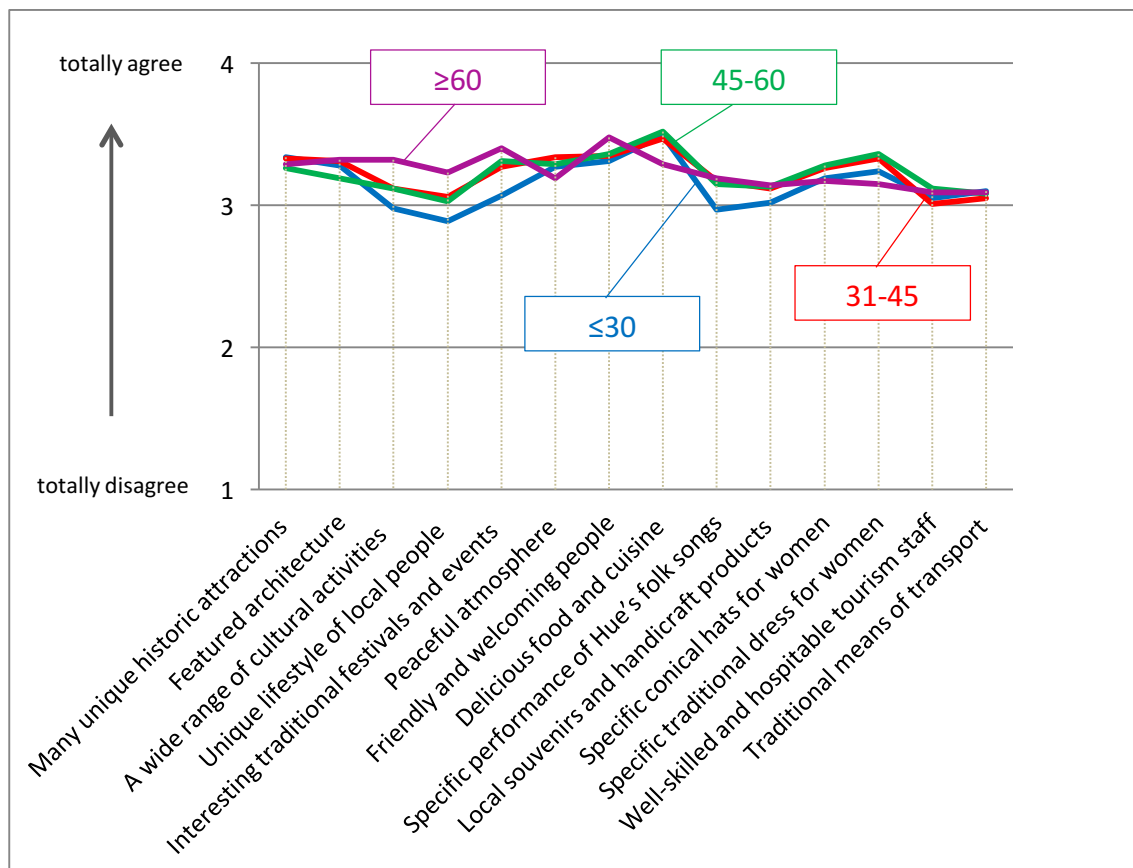
Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree)*

Figure 6.12: The differences in performance by visitors' age

Time of Arrival in Hue

There are also substantial differences in performance assessment on ten attributes by groups with different times of arrival in Hue *(see appendix 14, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05)*. The result discloses that the group *"today"* always feel more contented with the attributes performance than the group *"yesterday"* (on 14 attributes) and the group *"2 days ago"* (on 11 attributes) *(see figure 6.13)*.
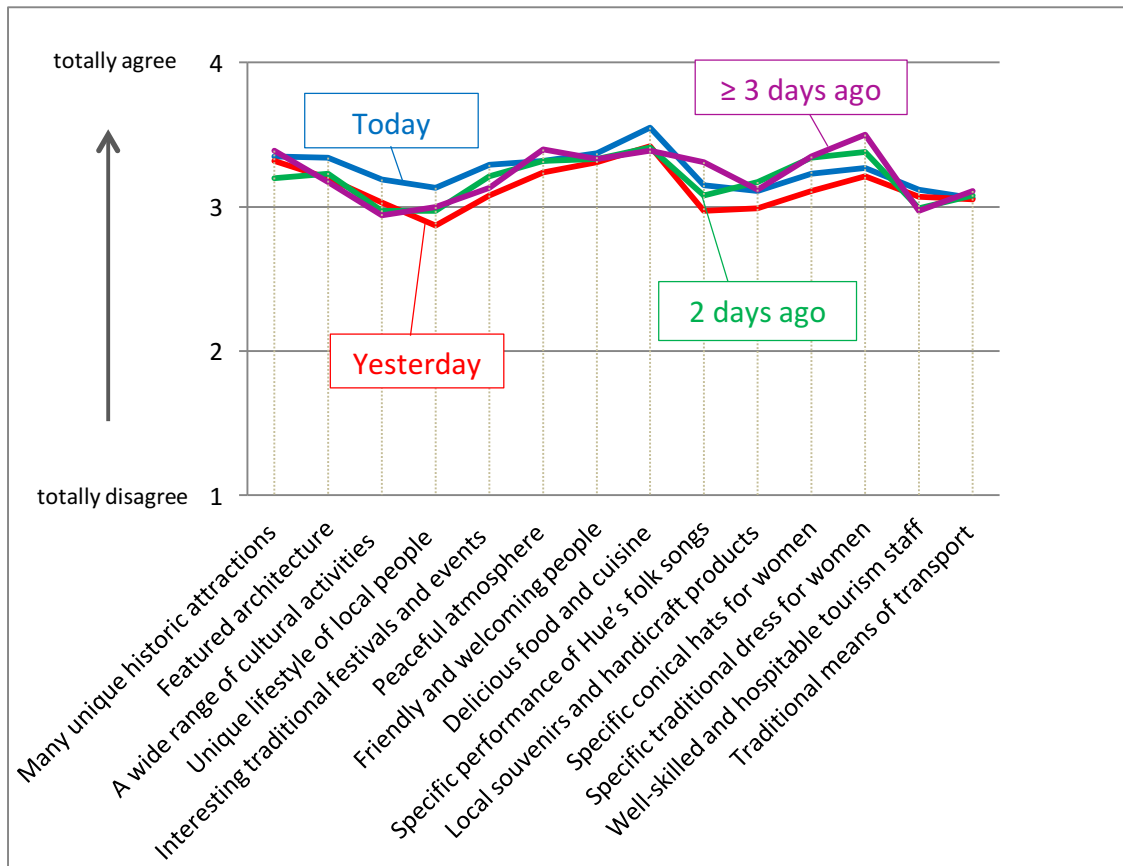
Scale from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree)

Figure 6.13: The differences in performance by visitors' time of arrival

6.3.3 Importance – Performance Analysis

It is absolutely essential to examine the relationship between the importance and the performance of destination attribute-images from the tourist's perspective in order to measure the gap between importance and performance as well as to identify solutions for each attribute-image.

6.3.3.1 Exclusion of Respondents with No Interest in Destination Attribute-Images

The previous results in this chapter are analyzed based on all the answers of the survey respondents. However, the performance values might be not significant if also containing the answers of those who do not find it important in some specific attribute-images as they declare them as "totally unimportant" or "unimportant". In such a circumstance, the inclusion of the respondents with these negative answers is particularly inaccurate because the performance values may be distorted by the answers

of people who are not interested in some specific attributes. Thus, for each attribute the performance evaluation has been counted again only for those who declared that a feature is at least "important" or "very important" to them.

Table 6.9 points out the change in every single surveyed attribute before and after the exclusion. The performance assessments of only relevant ("very important"/ "important") respondents are always a little higher. However, the differences are trivial and the Chi Square test confirms no major differences between the two performance evaluations.

Table 6.9: Performance gaps between "all" and "only relevant" respondents

	Mean of performance of			
	all respondents	**relevant respondents****	**Gap**	**p value***
Many unique historic attractions	3.31	3.32	+0.01	0.000
Featured architecture	3.27	3.30	+0.03	0.000
A wide range of cultural activities	3.08	3.10	+0.02	0.000
Unique lifestyle of local people	3.01	3.08	+0.07	0.000
Interesting traditional festivals/events	3.22	3.27	+0.05	0.000
Peaceful atmosphere	3.30	3.32	+0.02	0.000
Friendly and welcoming people	3.34	3.34	+0.10	0.000
Delicious food and cuisine	3.48	3.49	+0.01	0.000
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	3.10	3.20	+0.10	0.000
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	3.09	3.14	+0.05	0.000
Specific conical hats for women	3.24	3.32	+0.08	0.000
Specific traditional dress for women	3.30	3.31	+0.01	0.000
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	3.05	3.06	+0.01	0.000
Traditional means of transport	3.07	3.10	+0.03	0.000

Own survey 2014/15   *(*): Results from Pair Sample T-Test*
(**): only respondents who rate the Importance with "important" or "very important"

Figure 6.14 visibly shows that that there is no noteworthy difference between the two performance sets. However, in the following sections, only the answers of tourists who

declared attribute-images as "important" or "very important" will be used for further analyses - due to scientific accuracy.
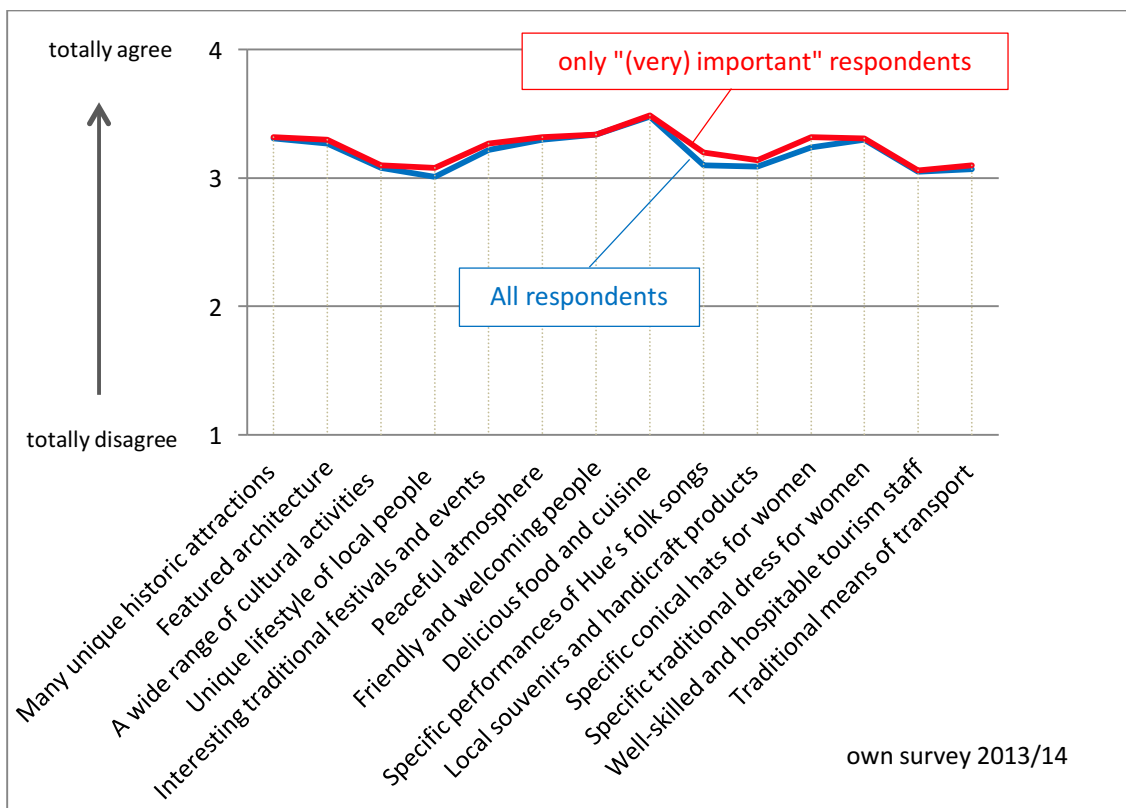
Own survey 2013/14   *Scale* *from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree)*

Figure 6.14: Comparison of two performance profiles

6.3.3.2 Importance - Performance Gaps

The comparison between the results of importance and performance evaluation produces valuable information. The data demonstrate that all the surveyed destination attribute-images get lower judgments on the performance than on the importance *(see figure 6.15)*.

4 ── Importance *

3

2 ── Performance **

1

Many unique historic attractions
Featured architecture
A wide range of cultural activities
Unique lifestyle of local people
Interesting traditional festivals and events
Peaceful atmosphere
Friendly and welcoming people
Delicious food and cuisine
Specific performances of Hue's folk songs
Local souvenirs and handicraft products
Specific conical hats for women
Specific traditional dress for women
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff
Traditional means of transport

own survey 2013/14

(*): scale from 4 (=very important) down to 3 (=important)
(**): scale from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree)

Figure 6.15: Importance - Performance gaps of surveyed attribute-images

Table 6.10 shows that all of the fourteen gaps are statistically significant. The largest negative gap falls into the attribute-image "well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff". This implies that the destination is expected to improve the quality of tourism staff as soon as possible. The other negative gaps are locating on "local souvenirs and handicraft products", "a wide range of cultural activities" and "unique lifestyle of local people". As a cultural heritage destination, beside the cultural and historical monuments, Hue should prioritize its resources for the development of the above mentioned attributes to match the expectation of tourists.

Table 6.10: Importance - Performance gaps after excluding the respondents with no interests in Hue attribute-images

	Importance *	Performance **	Gap	p value ***
Many unique historic attractions	3.60	3.32	-0.28	0.000
Featured architecture	3.56	3.30	-0.26	0.000
A wide range of cultural activities	3.53	3.10	-0.43	0.000
Unique lifestyle of local people	3.48	3.08	-0.40	0.000
Interesting traditional festivals/events	3.55	3.27	-0.28	0.000
Peaceful atmosphere	3.53	3.32	-0.21	0.000
Friendly and welcoming people	3.55	3.34	-0.21	0.000
Delicious food and cuisine	3.71	3.49	-0.22	0.000
Specific performance of Hue's folk	3.42	3.20	-0.22	0.000
Local souvenirs and handicraft	3.58	3.14	-0.44	0.000
Specific conical hats for women	3.45	3.32	-0.13	0.000
Specific traditional dress for women	3.57	3.31	-0.26	0.000
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism	3.76	3.06	-0.70	0.000
Traditional means of transport	3.42	3.10	-0.32	0.000

Own survey 2014/15

(*): scale from 4 (=very important) down to 3 (= important)
(**): scale from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree),
after excluding the respondents with no interests in Hue attribute-images
(***): Results from Pair Sample T-Test

Both international and domestic tourists have disillusionment for the destination attribute-images of Hue since their rating on the performance of each attribute in both groups (before and after excluding the respondents with no interests in Hue attributes) is always lower than their rating on its importance. *(see figure 6.16, 6.17)*

At present, the quality of the human resources in tourism sector in Hue is really a matter of concern. The number of tourism labors not having the required qualifications and professional training in tourism occupies up to 18% of the total tourism staff in Hue (HDCST 2015). Lots of tourism workers are short of qualified customer service skills, foreign languages skills, and even communication skills. Especially, there are several problems that international visitors encounter which failed to be completely solved due to misunderstandings derived from the language constraints of the tourism staff.

It is delighted to say that the Vietnamese are friendly and hospitable in general but these characteristics are not enough to become good tourism personnel. At the moment, the tourism human resources in Vietnam generally and in Hue particularly do not meet the needs of society in terms of both quantity and quality.
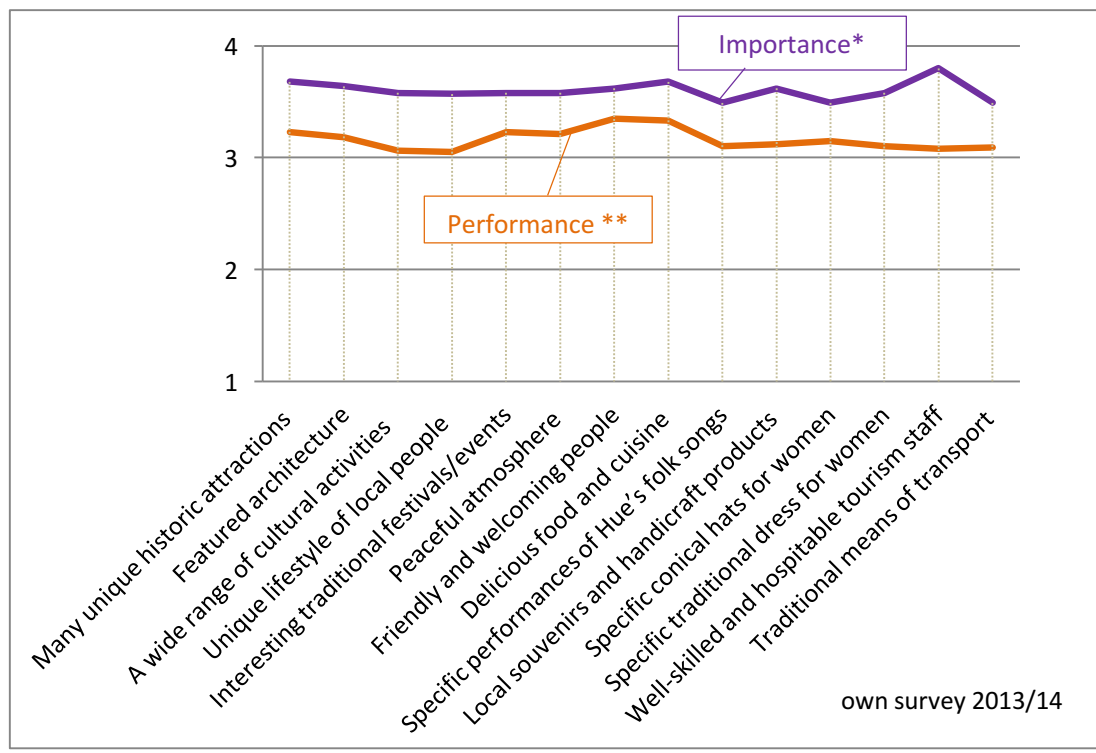
(*): scale from 4 (=very important) down to 3 (= important)
(**): scale from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree),
after excluding the respondents with no interests in Hue attribute-images

Figure 6.16: Importance – Performance gaps by international respondents

Another attribute which also receives the big negative gap of importance – performance is "specific local souvenirs and handcraft products". This reflects the reality that in spite of the availability of various souvenir shops in Hue, the number of souvenirs and handicraft products which show local identities are still missing.

Hue used to be a famous place of traditional crafts, particularly royal craft products. However, these attractions are at the risk of being eroded. Nowadays, uncompetitive local souvenir products with poor quality and unattractive appearance or products from China and from other places are quite popular in Hue. For tourists, it is not easy to find a worthy souvenir in Hue. The data reveals that international visitors seem more disappointed with the souvenirs and handicraft products than the domestics (gap = 0.50 and gap = 0.40 respectively).
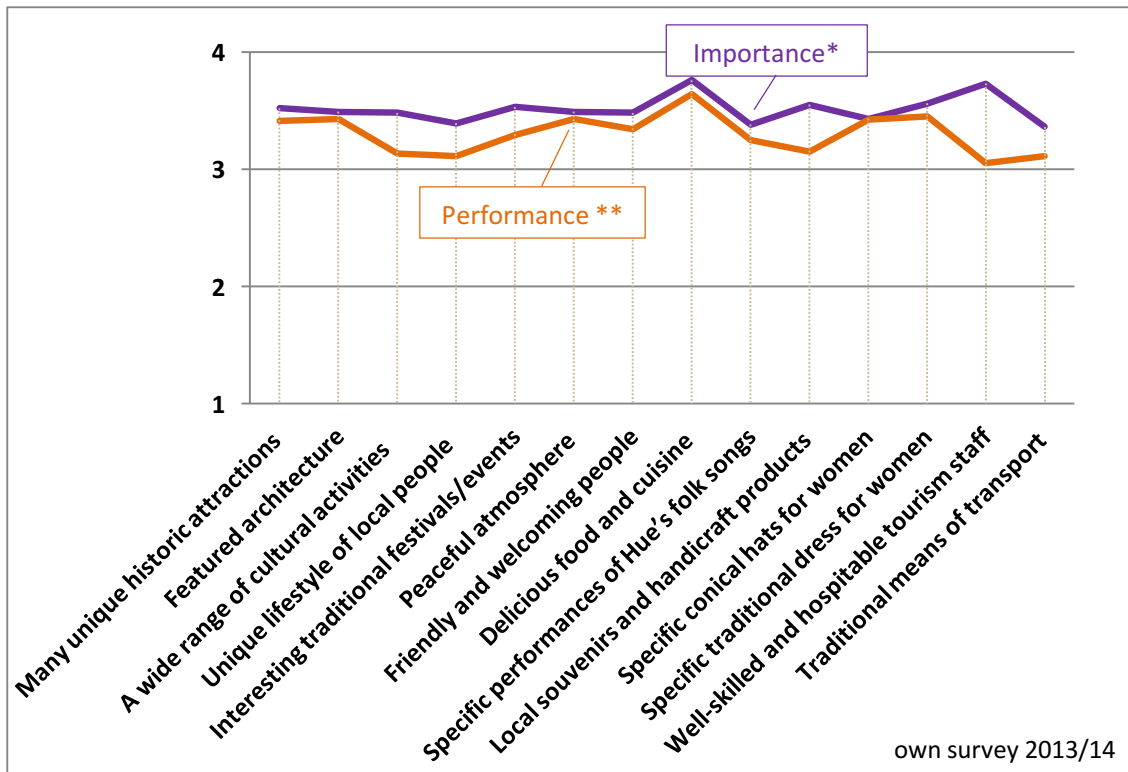
(*): scale from 4 (=very important) down to 3 (= important)
(**): scale from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree),
after excluding the respondents with no interests in Hue attribute-images

Figure 6.17: Importance – Performance gaps by domestic visitors

Generally, international guests seem more disappointed as the gap between importance and performance is quite large and the sum of the negative gaps between importance-performance is -6.12 while it is -2.94 for the domestics. By analyzing the differences in importance - performance between international and domestic visitors, it might be concluded that although these market segments have different consuming characteristics, they are not much happy with the same attribute-images such as "well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff", "local souvenirs and handicraft products", "a wide range of cultural activities" and "unique lifestyle of local people".

6.3.3.3 Importance - Performance Matrix

Table 6.11 illustrates the ratings and the gaps of tourists' evaluation on the relationship between the importance and the performance of the attribute-images of Hue. The data show that the performance of eleven attribute-images of Hue is not commensurate with their importance. There are only three attributes of "specific performance of Hue's folk

songs", "specific conical hats for women" and "specific traditional dress for women" getting the positive gaps in the importance – performance comparison.

The Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) is a simple but useful method that helps the destination managers identify which attribute-images should be improved to increase visitor satisfaction. From the research prospective, this paper also supports the adoption of the IPA as an alternative framework for evaluating visitors' perceptions on destination attribute-images.

Table 6.11: Importance - Performance gaps of surveyed destination attribute-images

	Importance *	Performance **	Gap	p value ***
Many unique historic attractions	3.56	3.31	-0.25	0.000
Featured architecture	3.50	3.27	-0.23	0.000
A wide range of cultural activities	3.45	3.08	**-0.37**	0.000
Unique lifestyle of local people	3.35	3.01	-0.34	0.000
Interesting traditional festivals/events	3.42	3.22	-0.20	0.000
Peaceful atmosphere	3.41	3.30	-0.11	0.000
Friendly and welcoming people	3.51	3.34	-0.17	0.000
Delicious food and cuisine	3.67	3.48	-0.19	0.000
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	3.09	3.10	+0.01	0.576
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	3.34	3.09	-0.25	0.000
Specific conical hats for women	3.07	3.24	+0.17	0.000
Specific traditional dress for women	3.15	3.30	+0.15	0.046
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	3.70	3.05	**-0.65**	0.000
Traditional means of transport	3.19	3.07	-0.12	0.000

Own survey 2013/14   *(*): scale from 4 (=very important) down to 1 (= totally unimportant)*
(**): scale from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree)
(***): Results from Pair Sample T-Test

Figure 6.19 illustrates the importance - performance grid results towards Hue attribute-images. The average level of performance of fourteen attribute-images of Hue and the average importance of these attributes are calculated for the overall sample *(see table 6.15)*. The position of each attribute on the importance-performance grid is defined by using the mean scores of importance and performance as the coordinates. After these

calculations are done, they are plotted on a two dimensional grid. LYNCH et al. (1996) and MARTILLA/JAMES (1977) suggest that it should still be considered the median value of the data reported to cross the axes, based on the trend of responses, median values as a measure of central tendency are theoretically preferable to means because a true interval scale may not exist. Hence, the grand mean scores of importance and performance are used to determine the placement of the axes on the grid (importance mean score = 3.42 and satisfaction mean score = 3.20). Each attribute on the grid is then analyzed by locating the appropriate quadrant in which it locates. *(see figure 6.18)*
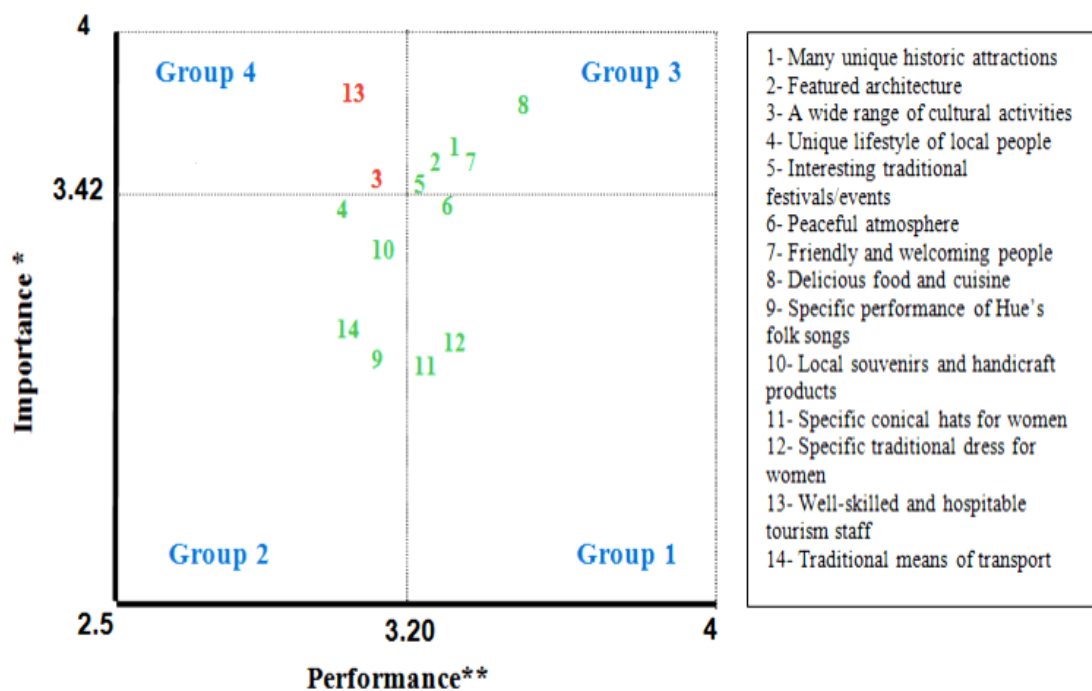
(*): scale from 4 (=very important) down to 1 (=totally unimportant)
(**): scale from 4 (=totally agree) down to 1 (= totally disagree)

Figure 6.18: Importance - Performance Grid

The grid visually shows that the attribute-images considered most important by visitors in Hue belong to group-1 and group-4. In which:

- Group-4 (called Concentrate Here) should be immediately reconsidered by the destination managers (very high importance – low performance). It is easy to visually identify that "well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff" seems to be the most crucial feature for tourism in Hue.

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- Attributes fall into group-3 (called Keep Up The Good Work) are paramount for tourists and they also have good performance, especially the attribute "delicious food and cuisine".

Besides, group-2 and group-1 are of lower priority, including attributes of lower importance than the others. However:

- Group-2 (called Low Priority) demonstrates that the attributes' performance is below average, but not to be considered as important. Hence, it does not require urgent efforts to improve these attributes.
- Group-1 (called Possible Overkill) with attributes below average importance and above average performance indicates that these attributes can be used in the destination promotion activities.

The importance – performance analysis has meaningful implications both for practitioners and academics. From the management prospective, the results may provide a clear guidance for the improvement of destination attribute-images by identifying the main area of intervention based on the tourists' perceptions. Specifically, Hue policy makers should devote more efforts to the enhancement of tourism staff quality as well as the design of more cultural activities for tourists.

6.4 Tourism Destination Image Measurement: A Combination of Scale Items and Open-ended Questions

In this section, a combination of open-ended questions and scale items in analysis will reveal the visitors' perceptions on Hue imagery in terms of attribute-holistic, common-unique and functional-psychological dimensions.

6.4.1 Open-ended Questions and Visitors' Responses

The study uses two open-ended questions to discover the most suitable images of Hue in the visitors' mind and to explore the most unique components of Hue image which the visitors are likely to recommend to their friends and relatives after their trips in Hue. The responses of visitors to these open-ended questions provides more holistic functional and psychological characteristics of the destination image as well as allow the unique images of Hue to arise.

Table 6.12 displays the answers for the first open question *"What images do you think are the most suitable for Hue?"* with responses having the frequencies over 10%.

According to PEARCE (1988), the image attributes were considered holistic and strong if more than 20% of people think of them. Based on the above findings, the associating images that generated a strong impression on visitors are "peaceful & safe", "hospitable", "appealing monuments", "historical & royal" and "food".

Table 6.12: The most suitable images of Hue

The most suitable images of Hue	Percent (%)
Peaceful and safe	30.2
Hospitable	28.7
Appealing monuments	27.9
Historical and royal	24.8
Food	24.0
Old/Ancient	15.1
Traditional and Conservative	15.0
Beautiful landscapes/Picturesque	12.7
The Citadel	12.3
Quite/Tranquil	12.2
Unique/Special	12.2
People (nice, tasteful)	11.6

Own survey 2013/14

For the second question **"*Please list the most attractive or unique tourist attractions that you can think of in Hue"*, the responses with frequencies over 10% mention ten attractions, which are showed in the table 6.13.

When being asked about the unique tourist attractions in Hue, the responses indicate that the unique attractions including "the Citadel" (50.5%), "food" (36.9%), "pagodas" (35.8%), "King's tombs" (28.8%) and "royal architecture" (21.3%) are considered strong components. It could be said that the Citadel, pagodas and the system of tombs belonging to the complex of Hue relics inherited from the Nguyen's dynasty which is recognized as World Cultural Heritage has become a strongly competitive advantage in

the development of Hue tourism. Besides, delicious food and cuisine is a distinctive offer of Hue that differentiates the place from other destinations.

Table 6.13: The most attractive/unique images of Hue

The most attractive/unique images of Hue	Percent (%)
The Citadel	50.5
Food	36.9
Pagodas	35.8
King's Tombs	28.8
Royal architecture	21.3
Local people and their daily life	18.2
Shops/ Souvenirs	15.6
Huong River	14.9
Hue Festival	11.5
Ao dai (traditional dress for women)	12.2

Own survey 2013/14

6.4.2 Combination of Scale items and Open-ended Questions in Measuring Tourism Destination Image of Hue

A combination of scale items and open-ended questions is used to measure the destination image of Hue. Scale items focus more on attribute-based components of the destination image whereas the open-ended questions provide more holistic and unique images of the destination. Hence, a combination of open-ended questions and scale items is completely necessary to cross-check and exclusively measure the concept of destination image of Hue.

As previously illustrated in figure 2.1, the components of destination image are suggested to fall within three dimensions including attribute-holistic, functional-psychological, and common-unique. As it is not easy to deal with three dimensions in the same figure, the components of destination image are separated into a series of two-aspect diagrams depicted in figures 6.19, 6.20 and 6.21. The source of the data, either open-ended questions or scale items, is also showed in each figure.
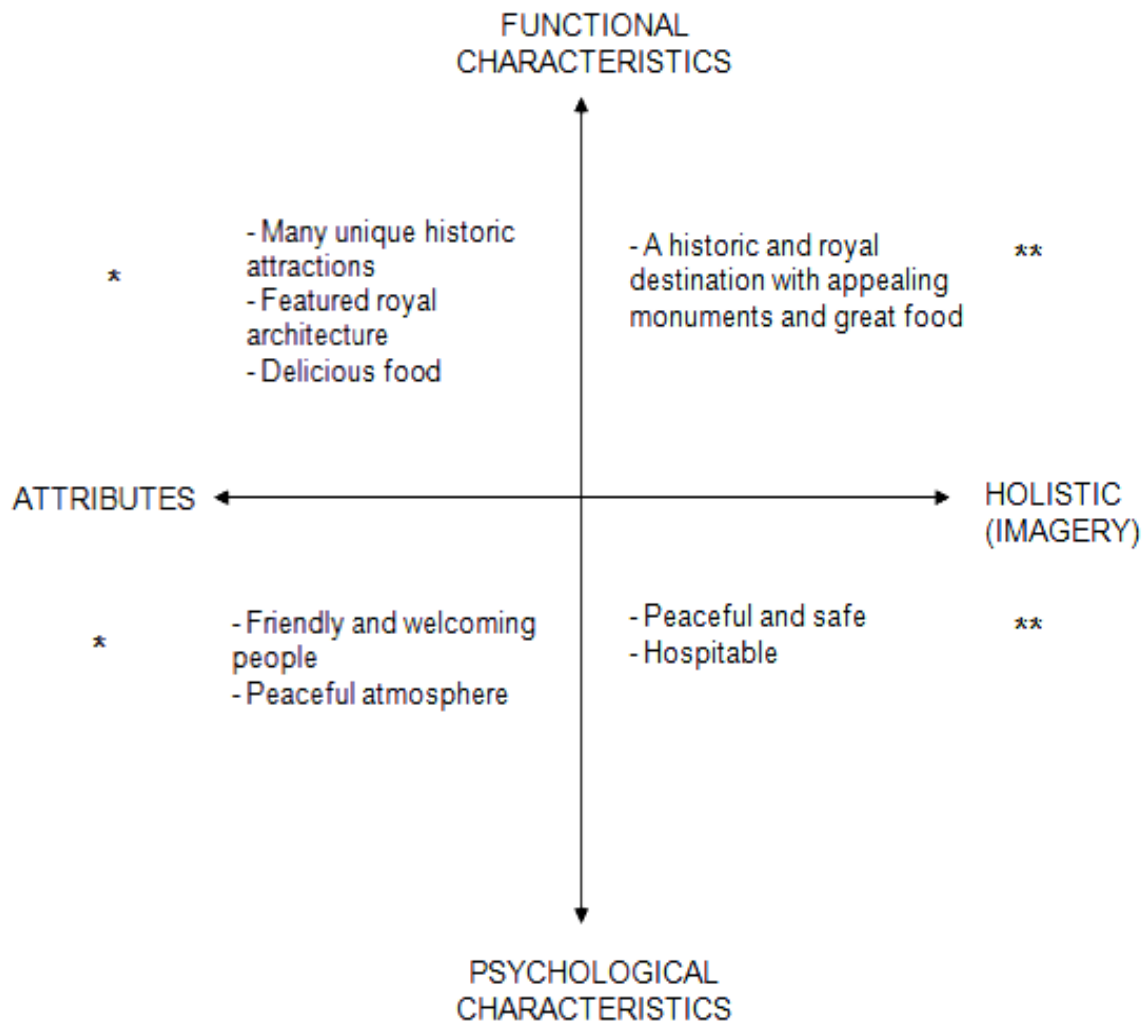
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FUNCTIONAL
CHARACTERISTICS

- Many unique historic
attractions
- Featured royal
architecture
- Delicious food

*

- A historic and royal
destination with appealing
monuments and great food

**

ATTRIBUTES ◄──────────┼──────────► HOLISTIC
(IMAGERY)

- Friendly and welcoming
people
- Peaceful atmosphere

*

- Peaceful and safe
- Hospitable

**

PSYCHOLOGICAL
CHARACTERISTICS

* Information in quadrant supplied by scale items
** Information in quadrant supplied by open-ended questions

Figure 6.19: The attributes/holistic and functional/psychological components of tourism destination image of Hue

Figure 6.19 illustrates the attribute-holistic and functional-psychological components of Hue's image as a tourist destination. The scale items are the main source of data for the attribute information in terms of both functional and psychological characteristics. Alternatively, the holistic functional and psychological imagery is given by the responses to the first open-ended question. Scale ratings for several functional attributes of Hue are presented in the upper left quadrant of the figure. To be specific, these include the respondents' ratings of "many unique historic attractions", "featured royal architecture" and "delicious food". The lower left quadrant provides scale scores on some psychological attributes such as "friendly and welcoming people" and "peaceful

atmosphere". On the other hand, the first open-ended question feeds data for the right side of the figure. The data from the first open-ended question reveal the functional and psychological holistic image of Hue.
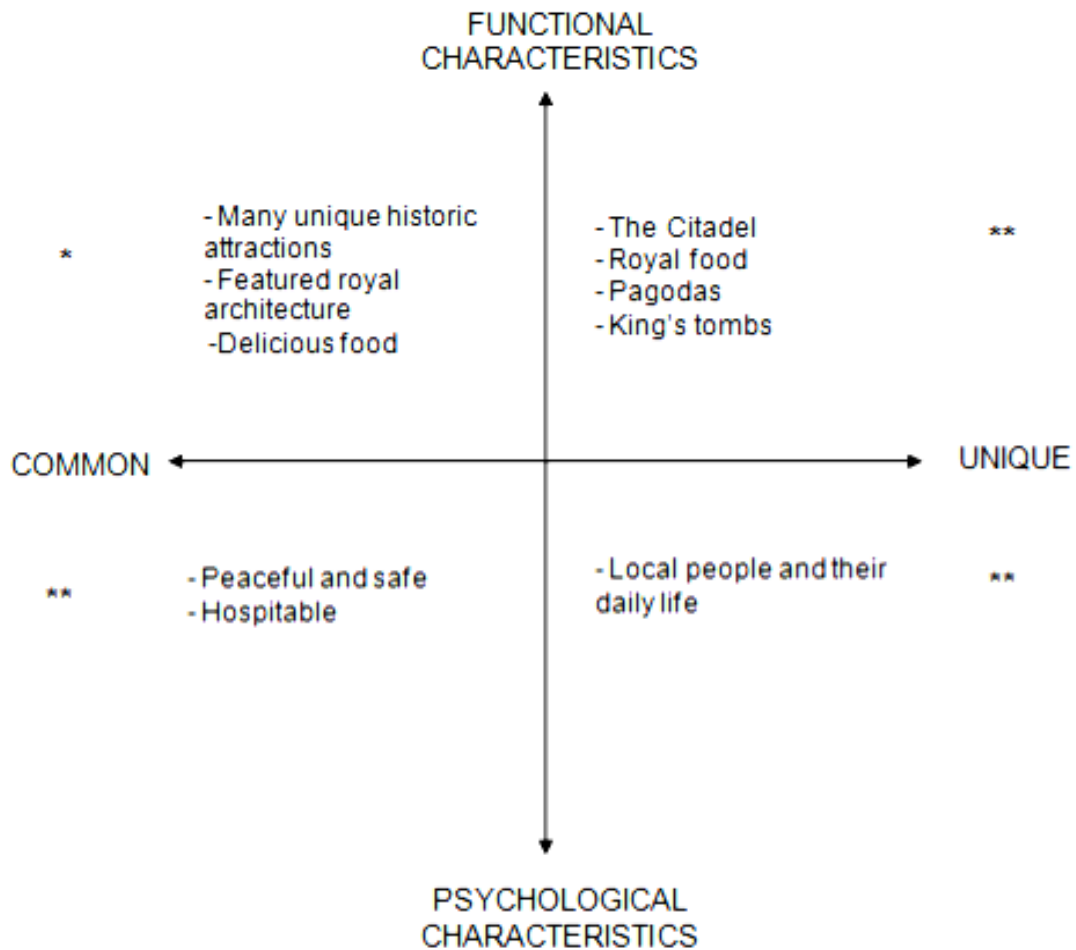
* Information in quadrant supplied by scale items
** Information in quadrant supplied by open-ended questions

Figure 6.20: The common/unique and functional/psychological components of tourism destination image of Hue

Figure 6.20 explains the functional/psychological and common/unique components of the destination image of Hue. The data on the right side of the figure are obtained from the responses to the second open-ended question, which requires respondents to provide examples of unique tourist attractions in Hue. With regard to the functional and psychological characteristics, "the Citadel", "pagodas", "King's tombs", "delicious food" and "local people and their daily life" can be considered as unique for Hue.

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```
                    COMMON
                  CHARACTERISTICS
                         ↑
                         |
  - Friendly and welcoming  |  - Peaceful and safe
  people                    |  - Hospitable          **
*  - Peaceful atmosphere    |

ATTRIBUTES  ←————————————————————————————→  HOLISTIC
                         |                    (IMAGERY)
                         |
   - The Citadel         |  - A historic and royal
** - Royal food          |  destination with appealing  **
   - Pagodas             |  monuments and great food
   - King's tombs        |
                         |
                         ↓
                     UNIQUE
                  CHARACTERISTICS
```

* Information in quadrant supplied by scale items
** Information in quadrant supplied by open-ended questions

Figure 6.21: The attribute/holistic and common/unique components of tourism destination image of Hue

Finally, figure 6.21 shows the attribute-holistic and common/unique components of destination image. The scale items feed data for only one quadrant on the common attributes of image. The remaining three quadrants are fulfilled by the responses to the two open-ended questions. This figure indicates that the holistic images of Hue are "peaceful and safe", "hospitable" and "a historic and royal place with appealing monuments and great food".

However, the split of the data into the three above figures is just to enable the examination on the different dimensions of image components. The overall imagery of Hue as a tourist destination should be judged under the combination and interaction of all of the components of attributes, holistic, common, unique, functional and psychological.

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Imagery is a definitely powerful tool in promoting a destination. It is imperative to communicate the appropriate holistic imagery, both functional and psychological to the travelers. In this paper, a cross-check between the scale items and the open-ended questions are done to comprehensively reveal the real holistic imagery of Hue.

6.5 Summary

The increasing development of tourism is generating fierce competitions among the destinations in attracting visitors. This reality certainly requires the tourism administrators and managers to create a more positive and differentiated imagery of the destination in the eyes of tourists since these images directly influence the decision on destination choice of tourists. To make this comes true, sufficient efforts to identify the destination image are vitally needed and worth investing as it really helps destinations properly position them in the market.

Despite the current advantages of being a city of heritages and festivals, the tourism development in Hue in the past years has not been commensurate with the resources that this destination possesses. The number of tourist arrivals to Hue only increases slightly in recent years (HDCST 2014). To achieve the goals set out for the tourism industry in the coming years is really a challenge for the tourism managers. Among the other necessary actions, the task to determine what the imagery of Hue in tourists' minds is would be the crucial foundation for achieving a practical and effective tourism management strategy.

Derived from the above mentioned justification, this research is conducted with the aim to give a hand to addressing the question in concern. The findings are then used as the basis for the proposed suggestions to improve the destination image of Hue.

The study results indicate that the functional image of Hue saved in the visitors' minds is a destination with many unique historical attractions, of which the most prominent one is the Citadel. This fact might suggest that the visitors' perceptions on the images of Hue are still pretty monotonous. For the psychological image, in the minds of tourists, Hue's atmosphere is very peaceful and safe thanks to the quiet space and friendly welcoming people. Nevertheless, beside the positive images the tourists also have negative associations when thinking about Hue such as images of pleading street

vendors, beggars and pursuing cyclo drivers, complex traffic systems or the situation of cheating prices. There are also some significant differences in the assessments on Hue images of different clusters of visitors grouped by their age, gender, nationality, level of education or time of arrival in Hue. In particular, there are a number of respondents who even fail to rate about Hue attribute-components or response to the open questions in the questionnaire. For instance, the attributes which are considered the strengths of Hue tourism by the local government including "specific performance of Hue's folk songs", "a wide range of cultural activities" and interesting traditional festivals and events" are the attributes getting the highest share of "no opinions" from the visitors.

In summary, the results confirm Hypothesis H1: "Destination's general-image and attribute-images of Hue are positive to tourists". However, the image of Hue is more positive in the minds of visitors before their trip to Hue and then part of its favorableness is gone after the visitors already stayed in destination. The destination image is very positive only if the tourists have no earlier experience of the city on their own. For those who have stayed at least one day in Hue and those who come back to Hue for the second time or more, their judgments on Hue's image become more negative.

7 Visitor Satisfaction and Gap Analysis

It is critical for all tourist destinations to investigate the visitors' satisfaction level because satisfaction is basically formed by visitors' experiences in the destination. However, dissatisfaction with the total tourism product might occur if any of the destination components has poor performance. Hence, it is very necessary to identify and measure tourist satisfaction with every destination's attribute.

The findings of visitor survey in this study will unveil the levels of visitors' satisfaction on the destination of Hue. The investigation draws a comprehensive picture of the current situation regarding the visitors' satisfaction towards Hue in general and towards each of its single attributes.

The following results are obtained by the author's surveys conducted in 2013 and 2014. Details about the methodology to carry out these surveys have been previously discussed in Chapter 3.

7.1 Visitors' Overall-Satisfaction with the Destination
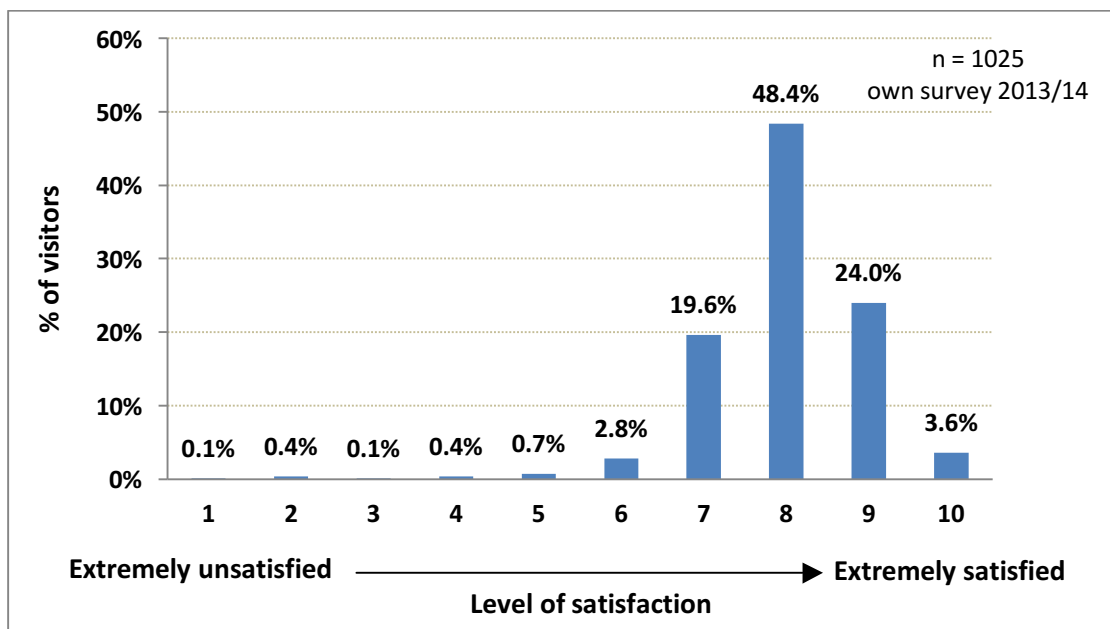
Figure 7.1: Visitors' overall-satisfaction with the destination

Figure 7.1 shows that visitors are fairly satisfied with their trip to Hue when being asked about their overall level of satisfaction towards this destination. It is a unimodal pattern

with the peak value at 8 of 10 points, the mean is 7.99. This suggests that the destination is offering tourists with a pretty satisfactory experience.

Regarding the gender, men and women show the same result - measured by the mean value *(see table 7.1)*.

Table 7.1: Overall-satisfaction divided by visitors' demographic and trip features

		Mean*	**p value**
Nationality	International	7.91	**0.005****
	Vietnamese	8.08	
Gender	Male	7.99	0.948**
	Female	7.99	
Age	≤ 30	7.95	0.113***
	31 - 45	7.96	
	46 - 60	8.00	
	>60	8.38	
Time arrival	Today	7.95	0.910***
	Yesterday	8.01	
	2 days ago	7.99	
	3 days ago or more	7.96	
Trip purpose	Holiday	7.99	**0.018*****
	Seminar/workshop/conference	8.45	
	Business	7.89	
	Others	7.75	
First or returning trip to Hue	First time visitor	7.97	0.316**
	Returning visitor	8.05	
Accommodation	Mini hotel	7.90	**0.000*****
	1-2 star hotel	7.92	
	3-4 star hotel	8.07	
	5 star hotel	8.73	
	Guesthouse	8.01	
	Other	7.56	
Revisit Hue in the future	Yes	8.18	**0.000*****
	No	6.72	
	I don't know	7.29	

Own survey 2013/14

(*): 1: extremely unsatisfied – 10: extremely satisfied
(**): result from Independent-Samples T Test
(***): result from One-way ANOVA

Concerning the age, there seems to be a trend that the older the people are, the higher the level of satisfaction they have. However, there are no substantial differences in the

overall satisfaction among the respondents who have just arrived and already stayed some days in Hue as well as among the first-time and returning visitors. Visitors staying in different kinds of accommodation show dissimilar levels of overall satisfaction but there still exists a simple tendency that the more expensive and the better the comfort of the accommodation are, the higher the overall satisfaction the respondents have towards their stays in Hue. *(see table 7.1)*

In general, this analysis of overall-satisfaction aims to provide some initial facts about the current status of visitors' perceptions of the destination for the destination managers as well as the businesses in Hue. But it is just showing the overall level. Therefore, the following section will analyze the results further in detail.

7.2 Importance of Destination Attributes

Destinations normally offer a number of services and attractions. In order to meet the expectations of their guests and to satisfy them, the destinations need to understand the importance of each of the offers (i.e. destination attributes) in the opinions of their visitors. It is true that not all destination attributes or offers are relevant for all tourists. Therefore, the personal opinions of tourists about the importance of every single destination offer need to be identified. Through this initial analysis of destination attributes' importance, the study is expected to provide helpful information to the destination planners and marketers with the aim to develop the destination in a way that is consonant with the tourists' demands.

First of all, a reliability test is done with the use of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient in importance analysis. After processing, the value for each variable is above 0.85 *(see appendix 15),* this means the variables are valid for further analyses.

Figure 7.2 shows the ranking of the attributes used in this study and their achieved importance level.
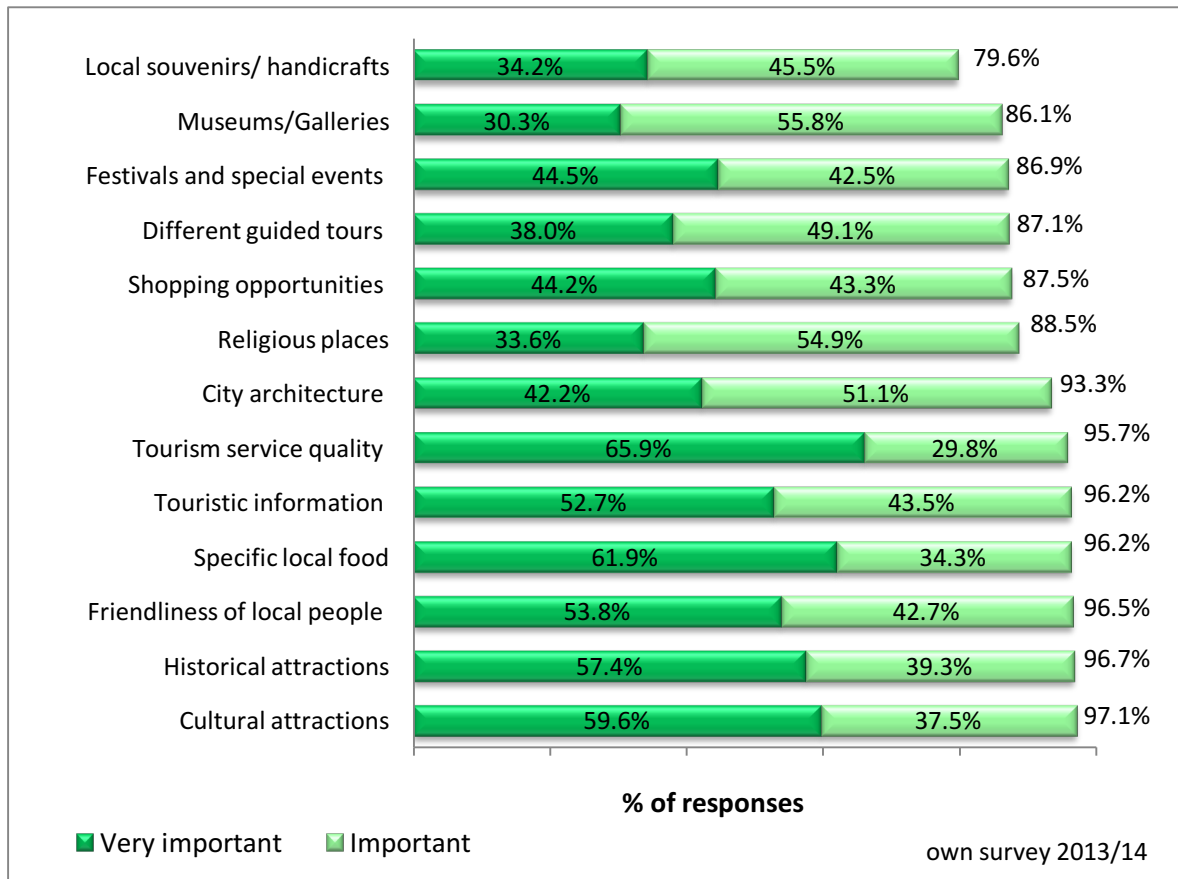
Figure 7.2: Importance ranking of destination attributes

All the thirteen checked attributes receive a very high level of confirmed relevance. This is not surprising because the thirteen chosen attributes are the most highlight offers of Hue. In which, five attributes are at the same high level of their importance including "cultural attractions", "historical attractions", "friendliness of local people", "specific local food" and "touristic information". Besides, "tourism service quality" needs to be emphasized because this feature also receives the highest share of people (65.9%) who regard this as "very important".

It seems a little bit confusing that "cultural attractions" and "historical attractions" are ranked on top, whereas "local souvenirs/handicraft" and "museums/galleries" are at the bottom. These apparent contradictions might be due to the attribute wording which combines souvenir with handicraft and museum with galleries.

Considering the four levels of answer possibilities as an interval scale (see chapter 3), there are many more detailed results visible. The interval ranking by the interval mean *(see table 7.2)* delivers a little bit different order compared to the previous ranking

shown in figure 7.2 - attributes with a higher share of "very important" are ranked higher by the metric scale. Table 7.2 shows also the variation of answers: "souvenirs/ handicrafts" delivers the highest value (0.79) for the statistical parameter "standard deviation" which indicates already a broad variation within the given answers. This confirms the possible confusion of tourists due to the combined two offers - handicraft and souvenirs.

Table 7.2: The importance of destination attributes

	Rank	Mean*	Std. Deviation
Historical attractions	4	3.54	0.575
Cultural attractions	3	3.56	0.562
Religious places	11	3.21	0.655
Museums/Galleries	12	3.15	0.676
City architecture	7	3.35	0.617
Festivals and special events	9	3.29	0.757
Local souvenirs/ handicrafts	13	3.11	0.787
Friendliness of local people	5	3.50	0.580
Specific local food	2	3.58	0.572
Shopping opportunities	8	3.30	0.735
Tourism service quality	1	3.61	0.578
Different guided tours	10	3.23	0.717
Touristic information	6	3.49	0.584
Valid N (listwise): 973			

Own survey 2013/14   *(*) scale from 4 (= very important) down to 1 (= totally unimportant)*

Through the initial analysis of destination attributes' importance, the study provides plentiful interesting and useful information for the destination marketers in Hue. Result from table 7.2 indicates that, all of the mean scores of the thirteen attributes in terms of their importance level are higher than 3.0, which is the value of high importance level. Thus, it can be concluded that the thirteen attributes are significantly important to the visitors' decision on choosing Hue as their destination. The results are somewhat

surprising as they discover a new understanding about the visitors' expectation that the order of expectation differs from any assumptions heretofore.

In addition, further analysis on the differences in importance by different groups of nationality, gender, age and time of arrival in Hue reveals a lot of important information which helps the destination develop their tourism products in line with the expectation of different market segments. The following findings will concisely clarify this question.

Nationality

Scale *from 4 (= very important) down to 1 (= totally unimportant)*

Figure 7.3: Importance differences by visitors' nationality

In general, the gaps between international and domestic visitors in their importance evaluation are quite narrow but there are still some differences identified *(see figure 7.3)*. Specifically, significant differences are found on five features *(see appendix 16, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05)*:

- "museums/galleries" is more important for foreigners; whereas
- "festivals/events", "souvenirs/handicraft", "local food" and "shopping possibilities" are more preferred by domestic visitors.

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Foreigners:

- focus on "tourism service quality" (mean = 3.61) with the highest relevance and
- "local souvenirs and handicraft" seems to be not so important (mean = 3.02).

Vietnamese visitors:

- highest priority is the "specific local food" (mean = 3.64) and
- they are less interested in "museums and galleries" (mean = 3.06).

Gender

Women generally assess the attributes with higher relevance than men *(see figure 7.4)*. Major differences are found on the attributes "festivals/events", "souvenirs/handicrafts" and "shopping possibilities" *(see appendix 17, on attributes with p-value of t-Test <0.05).*

For both men and women, the "tourism service quality" is of highest priority. For the lowest interest, men choose "souvenirs/handicraft" while women select "museum/galleries".
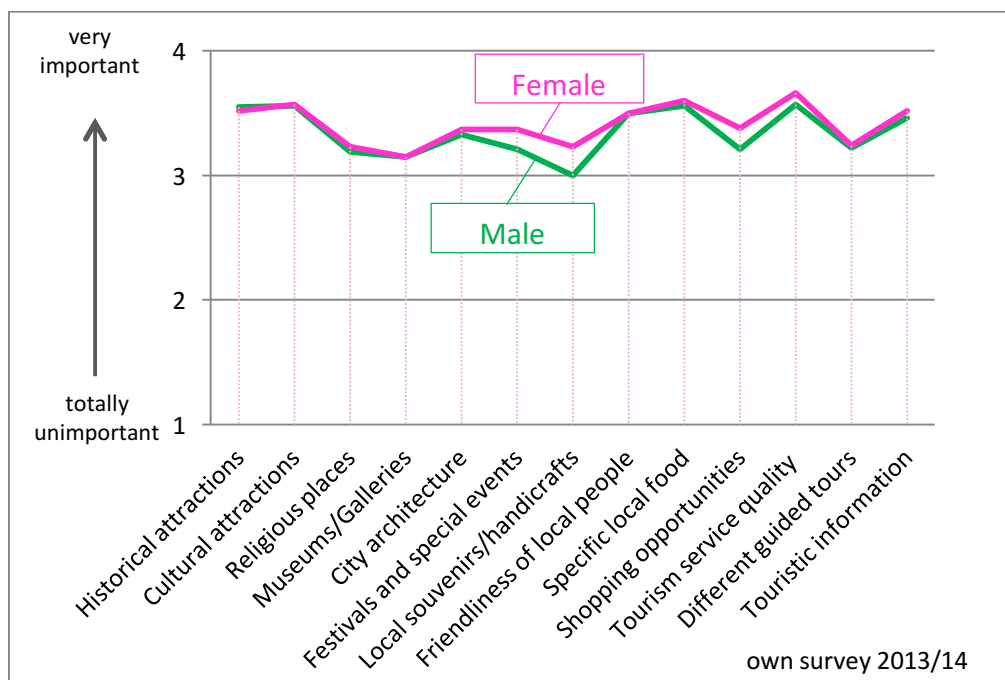
Scale from 4 (= very important) down to 1 (= totally unimportant)

Figure 7.4: Importance differences by visitors' gender

Age

The importance assessment of the respondents in different groups of ages is considerably different on eight attributes *(see appendix 18, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05)*. In general, most attributes are more important for the groups of 31- 60 years old than the remaining groups *(see figure 7.5)*.
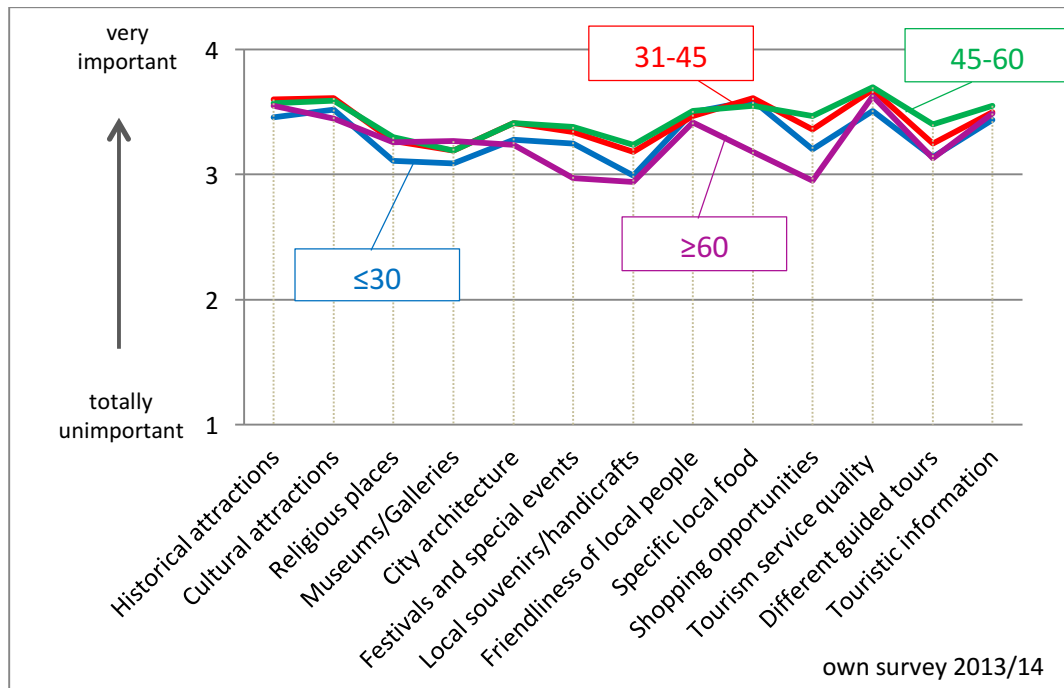
Scale from 4 (=very important) down to 1 (=totally unimportant)
Figure 7.5: Importance differences by visitors' age

Time of arrival in Hue

The substantial differences in assessment by groups with different times of arrival in Hue are found on ten attributes *(see appendix 19, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05)*. The remarkable finding is that the group arriving in Hue "*2 days ago*" is probably more interested in the destination attributes than the other groups. Meanwhile, the visitors arriving in Hue "*≥ 3 days ago*" have the lowest interest compared to the others. Especially, the importance gaps between the group "*2 days ago*" and group "*≥ 3 days ago*" are quite big. *(see figure 7.6)*

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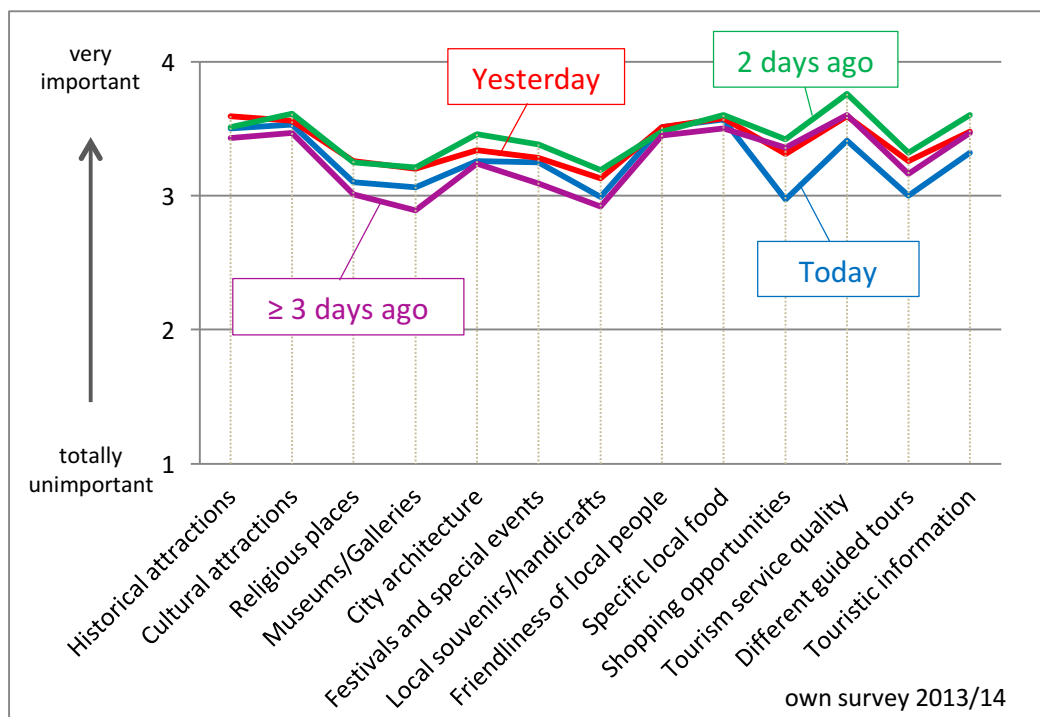
Scale from 4 (=very important) down to 1(=totally unimportant)

Figure 7.6: Importance differences by visitors' time of arrival

7.3 Visitors' Satisfaction with Destination Attributes

The satisfaction assessment of the visitors on Hue attributes are presented in this section. In addition, the differences analysis in satisfaction of the attributes in different groups of visitors divided by gender, nationality, age, education and time of arrival are also revealed.

A reliability test with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is used in satisfaction analysis. In this study the value for each variable is above 0.81 indicating that the variables are reliable. The result of reliability analysis is given in appendix 20. Figure 7.7 shows the ranking based on the opinions of the respondents who state that they are "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the surveyed attributes of Hue. The "specific local food" is the most satisfied offer to the tourists, whereas the "festivals and events" is ranked at the lowest level. It is also noticed that the "tourism service quality", which has been mentioned before as the most important concern for the tourists in Hue, is evaluated at the second low level. This issue is to be explicitly discussed further later on.

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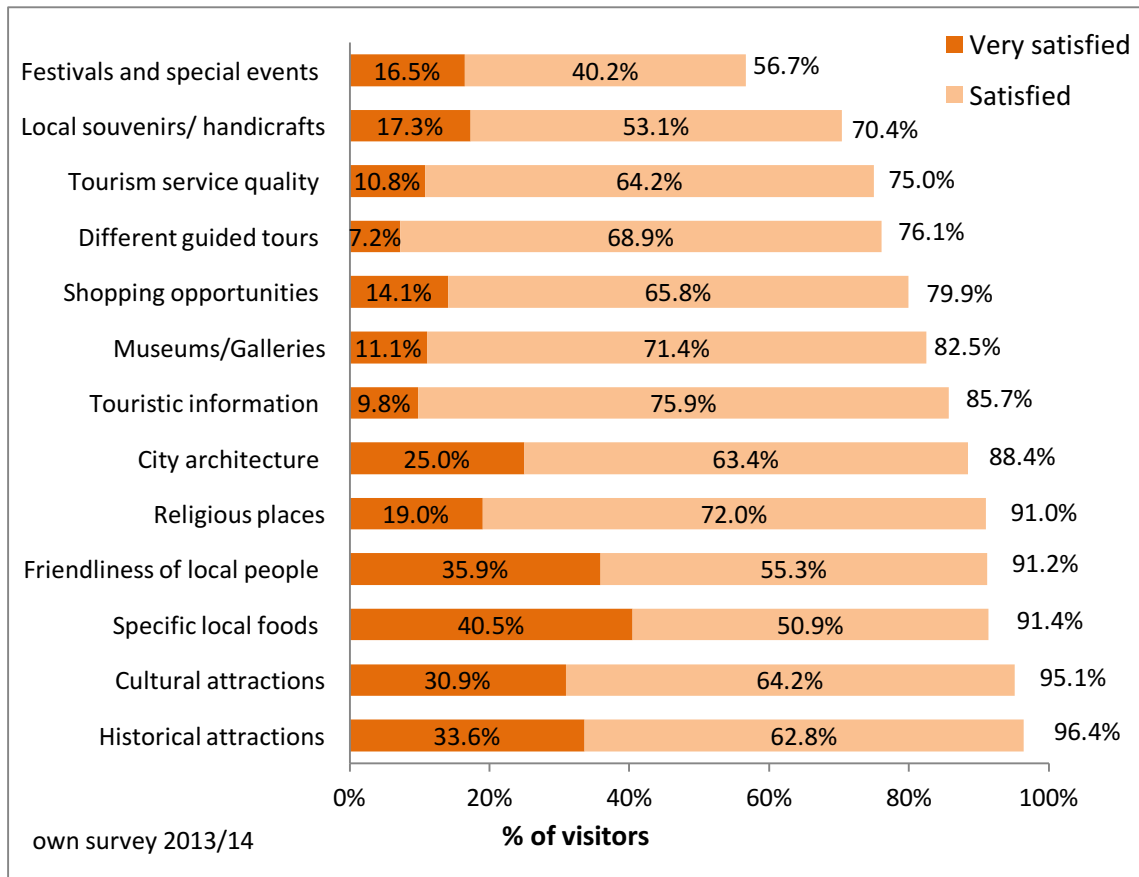
Figure 7.7: Satisfaction ranking of destination attributes

Considering the four levels of answer possibilities as an interval scale (see chapter 3) there are many more detailed results are visible. Table 7.3 demonstrates the average values of visitors' satisfaction and the statistical variation.

Food is an increasingly important and effective way to attract tourists. This, once again, reconfirms the research of RICHIE (1995) that one of the personal drive for travelling is to experience something different or stranger, including food despite it is tasteful or not. In this case, there is no doubt that Hue food is highly appreciated by the visitors (mean=3.37) as it is definitely the advantage of Hue tourism. 95.1% of guests are satisfied (53.0%) or very satisfied (42.1%) with Hue food. This is understandable because Hue used to be the ancient capital of the last feudal dynasty in Vietnam so Hue people still retain the royal cuisine. This unique local cuisine creates a special pull for domestic and foreign tourists. Several researches prove that Hue food bring great satisfaction to a lot of visitors.

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Table 7.3: Visitors' satisfaction with destination attributes

	Mean*	Std. Deviation
Historical attractions	3.33	0.503
Cultural attractions	3.29	0.509
Religious places	3.15	0.476
Museums/Galleries	3.01	0.492
City architecture	3.19	0.549
Festivals and special events	2.84	0.752
Local souvenirs/ handicrafts	2.96	0.675
Friendliness of local people	3.30	0.599
Specific local food	3.37	0.576
Shopping opportunities	2.97	0.579
Tourism service quality	2.89	0.576
Different guided tours	2.93	0.480
Touristic information	2.99	0.468

Own survey 2013/14   *(*): scale from 4 (= very satisfied) down to 1 (= totally unsatisfied)*

In tourism, the friendliness of the local people is a very important factor directly affecting visitor satisfaction. Especially for international visitors this factor becomes more imperative because the friendliness of the people will help them feel safe and welcome in a totally strange living context. Hue people are also well-known for their mildness and tenderness in comparison with those in the other regions of Vietnam. This might explain why the satisfaction of the visitors for this attribute is quite high (mean=3.30) with 94.4% of visitors feel "very satisfied" (37.0%) or "satisfied" (57.0%).

The attributes of "historical attractions" and "cultural attractions" also receive very high appreciation from the visitors (mean=3.33 and 3.29 respectively). The majority of visitors are satisfied or very satisfied with these two attributes. This result is consistent with the fact that Hue is a destination containing various amazing historical and cultural relics within the Complex of Hue Monuments recognized as World Heritage by UNESCO.

It is worth mentioning here that compared to the other attributes, "festival and special events" dissatisfy tourists the most (mean = 2.84). A high proportion of visitors are not satisfied with this attribute (33.1%). Although Hue Festival is considered an important occasion to attract tourists to Hue, this event is still extremely seasonal. Besides, Hue has many other festivals but they are mostly in small scale and most of them are religious festivals. In general, the festivals and events in Hue are still insufficient in quantity, poor in quality and not really meeting the needs of visitors.

As mentioned above, though "tourism service quality" receives the highest expectation from the visitors, their satisfaction towards this attribute is almost the lowest. With the fact that 23.0% of the surveyed tourists unsatisfied with this attribute, it is apparently an alert for the tourism businesses in Hue to pay much more efforts in improving the working performance of their staffs and the quality of facilities for a better service delivery. The answers for the open-ended questions explain that the visitors are not satisfied with the unprofessional manner of the staff, with the degraded facilities, with poor recreational activities and finally with language barriers.

Besides, 20.6% of tourists are not satisfied with "local souvenirs/ handicrafts". This can also be explained in a way that the souvenir products of Hue are monotonous, non-local and thus they are of course unattractive to the visitors.

"Different guided tours" only gets 8.1% very-satisfied responses and 14.4% (very) dissatisfied ones from the visitors. A lot of tourists are very interested in guided tours in Hue, but apart from the daily city tour there are very few guided tours organized regularly.

For further satisfaction analysis, the visitors with different nationalities, genders, ages, and times of arrival in Hue are tested to find out the significant differences in their satisfaction towards Hue attributes. The following findings will concisely address this question.

Nationality

The domestic tourists seem to be a little bit more satisfied than the international guests on most of the destination attributes *(see figure 7.8)*. Noteworthy differences can be seen on the attributes of "festivals and special events", "local food" and "shopping opportunities", of which the most difference belongs to the attribute "shopping opportunities" *(see appendix 21, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05)*.
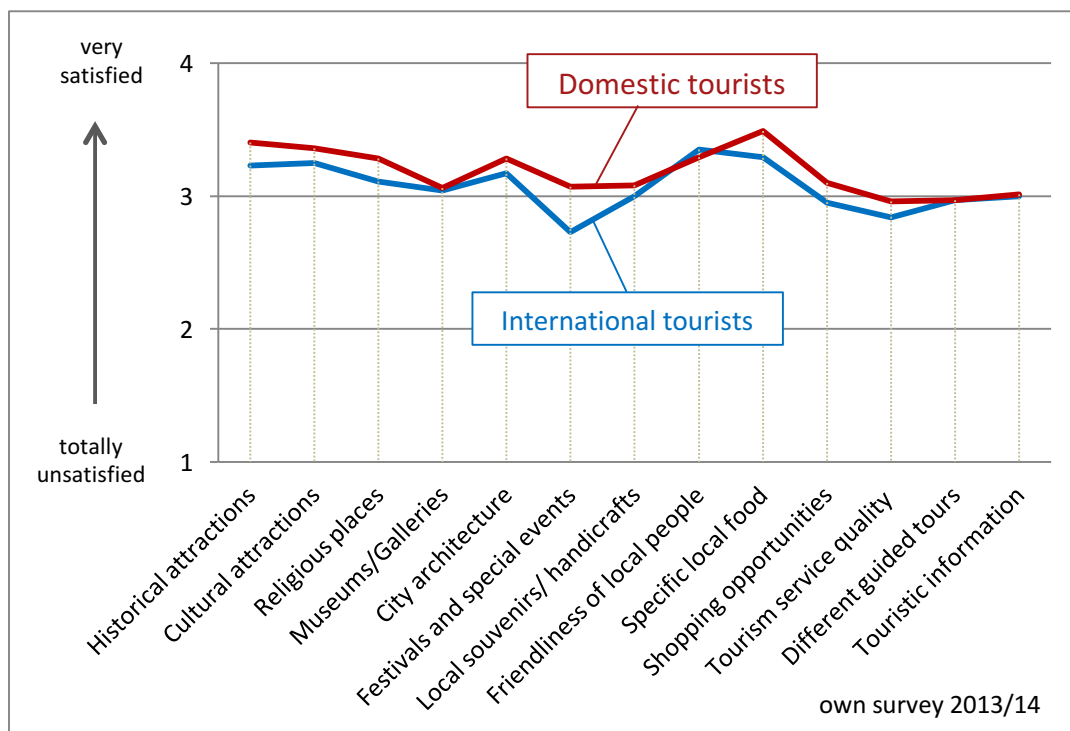
Scale from 4 (= very satisfied) down to 1 (= totally unsatisfied)

Figure 7.8: Satisfaction differences by visitors' nationality

Accommodation is considered a key service in tourism which plays an important role in visitors' satisfaction. As per the survey of visitors in Hue, there are 13.1% of guests who are still not satisfied with this service.

The analysis also reveals more details about the tourism service in Hue that the international visitors normally have lower satisfaction in accommodation service than the domestic tourists. *(see table 7.4)*

Table 7.4: Visitors' satisfaction with accommodation

	Very satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Unsatisfied (%)	Totally unsatisfied (%)	Mean*
All visitors	20.3	66.6	12.8	0.3	**3.07**
in which:					
- International	19.6	65.0	15.2	0.2	**3.04**
- Domestic	21.0	68.3	10.3	0.4	**3.10**

Own survey 2013/14   *(*): scale from 4 (= very satisfied) down to 1 (= totally unsatisfied)*

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Tourists feel satisfied the most with 5-star hotels but the international tourists are more satisfied than the domestics. And there is a reality seen: The more luxury the hotel, the more satisfaction of the guests. *(see table 7.5)*

Table 7.5: Satisfaction differences by kind of accommodation

	Mean*		
	International visitors	**Domestic visitors**	**All visitors**
5 star hotel	3.86	3.38	3.68
3-4 star hotel	3.10	3.31	3.19
1-2 star hotel	2.90	3.03	2.97
Mini hotel	2.92	2.86	2.89
Guesthouse	3.10	2.96	3.04
Other	3.17	2.88	2.95
Total	**3.04**	**3.10**	**3.07**

Own survey 2013/14 *(*): scale from 4 (=very satisfied) down to 1 (=totally unsatisfied)*

Gender

When categorizing the respondents in two groups by sex, the analysis discovers that there are substantial differences in assessment on five attributes including "historical attractions", "cultural attractions", "festivals and special events", "local souvenirs/ handicrafts" and "tourism service quality". The male respondents express their level of satisfaction higher than the female towards eight of thirteen attributes (*see appendix 22, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05*). This implies that male visitors are easier to be satisfied than the women. However, the satisfaction gaps between men and women are extremely small. *(see figure 7.9)*
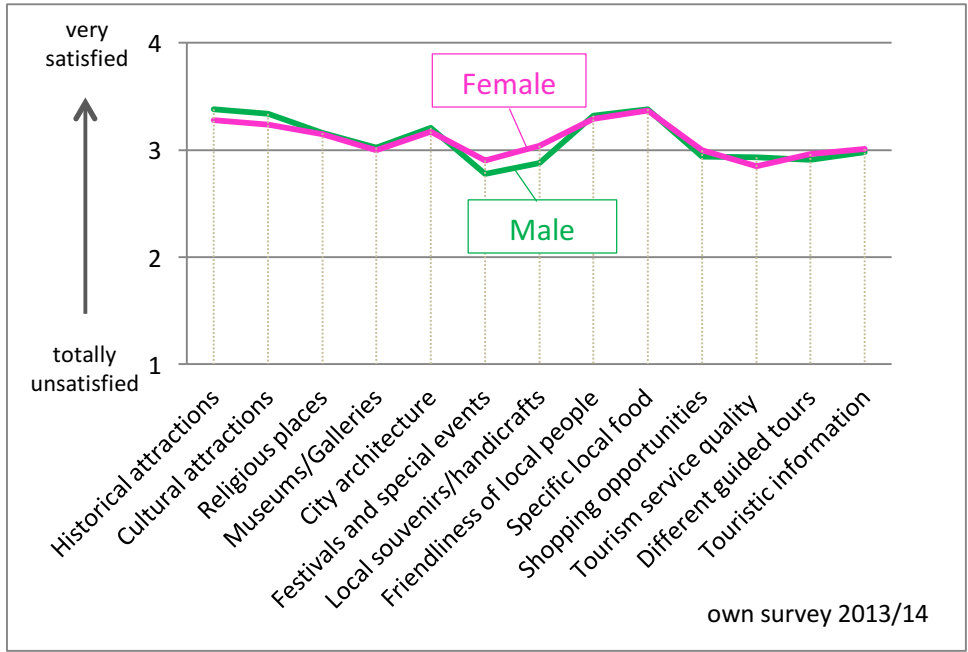
Scale from 4 (=very satisfied) down to 1 (=totally unsatisfied)

Figure 7.9: Satisfaction differences by visitors' gender

Age
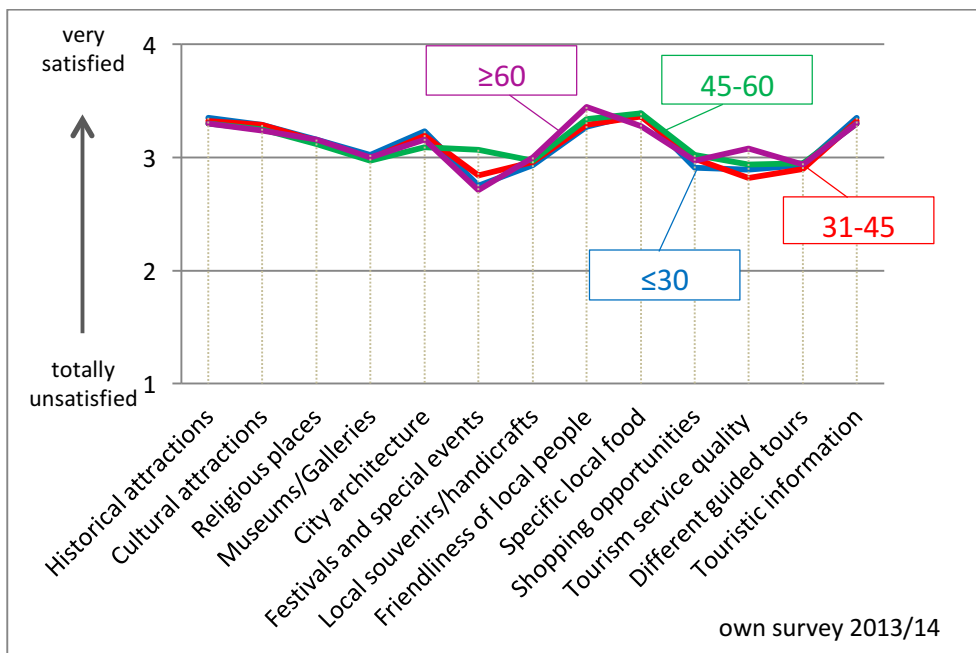
Scale from 4 (=very satisfied) down to 1 (=totally unsatisfied)

Figure 7.10: Satisfaction differences by visitors' age

The results of one-way ANOVA test show that there are two attributes receiving significantly different opinions by different groups of age, including "festivals and special events" and "tourism service quality" *(see appendix 23, on attributes with p-*

value of t-Test<0.05). In overall, there is not much difference between various groups of age in their satisfaction levels *(see figure 7.10).*

Time of arrival in Hue

The result discovers that significant differences in assessment by groups with different times of arrival in Hue locate on six attributes *(see appendix 21, on attributes with p-value of t-Test<0.05).* The interesting thing is that the group arriving in Hue "today" has the lowest satisfaction compared to the other groups. In addition, the satisfaction gaps on the attributes of "festival and special events" and "shopping opportunities" are quite large*. (see figure 7.11)*
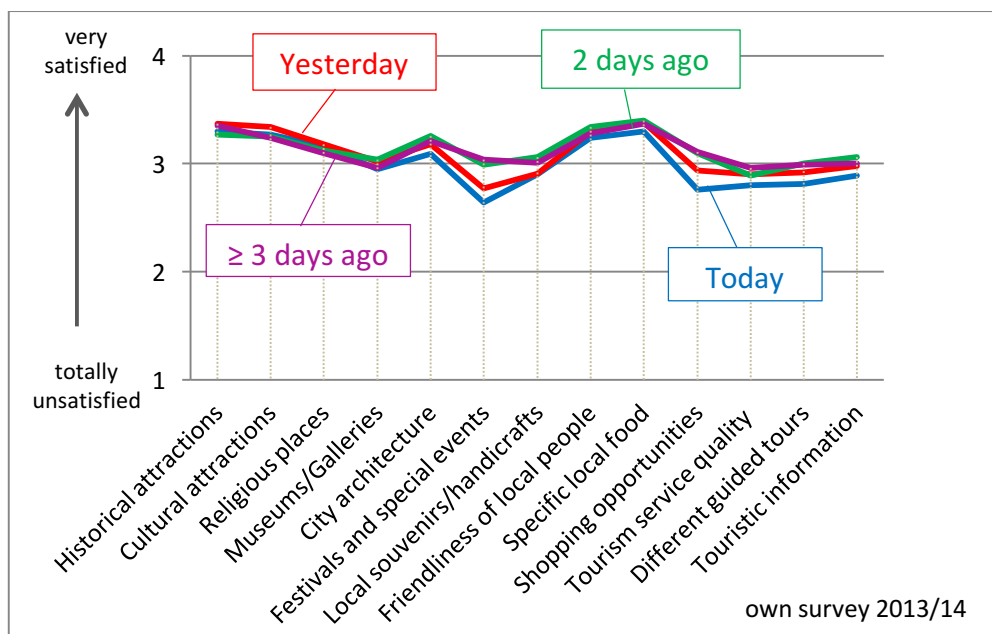
Scale from 4 (=very satisfied) down to 1 (=totally unsatisfied)

Figure 7.11: Satisfaction differences by visitors' time of arrival

7.4 Importance – Satisfaction Comparison

In order to make Hue become a preferable destination for tourists, it is absolutely essential to examine the relationship between tourists' expectation and their satisfaction towards the destination attributes from the tourist's perspective. This part of the paper will provide more insights into this question.

7.4.1 Distortion by Respondents with No Interest in Single Destination Attributes

The satisfaction values might be distorted by the answers of visitors who are not interested in some specific attributes and then they just declare them as "totally unimportant" or "unimportant". Therefore, the level of deviation would be an issue which should be clarified in the beginning.

Table 7.6: Satisfaction gaps between all respondents and only relevant respondents

| | Mean of satisfaction rate of | | | |
	all respondents	only relevant respondents**	Gap	p value *
Historical attractions	3.33	3.34	+0.01	0.000
Cultural attractions	3.29	3.31	+0.02	0.000
Religious places	3.15	3.19	+0.04	0.000
Museums/Galleries	3.01	3.05	+0.04	0.000
City architecture	3.19	3.23	+0.04	0.000
Festivals and special events	2.84	2.91	+0.07	0.000
Local souvenirs/ handicrafts	2.96	3.04	+0.08	0.000
Friendliness of local people	3.30	3.32	+0.02	0.000
Specific local food	3.37	3.39	+0.02	0.000
Shopping opportunities	2.97	3.03	+0.06	0.000
Tourism service quality	2.89	2.90	+0.01	0.000
Different guided tours	2.93	2.97	+0.04	0.000
Touristic information	2.99	3.01	+0.02	0.000

Own survey 2013/14   *(*): Results from Pair Sample T-Test*
(**): only respondents who rated the expectation with "important" or "very important"

Luckily, the number of respondents in Hue who declare some attributes of this destination as "totally unimportant" or "unimportant" is small. In general, all new correctly calculated values show a little bit higher relevance for each feature. The gaps are very tiny and rather similar for all attributes. Thus, the pair-samples T-test confirms no significant differences between the both data sets. *(see table 7.6)*

Although there is no big difference within the structure of the satisfaction assessments, in the following sections only the answers of tourists who declare features as "important" or "very important" are used for further analyses to ensure the scientific accuracy.

7.4.2 Importance - Satisfaction Gaps

Table 7.7: Importance-Satisfaction gaps of surveyed destination attributes

	Importance*	Satisfaction**	Gap	p value ***
Historical attractions	3.59	3.34	-0.25	0.000
Cultural attractions	3.61	3.31	-0.30	0.000
Religious places	3.38	3.19	-0.19	0.000
Museums/Galleries	3.35	3.05	-0.30	0.000
City architecture	3.45	3.23	-0.22	0.000
Festivals and special events	3.51	2.91	-0.60	0.000
Local souvenirs/handicrafts	3.43	3.04	-0.39	0.000
Friendliness of local people	3.56	3.32	-0.24	0.000
Specific local food	3.64	3.39	-0.25	0.000
Shopping opportunities	3.51	3.03	-0.48	0.000
Tourism service quality	3.69	2.90	-0.79	0.000
Different guided tours	3.44	2.97	-0.47	0.000
Touristic information	3.55	3.01	-0.54	0.000

Own survey 2013/14

(*): scale from 4 (=very important) down to 3 (= important)
(**): scale from 4 (=very satisfied) down to 1 (=totally unsatisfied),
after excluding the respondents with no interests in Hue attributes
(***): Results from Pair Sample T-Test

The comparison between the results of a relevance assessment and the satisfaction evaluation delivers valuable information. All the thirteen surveyed attributes of the destination receive low assessments from visitors concerning their satisfaction level *(see figure 7.12)*.

The most negative gaps fall into the attributes of "tourism service quality" and "festivals and special events". Table 7.7 shows that all of the 13 gaps are statistically significant.

These findings imply that the destination has considerably a lot of issues to address such as improving the quality of tourism services, creating more shopping options and diversifying guided tours, etc.

Tourists have many reasons to feel displeased with Hue. For instance, there are several shopping places for tourists in Hue but a worthy shopping center which meets the high

demands of tourists is still missing. Besides, guided tours in Hue are highly seasonal and not diversified. Furthermore, local souvenirs or handicrafts in Hue are in a lack of characterized local features.
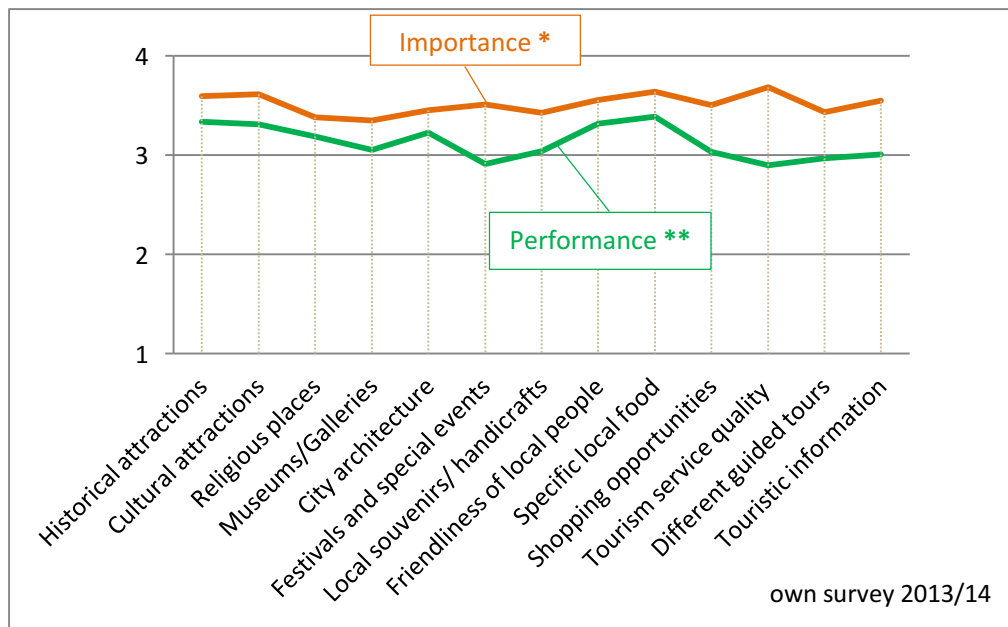
(*): scale from 4 (=very important) down to 3 (=important)
(**): scale from 4 (=very satisfied) down to 1 (=totally unsatisfied)

Figure 7.12: Importance-Satisfaction gaps of surveyed destination attributes

With regard to international and domestic tourists, the pattern is consistent which shows the satisfaction is always rated lower than the expectation.

For international visitors *(see figure 7.13):*

- the remarkably negative gaps fall into the attributes of "tourism service quality" (-0.88), "festival and special events" (-0.81), "touristic information" (-0.59), "shopping opportunities" (-0.55), "different guided tours" (-0.49), and "local souvenirs/handicrafts" (-0.47);

- "tourism service quality" is the attribute getting the highest relevance, but in the end its performance does not meet the demand of visitors;

- the attribute "touristic information" is still insufficient with many language barriers, although the city currently has a tourist information center run by the HDCST and a few other information centers run by the tourism companies.
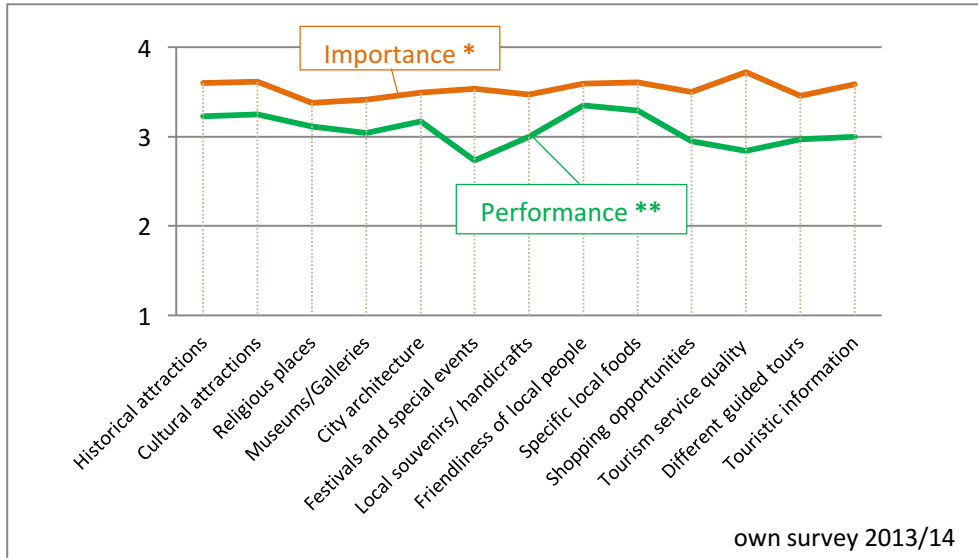
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(*): scale from 4 (= very important) down to 3 (= important)
(**): scale from 4 (= very satisfied) down to 1 (= totally unsatisfied),
after excluding the respondents with no interests in Hue attributes

Figure 7.13: Importance - Satisfaction gaps by international respondents

For domestic travelers *(see figure 7.14):*

- the biggest negative gap also falls into the attribute of "tourism service quality" (-0.70);

- the next big gaps drop in the attributes of "touristic information" (-0.50), "different guided tours" (-0.44), "festival and special events" (-0.42) and "shopping opportunities" (-0.41).
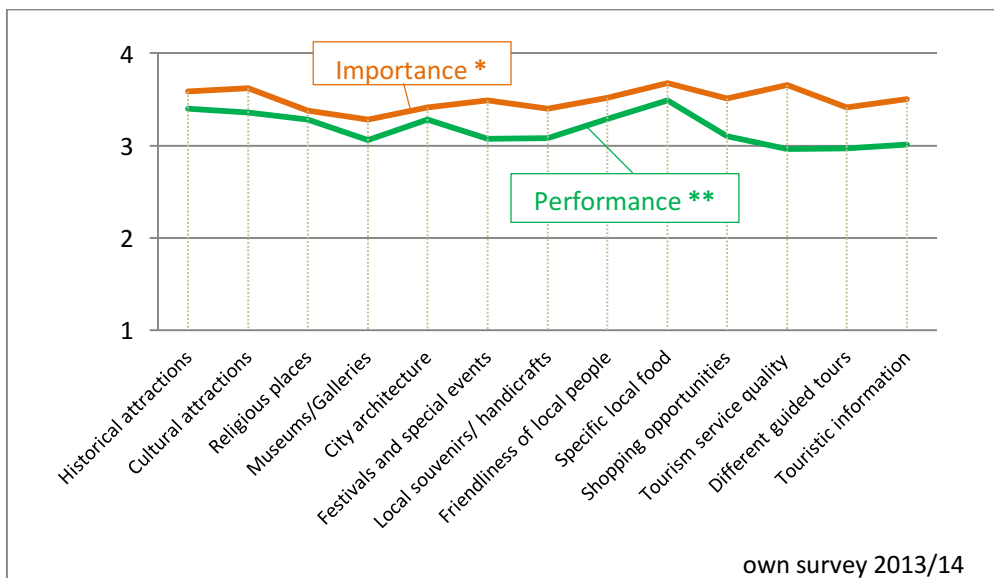
(*): scale from 4 (=very important) down to 3 (= important)
(**): scale from 4 (= very satisfied) down to 1 (= totally unsatisfied),
after excluding the respondents with no interests in Hue attributes

Figure 7.14: Importance - Satisfaction gaps by domestic respondents

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By analyzing the differences in importance - satisfaction between international and domestic visitors, it might be concluded that although these market segments have different consuming characteristics they are all not much satisfied with the same attributes of Hue such as "tourism service quality", "touristic information" and "different guided tours". However, international tourists are likely to be more disappointed than domestic tourists as the sum of the negative gaps between importance-satisfaction is -6.04 for the internationals while it is only -4.10 for the domestics.

7.4.3 Importance – Satisfaction Grid

The average level of satisfaction with all the attributes of Hue and the average importance level of these attributes are calculated for the overall sample. The position of each attribute on the importance-satisfaction grid is defined by using the mean scores of importance and satisfaction as the coordinates. As soon as these calculations are done, they are plotted on a two dimensional grid. This analysis is analog to the IPA-model (Importance-Performance-Analysis, see chapter 2).

The grand mean scores of importance and satisfaction are used to determine the placement of the axes on the grid (importance mean score = 3.38 and satisfaction mean score = 3.10). Each attribute on the grid is then analyzed by locating the appropriate quadrant in which it is placed.
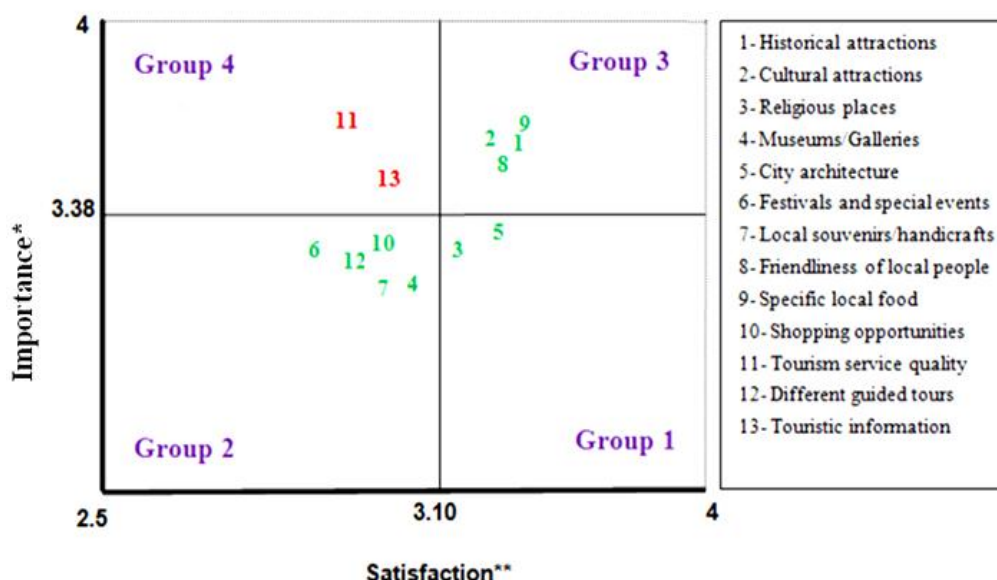
(*): scale from 4 (=very important) down to 1 (=totally unimportant)
(**): scale from 4 (=very satisfied) down to 1 (=totally unsatisfied)

Figure 7.15: Importance - Satisfaction Grid

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Figure 7.15 is an importance-satisfaction grid which shows the tourists' overall ratings of their importance and their satisfaction on the destination attributes. Based on this visual analysis, four groups of attributes are distinguished:

- Group-4 should be immediately reconsidered by the destination managers (high importance – low satisfaction). It is easy to visually identify that "tourism service quality" and "touristic information" are the most crucial features for tourism in Hue that need to be improved at once.

- Group-3 might please stakeholders in Hue, these attributes in this quadrant are important for tourists and they also most satisfy the visitors' expectations, especially "specific local food".

- Group-2 is of lower priority, these attributes are of low relevance so the low satisfaction will not create significantly negative impacts on tourism in Hue.

- Group-1 has positive effects for future development because these features satisfy visitors although they are focused on. Of which, "City architecture" and "religious places" might be hidden strengths of Hue.

7.5 Summary

All of the thirteen attributes given to have evaluated are of high importance for tourists. However, the satisfaction level for each attribute is always lower than its importance. Hence, there are many issues that need to be addressed by the destination of Hue in order to bridge the gaps between importance and satisfaction.

The Importance – Satisfaction Analysis (ISA) grid uncovers that "well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff" and "touristic information" are to be the most crucial features for tourism in Hue that should be immediately reconsidered for improvement by the destination managers. "Delicious food and cuisine" is the second paramount offer of Hue to tourists, but this offer more satisfies the guests in Hue compared to the other offers.

The results confirm Hypothesis H2: "Tourists' overall-satisfaction and attribute-satisfaction with the destination of Hue are positive". Frankly speaking, the destination of Hue is offering tourists with a pretty satisfactory experience, not as high as their expectations, but acceptable with fairly positive ratings from tourists.

The insights provided by this chapter can lead the destination managers in Hue to plan accordingly with the tourists' needs in order to enhance their satisfaction.

8 Interrelationship of Destination Image, Tourist Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty

"Tourism destination image" and "tourist satisfaction" have been discussed in previous chapters as core components in tourism and tourism marketing which determine "destination loyalty" (see chapter 2). This chapter aims to identify and to confirm the interrelationship between these three components.

8.1 Destination Loyalty

Destination loyalty is commonly defined as the level of tourists' perceptions of a destination as a recommendable place. Thus the centered objective of each destination is to achieve a high "loyalty level" among their visitors. In tourism, the intention to return a destination and the recommendation of the destination to others are both indicators of destination loyalty (BIGNÉ et al. 2001, CAI et al. 2003, PETRICK 2004).

8.1.1 Revisit Intention

Concerning the idea to visit Hue again, only slightly more than half of the respondents confirm (52.3%) to revisit Hue in the future, meanwhile up to 44.4 % of guests are not sure whether they will return *(see table 8.1)*.

Table 8.1: Visitors' revisit intention

		Number	Percent (%)
	Yes	540	52.3
Revisit Hue in the future	No	34	3.3
	I don't know	458	44.4

Own survey 2013/14

This high portion of undecided people is made up mostly by foreigners. Specifically, nearly two-thirds of them are unsure whether they will return to Hue or not *(see figure 8.1)*. This high number of waverers should not be interpreted against Hue, since many foreigners visit a country only one time in their lives. In fact, even though they like a

destination they will not return to visit it again. Thus, the positive proportion that approximately one-third of foreigners confirms to revisit Hue in the future indicates a good sign for Hue tourism.
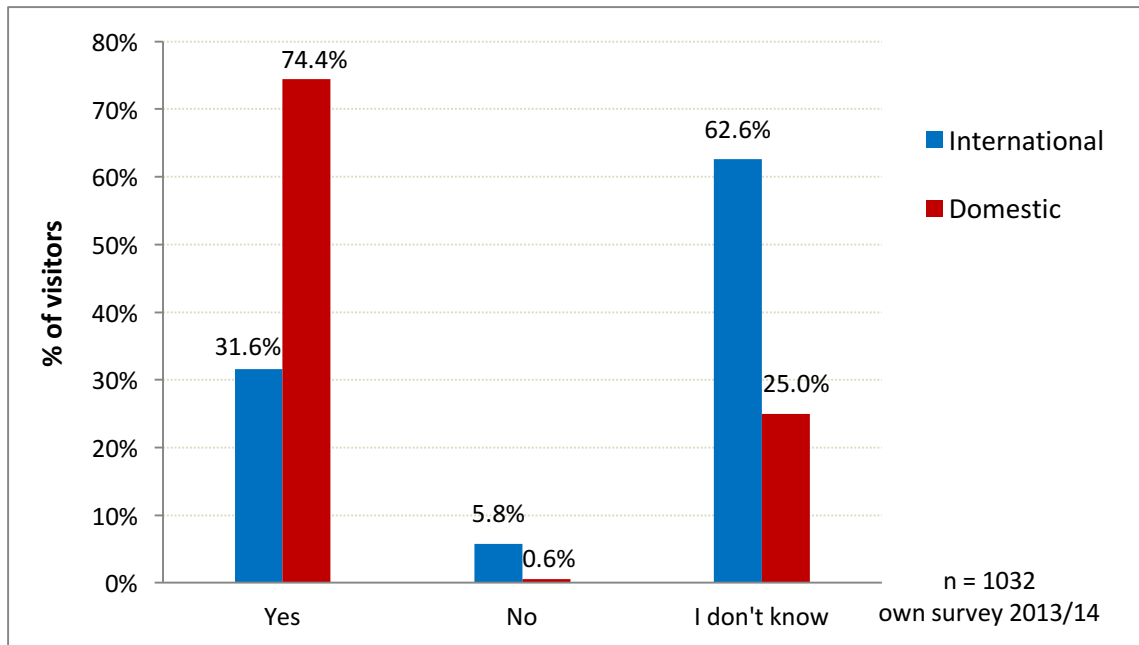
Figure 8.1: Revisit intention by visitors' nationality

There is no difference in revisit intention between male and female travelers. Nevertheless, regarding the age it is - at first sight - interesting that there is a clear tendency that the older the tourist, the lower the share of confirmation to return to Hue *(see figure 8.2)*. It seems that the respondents are realistic in their answers as of course, the probability of young people to come back to a destination is much higher than of old ones.
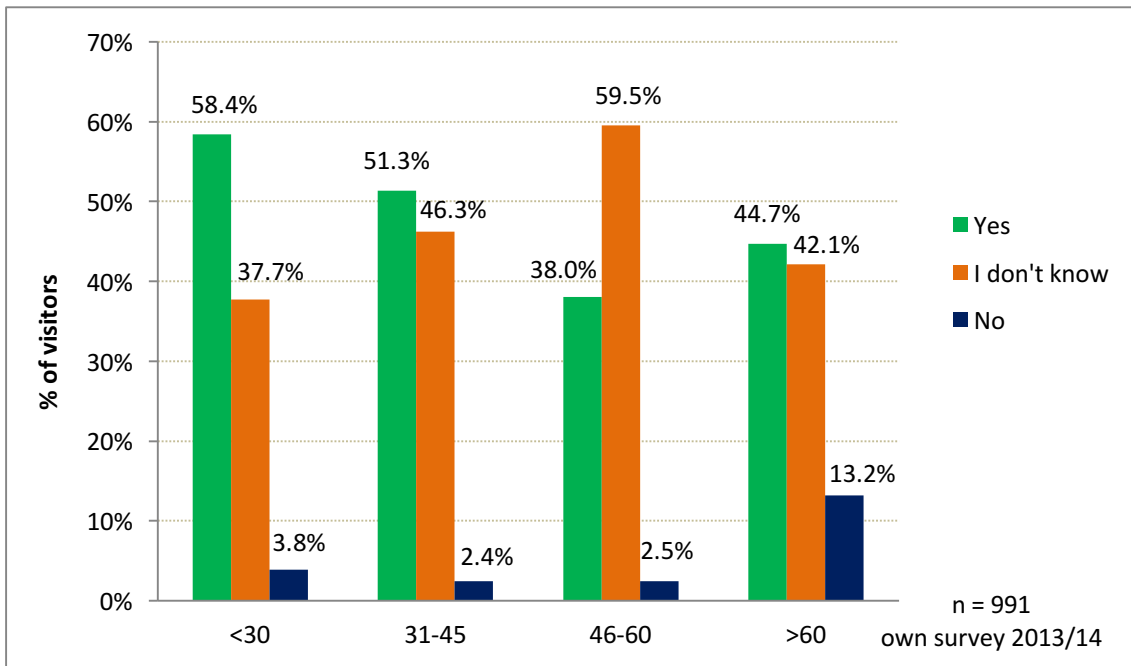
Figure 8.2: Revisit intention by visitors' age

Furthermore, more than a half of first-time visitors (51.8%) is wavering ("I don't know") *(see figure 8.3)* with the intention to visit Hue in the future.
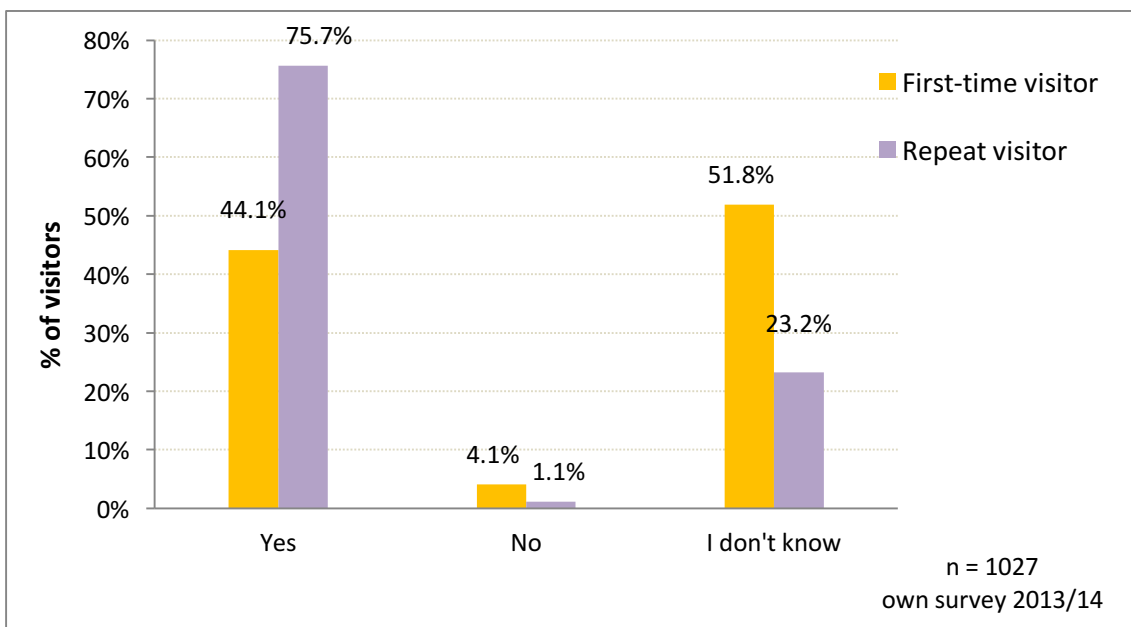
Figure 8.3: Revisit intention between first-time and repeat visitors

So, this share should be looked into more in detail. As most foreigners are first-time visitors and foreigners do not return often to a visit country, it is needed to take the Vietnamese guests into account. The share of Vietnamese tourists who come to Hue the

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first time and confirm to revisit Hue is 68.0% *(see table 8.2).* One more interesting is that 81.8% of the repeat visitors intend to return. This means Hue is for Vietnamese tourists given that two third of first-time visitor likes to come back and the Vietnamese tourists who visited Hue already at least one time are a very strongly loyal target group.

Table 8.2: Shares of revisit intention among Vietnamese tourists

	First-time visitors in Hue	Repeat visitors in Hue
"Yes", confirm to revisit Hue	68.0 %	81.8 %
"No" or "Don't know"	32.0 %	18.2 %

Own survey 2013/14

8.1.2 Willingness to Recommend Hue to Others

The share of tourists who recommend a destination they have visited themselves to others depends on their own level of satisfaction. Luckily, this portion among Hue visitors is very high, i.e. 92.4 % are willing to recommend Hue as a good destination to the others *(see table 8.3).*

Table 8.3: Visitors' willingness to recommend Hue to others

		Number	Percent (%)
	Yes	952	92.4
Recommend Hue to others	No	8	0.8
	I don't know	70	6.8

Own survey 2013/14

There are no significant differences between male and female, international and domestic, first-time and repeat visitors in their willingness to recommend Hue as a good destination to others. However, concerning the age it finds that the older the tourists are, the higher is the recommendation quote *(see figure 8.4).*
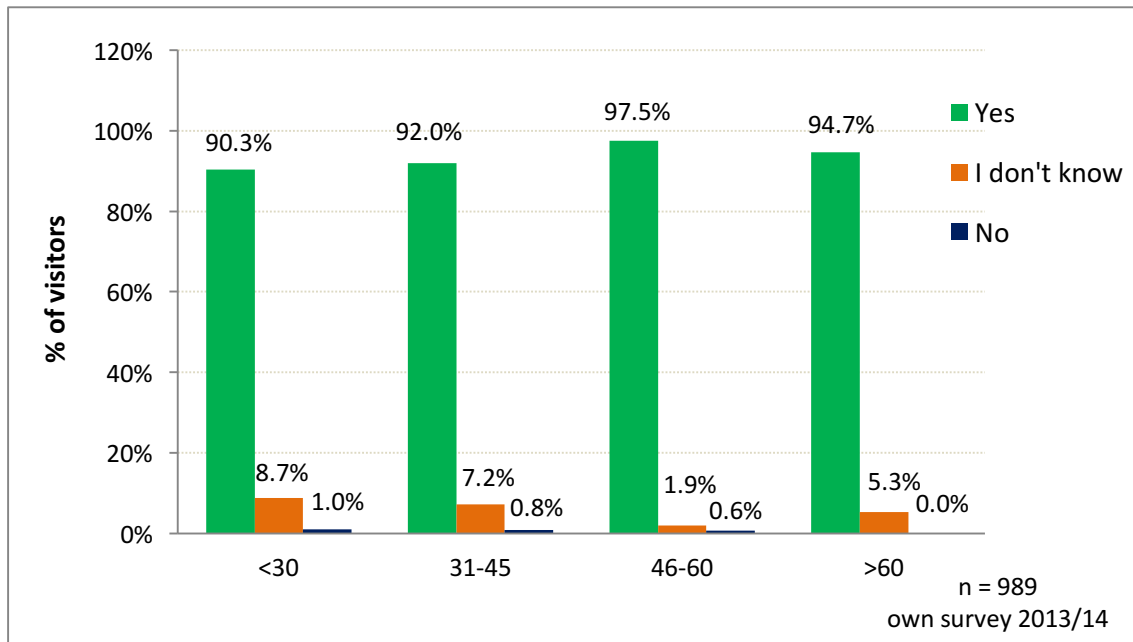
Figure 8.4: Willingness to recommend Hue to others by visitors' age

8.2 Destination Image and Overall-Satisfaction

"Overall-satisfaction" is the core component constructing the destination loyalty of tourists. Thus, the influence of the destination image on the destination loyalty might be affected by the "overall-satisfaction".

Both aspects "destination image" and "overall-satisfaction" have been asked in the surveys by a 10-level interval scale, to be specific:

- the image of Hue ranked from 1= very negative up to 10 = very positive;
- the overall-satisfaction ranked from 1=very unsatisfied up to 10 = very satisfied.

The statistical correlation between both answers among 1,019 respondents is very high: 0.820.

A regression model takes tourist's overall-satisfaction as the dependent variable and destination image as the independent variable. Table 8.4 presents the results of the analysis. The standardized coefficient beta (β) is 0.813 ($p < 0.001$). The p-value of the t-tests is less than 0.001 of significance, indicating that the beta coefficient is significant. The adjusted coefficient of determination (Adjusted R^2) reveals that 66.1% of the variance in overall-satisfaction is explained by the regression model. This means 66.1% of the variability in the overall-satisfaction is predicted by destination image.

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Table 8.4: Linear regression results of destination image and overall-satisfaction

Model 1	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	p-value	Adj. R^2
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
Overall-Satisfaction (Constant)	1.927	0.137		14.023	0.000	0.661
Destination Image	0.761	0.170	0.813	44.539	0.000	

Own survey 2013/14

Hence, the results signify a positive relationship between destination image and overall-satisfaction, supporting the assumption in the research hypothesis H3: "Destination image has a positive influence on tourist satisfaction". In this case, tourist's overall-satisfaction with the destination of Hue is strongly determined by the tourism destination image.

In an opposite way, a regression model takes destination image as the dependent variable and tourist's overall-satisfaction as the independent variable. Table 8.5 presents the results of the analysis. The standardized coefficient beta (β) is 0.813 ($p < 0.001$). The p-value of the t-tests is less than 0.001 of significance, indicating that the beta coefficient is significant. The adjusted coefficient of determination (Adjusted R^2) reveals that 66.1% of the variance in overall-satisfaction is explained by the regression model. This means 66.1% of the variability in the destination image is predicted by overall-satisfaction.

Table 8.5: Linear regression results of overall-satisfaction and destination image

Model 2	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	p-value	Adj. R^2
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
Destination Image (Constant)	1.027	0.157		6.640	0.000	0.661
Overall-satisfaction	0.868	0.190	0.813	44.539	0.000	

Own survey 2013/14

According to the loyalty model proposed in this study, there exists only one-way relationship between destination image and tourist overall-satisfaction in which tourist overall-satisfaction is the influenced factor. This finding also confirms that satisfaction has a positive influence on destination image. Thus the relationship between destination image and tourist overall-satisfaction is proved to be a bidirectional relationship.

8.3 Destination Image and Destination Loyalty

There is a wide agreement among researchers related to the influence that the destination image exercises on the future behavior of tourists (MANSFELD 1992, BIGNÉ et al. 2001)

8.3.1 Destination Image and Revisit Intention

The finding discloses a close relation between the destination image and the intention to visit Hue again in the future among the visitors. The data proves that the more positive the image is, the more tourists confirm to revisit Hue in the future. *(see table 8.6)*

Table 8.6: Relationship between destination image and revisit intention

	General-image grouped (*)			All
	Level 1-6	**Level 7-8**	**Level 9-10**	
"Yes", confirm to revisit Hue	35.9 %	47.0 %	69.7 %	**52.7 %**
"No" or "Don't know"	64.1 %	53.0 %	30.3 %	**47.3 %**

Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 1 (=very negative) to 10 (= very positive)*
Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig. = 0.000

However, as discussed in the first section of this chapter, the intention to return to a destination of foreign tourists depends on not only the image or satisfaction with the visit but also on many other influencing factors. Accordingly, only the Vietnamese tourists are taken into account in the following analysis.

Table 8.7 shows a strong relationship between the destination image and destination loyalty among domestic tourists. It is easily seen that the destination of Hue has achieved a very high level of "loyalty" among its domestic guests.

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Table 8.7: Relationship between destination image and revisit of Vietnamese tourists

| | General-image grouped (*) | | | All |
	Level 1-6	Level 7-8	Level 9-10	
"Yes", confirm to revisit Hue	54.7 %	67.8%	90.0 %	**74.3 %**
"No" or "Don't know"	45.3 %	32.2 %	10.0 %	**25.7 %**

Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 1 (=very negative) to 10 (= very positive)*
Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig. = 0.000

8.3.2 Destination Image and Willingness to Recommend Hue to Others

Most of the interviewed tourists are willing to recommend Hue as a good destination to others (92.4%). This extremely high percentage of positive WOM shows a very good opportunity for the destination in promoting its image to people all over the world.

Furthermore, the relationship between the destination image and the willingness to recommend Hue to others has been checked with the findings presented in table 8.8. The result reveals that the correlation between them is very powerful which indicates that the more positive the image in the minds of visitors, the more positive WOM for the destination of Hue. Most notably, 100% of the visitors with highest positive image (level 9-10) confirm that they will recommend Hue to other as a preferable place.

Table 8.8: Relationship between destination image and willingness to recommend Hue to others

| | General-image grouped (*) | | | All |
	Level 1-6	Level 7-8	Level 9-10	
"Yes", confirm to recommend Hue to others	76.9 %	91.1 %	100.0 %	**92.6 %**
"No" or "Don't know"	23.1 %	8.9 %	0.0 %	**7.4 %**

Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 1 (=very negative) to 10 (= very positive)*
Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig. = 0.000

Through the examination of the relationship between destination image and tourists' intention to revisit Hue as well as their willingness to recommend Hue as an advisable destination, hypothesis H4: "Destination image has a positive effect on destination

loyalty" is confirmed. This means that tourists' loyalty with the destination will be enhanced by positive destination image.

8.4 Destination Image and Attribute-Satisfaction

This section aims to check Hypothesis H5: "Tourist's attribute-satisfaction is directly influenced by destination image".

As the attribute-satisfaction of tourists has been captured only by a 4-interval-scale, the results of correlation calculations are not adequately reliable. Thus, the relationship between destination image and attribute-satisfaction is analyzed by simple crosstabs.

Table 8.9: Relationship between destination image and attribute-satisfaction

	General- image grouped			All	Gap between Level 9-10 with All
	Level 1-6	Level 7-8	Level 9-10		
Historical attractions	3.06	3.27	3.55	3.33	0.22
Cultural attractions	3.04	3.24	3.47	3.29	0.18
Religious places	2.93	3.10	3.34	3.16	0.18
Museums/Galleries	2.69	2.98	3.16	3.01	0.15
City architecture	2.91	3.15	3.38	3.20	0.18
Festivals and special events	2.59	2.78	3.06	2.84	0.22
Local souvenirs/ handicrafts	2.72	2.92	3.13	2.97	0.16
Friendliness of local people	3.00	3.24	3.52	3.30	0.22
Specific local food	3.19	3.32	3.54	3.37	0.17
Shopping opportunities	2.68	2.92	3.17	2.97	0.20
Tourism service quality	2.65	2.77	3.20	2.89	0.31
Different guided tours	2.82	2.88	3.08	2.93	0.15
Touristic information	2.86	2.93	2.99	2.99	0.00

Own survey 2013/14   *Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig. = 0.000*

Table 8.9 shows a very clear result for all analyzed attributes that the more positive the destination image, the higher the attribute-satisfaction. In an opposite ways, it can be

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also stated that the higher the attribute-satisfaction, the more positive the destination image. Thus the relationship between attribute-satisfaction and destination image is a bidirectional relationship.

8.5 Attribute-Satisfaction and Overall-Satisfaction

This section focuses on the test of Hypothesis H6: "Tourists' overall-satisfaction is determined by attribute-satisfaction".

However, as the attribute-satisfaction of tourists has been measured only by a 4-interval-scale, the results of correlation calculations are not reliable. Thus, the correlation between attribute-satisfaction and overall-satisfaction is analyzed by simple crosstabs instead.

Table 8.10: Relationship between attribute-satisfaction and overall-satisfaction

	Overall-satisfaction grouped			All	Gap between Level 9-10 with All
	Level 1-6	Level 7-8	Level 9-10		
Historical attractions	2.98	3.25	3.56	3.33	0.23
Cultural attractions	2.90	3.24	3.48	3.29	0.19
Religious places	2.77	3.10	3.34	3.15	0.19
Museums/Galleries	2.54	2.98	3.16	3.01	0.15
City architecture	2.86	3.14	3.38	3.19	0.19
Festivals and special events	2.59	2.79	3.00	2.84	0.16
Local souvenirs/ handicrafts	2.59	2.92	3.12	2.96	0.16
Friendliness of local people	2.86	3.24	3.52	3.30	0.22
Specific local food	3.28	3.31	3.54	3.37	0.17
Shopping opportunities	2.59	2.93	3.15	2.97	0.18
Tourism service quality	2.56	2.77	3.22	2.88	0.34
Different guided tours	2.81	2.87	3.08	2.93	0.15
Touristic information	2.77	2.93	3.16	2.99	0.17

Own survey 2013/14 *Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig .= 0.000*

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The result shows that the higher the attribute-satisfaction, the higher the overall-satisfaction. This confirms the hypothesis H6 that the overall-satisfaction of tourists is determined by attribute-satisfaction, in which the most influencing attributes are "historical attractions", "specific local food", "friendliness of local people" and "cultural attractions". *(see table 8.10)*

8.6 Attribute-Satisfaction and Destination Loyalty

Hypothesis H7 assumes that attribute-satisfaction is a direct antecedent of destination loyalty. This section aims to test this hypothesis and answer the question of whether destination loyalty is positively influenced by attribute-satisfaction.

The two dimensions of destination loyalty including the intention to revisit Hue and the willingness to recommend Hue to others are used as dependent variables.

As mentioned earlier, the attribute-satisfaction of tourists has been captured only by a 4-interval-scale so the results of correlation calculations are not reliable. Thus, the relationship between attribute-satisfaction and destination loyalty is analyzed by simple crosstabs instead.

8.6.1 Attribute-Satisfaction and Revisit Intention

It is found a straight connection between the attribute-satisfaction and the tourists' intention to revisit Hue that the (very) satisfied tourists always have higher confirmation of revisiting Hue in the future than the (totally) unsatisfied ones. *(see table 8.11)*

The data show that among the fourteen attributes, "festivals and special events", "local souvenirs/handicrafts items", "shopping opportunities" and "touristic information" have weaker influences than the other attributes on the intention to revisit Hue of the visitors.

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Table 8.11: Relationship between attribute-satisfaction and revisit intention

	Confirm to revisit Hue (%) ("Yes")			
	Totally unsatisfied	**Unsatisfied**	**Satisfied**	**Very satisfied**
Historical attractions	x	30.7	46.4	70.3
Cultural attractions	x	43.4	47.3	63.8
Religious places	x	45.0	47.0	75.6
Museums/Galleries	x	49.5	51.2	65.2
City architecture	x	35.9	50.5	61.0
Festivals and special events	26.3	48.7	59.6	51.8
Local souvenirs/ handicrafts	35.7	47.3	58.3	51.7
Friendliness of local people	28.5	43.4	53.3	52.7
Specific local food	x	44.7	50.0	56.9
Shopping opportunities	x	65.3	46.8	63.4
Tourism service quality	x	43.2	55.5	55.4
Different guided tours	x	50.7	52.3	66.2
Touristic information	x	54.0	50.8	64.7

Own survey 2013/14   *Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig. = 0.000*
                                     (x): The absolute numbers for calculation is very small (≤10)

8.6.2 Attribute-Satisfaction and Willingness to Recommend Hue to Others

There is a very strong connection between attribute-satisfaction and the tourists' willingness to recommend Hue to others that the higher satisfaction on the destination attributes the higher confirmation of willingly recommending Hue as a preferable destination. *(see table 8.12)*

Based on the findings, the direct path from attribute-satisfaction to destination loyalty is exposed to be significant. Therefore, attribute-satisfaction is also a direct influence of destination loyalty. The analyses confirm that tourists' loyalty towards the destination of Hue is enhanced by attribute-satisfaction.

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Table 8.12: Relationship between attribute-satisfaction and willingness to recommend Hue to others

	Confirm to recommend Hue to others (%) ("Yes")			
	Totally unsatisfied	**Unsatisfied**	**Satisfied**	**Very satisfied**
Historical attractions	x	92.3	90.8	95.1
Cultural attractions	x	82.6	91.2	95.6
Religious places	x	75.0	92.9	93.4
Museums/Galleries	x	74.7	94.3	96.5
City architecture	x	69.8	93.2	96.9
Festivals and special events	78.9	84.4	95.1	98.2
Local souvenirs/ handicrafts	50.0	87.5	92.1	98.9
Friendliness of local people	x	66.0	92.1	96.5
Specific local food	x	87.5	90.2	95.4
Shopping opportunities	x	73.8	95.7	97.2
Tourism service quality	x	88.7	92.7	98.2
Different guided tours	x	75.8	94.9	97.3
Touristic information	x	65.0	95.4	96.1

Own survey 2013/14   *Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig. = 0.000*
(x): The absolute numbers for calculation is very small (≤10)

8.7 Overall-satisfaction and Destination Loyalty

It is normally believed that satisfaction leads to repeat purchase and positive WOM recommendation, which are main indicators of loyalty. Marketing literature has paid much investigation into the relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty, and a number of studies have confirmed the significantly positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty (ANDERSON/SULLIVAN 1993, TAYLOR/BAKER 1994, CRONIN et al. 2000). If consumers are satisfied with the product or service, they are more likely to continue to purchase and more willing to spread positive WOM about that product or service.

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This section aims to explore the relationship between tourists' overall-satisfaction and their loyalty towards Hue and thereby confirms hypothesis H8 that tourists' loyalty will be enhanced by highly overall-satisfaction.

8.7.1 Overall-satisfaction and Revisit Intention

The data in table 8.13 prove that the tourists' overall-satisfaction positively influences the intention to revisit Hue of the tourists. In other words, the higher the satisfaction, the more likely the tourists confirm to return to Hue in the future.

Table 8.13: Relationship between overall-satisfaction and revisit intention

	Overall-satisfaction grouped			All
	Level 1-6	Level 7-8	Level 9-10	
"Yes", confirm to revisit Hue	27.3 %	46.8 %	69.9 %	**52.3 %**
"No" or "Don't know"	72.7 %	53.2 %	30.1 %	**47.7 %**

Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 1 (=very satisfied) to 10 (= totally unsatisfied)*
Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig. = 0.000

However, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the intention to return to a destination of foreign tourists depends on not only the image or satisfaction with the visit but also on many other influencing factors. Accordingly, only the Vietnamese tourists are taken into account in the following analysis.

Table 8.14: Relationship between overall-satisfaction and revisit intention of domestic tourists

	Overall-satisfaction grouped			All
	Level 1-6	Level 7-8	Level 9-10	
"Yes", confirm to revisit Hue	38.1 %	69.0 %	89.0 %	**74.3 %**
"No" or "Don't know"	61.9 %	31.0 %	11.0 %	**25.7 %**

Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 1 (=very satisfied) to 10 (= totally unsatisfied)*
Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig. = 0.000

Table 8.14 reveals a strong relationship between the domestic tourists' overall-satisfaction and their loyalty towards Hue. Up to 89.9% of the extremely satisfied tourists (level 9-10) state to visit Hue again, whereas 38.1% of the less satisfied guests (level 1-6) promise to return to Hue in the future.

8.7.2 Overall-satisfaction and Willingness to Recommend Hue to Others

Table 8.15 below shows explicitly that the recommendation-share depends on the level of satisfaction of the visitors. Among the very satisfied visitors who rated their overall-satisfaction with their stay in Hue with 9 or even 10 point on a 10-level-scale, there are only two respondents - for whatever reasons - who are uncertain whether they would recommend Hue or not. On the contrary, the unsatisfied visitors intend to recommend Hue on a much lower level.

Table 8.15: Relationship between overall-satisfaction and willingness to recommend Hue to others

	Overall-satisfaction grouped			All
	Level 1-6	Level 7-8	Level 9-10	
"Yes", confirm to recommend Hue to others	67.4 %	91.3 %	99.3 %	**92.5 %**
"No" or "Don't know"	32.6 %	8.7 %	0.7 %	**7.5 %**

Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 1 (=very satisfied) to 10 (= totally unsatisfied)*
Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig. = 0.000

Table 8.16: Relationship between overall-satisfaction and willingness to recommend Hue to others of international tourists

	Overall-satisfaction grouped			All
	Level 1-6	Level 7-8	Level 9-10	
"Yes", confirm to recommend Hue to others	68.2 %	90.1 %	100.0 %	**91.4 %**
"No" or "Don't know"	31.8 %	9.9 %	0.0 %	**8.6 %**

Own survey 2013/14   *Scale from 1 (=very satisfied) to 10 (= totally unsatisfied)*
Results from Pearson Chi-square, with sig. = 0.000

Table 8.16 shows a very pleasant result that 100% of international guests with very high satisfaction (level 9-10) confirm to recommend Hue as a preferable destination to others.

Based on these analyses, it can be stated that the hypothesis H8 is confirmed: "Tourist satisfaction has a positive effect on destination loyalty".

8.8 Summary

The destination loyalty model outlined in the chapter of theoretical background has been verified in this chapter. Therefore, it can be said that the tourists' overall-satisfaction is determined by destination image and attribute-satisfaction. Tourist attribute-satisfaction is also directly influenced by destination image, and destination loyalty is in return influenced by overall-satisfaction. In addition, the connection from attribute-satisfaction to destination loyalty is proved to be significant. Thus, attribute-satisfaction is also a direct antecedent of destination loyalty. The findings finally verify that tourists' loyalty is enhanced by positive destination image and high satisfaction; this is totally consistent with the "image-satisfaction-loyalty" idea that conceptually guides this study. Remarkably, the results also add to the proposed loyalty model a new relationship: Tourist overall-satisfaction and attribute-satisfaction have positive influences on destination image.

9 Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter concludes by presenting the limitations of the study, summarizing the significant findings of the research before making several constructive implications for Hue tourism as well as recommendations for further researches.

9.1 Methodological Recommendations and Limitations

The "loyalty-model" (CHI/QU 2008) fits well to structure and to guide surveys concerning image, satisfaction and loyalty of destinations. However, it became apparent that reality is more complex than the model explains: The interrelations between destination image and overall satisfaction as well as with destination attributes are influencing the overall satisfaction in one way but determining each other in both directions. Means, the model should be understood as a network, not as a flow of determinants.

The used IPA-grid is useful for detecting practical recommendations. The new derived ISA-model (Importance-Satisfaction-Analysis) and its grid - which works analog to the elder IPA-model - seems to be easier to manage in surveys due to its clearer terminology and delivers therefore more directly practical recommendations.

Beside some accomplishments gained, the author also encounters the following limitations which could be the lessons learnt for conducting further researches:

- The research on destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty is quite popular around the world, yet this area of research is still uncommon for Hue or even Vietnam. This is a disadvantage for the literature study regarding this study.

- It is a pity that the questionnaire fails to reach a larger number of international visitors due to the use of only English and Vietnamese languages. This shortcoming might influence the representativeness of the survey sample concerning international tourism in Hue.

- Concerning the methodology, the questionnaire used a 4-level interval scale to measure the tourist's perceptions. In one hand, this 4-interval scale is not

complicated for tourists as it shortens the questionnaire and helps the tourists easily choose the correct answers. On the other hand, to better check the correlation among the variables, at least a 6- or 7-level interval scale should be used in the study. Instead, the study has to employ crosstabs with Pearson Chi-square test to examine the relationship among the variables.

9.2 Significant Findings

This study aims at successfully building a winning destination image of Hue, highly satisfying the tourists and growing returning guests in Hue. With the hope of delivering the first comprehensive analysis and evaluation of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty as well as the interrelationship between them in the context of Hue city, this study is expected to provide tourism managers and marketers in Hue a scientific insight as foundation for their strategic marketing decisions. It implies that, if the destination promotes well its tourism image and improves the quality of tourism offers and services, the tourist satisfaction will be increased and accordingly the destination loyalty will be enhanced. The findings of the study have confirmed all the seven hypotheses proposed in chapter 1.

Concerning the destination image, the results indicate that Hue is well known as a destination rich of unique historical attractions, of which the most prominent one is the Citadel. Furthermore, Hue's atmosphere is very peaceful and safe thanks to the quiet space and friendly local people. Nevertheless, beside the positive images the tourists also have negative associations when thinking about Hue such as the problems of pleading street vendors, beggars and pursuing cyclo drivers, complex traffic systems or the price cheating. In particular, there are a number of respondents who even fail to rate about Hue attribute-images or response to the open questions in the questionnaire. For instance, the attributes which are considered the strengths of Hue tourism by the local government including "specific performance of Hue's folk songs", "a wide range of cultural activities" and "interesting traditional festivals and events" are the attributes getting the highest share of "no ideas" from the visitors. This somewhat proves that the destination image of Hue are still not interpreted well to tourists.

The imagery of Hue appears differently among international and domestic tourists. For domestic guests, Hue image is clearly positioned with its fame of the capital of the last feudal dynasty in Vietnam. It can be stated that every Vietnamese knows Hue as a place rich in history, culture and art. Hue, for the Vietnamese, is one of the most well-known destinations in Vietnam like Hanoi, the capital city, and Ho Chi Minh, the biggest metropolis in Vietnam. Especially, the image of Hue in the minds of the Vietnamese is mostly not coming from destination's promotional activities but non-tourist information about the destination. Meanwhile, Hue is still quite fuzzy to the international tourists. It could be presumed that no effective tourism policy is in place to promote the destination image of Hue to targeted international markets.

The general image of Hue is more positive in the minds of visitors before their trip to Hue and then part of its favorableness is lost after the visitors already stayed in destination. Furthermore, the image of the city is very positive only if the tourists have no earlier experience of the city on their own. For those who have stayed at least one day in Hue and those who come back to Hue for the second time or more, their assessments on Hue's image become more negative.

Tourists seem not very happy with the attribute-images of Hue since their ratings on the performance of each attribute are always lower than their ratings on its importance. Among the thirteen attributes selected to have evaluations from tourists, the most discontented offers to tourists are "well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff", "local souvenirs and handicraft products", "a wide range of cultural activities" and "unique lifestyle of local people". Especially, international guests are more disappointed about these attributes than the domestic ones.

The ISA (Importance – Satisfaction Analysis) grid finds that "well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff" seems to be the most crucial feature for tourism in Hue that should be immediately reconsidered for improvement by the destination managers. "Delicious food and cuisine" is the second paramount offer of Hue to tourists, but this offer somehow satisfies the guests in Hue more than the other offers.

For tourists, the most important offers of the destination include "tourism service quality", "cultural attractions", "historical attractions", "friendliness of local people" and "touristic information". But in reality, these attributes do not meet the expectations

of tourists. Especially, "tourism service quality" and "touristic information" are the most important features for tourism in Hue that need to be improved at once.

Nevertheless, frankly speaking, the destination of Hue is offering tourists with a pretty satisfactory experience, not as high as their expectations, but acceptable with positive ratings from tourists.

With regard to destination loyalty, the results show that domestic guests are more loyal to the destination of Hue than the international ones. Though it is commonly agreed that destination loyalty is strongly determined by tourists' satisfaction, this relationship cannot be fully applied to international visitors because many foreigners might visit a country only one time in their lives. Accordingly, even they like a destination very much and feel very satisfied with it, they do not return to visit it again.

The results absolutely support the destination loyalty model regarding the interrelationships among destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. It is proved that tourists' overall satisfaction is determined by destination image and attribute-satisfaction, and destination loyalty is influenced by overall satisfaction. Moreover, the findings also confirm that attribute-satisfaction and destination image are also the direct influences of destination loyalty. The study provides evidences that tourists' loyalty is enhanced by positive destination image and high satisfaction. This is consistent with the "image-satisfaction-loyalty" idea that conceptually guides this whole study. Surprisingly, the results also add to the proposed loyalty model a new relationship: Tourist overall-satisfaction and attribute-satisfaction both have positive influences on destination image.

9.3 Implications for Hue Tourism

The following constructive recommendations of this research are based on: (1) literature review and secondary data examination; (2) expert interviews; and (3) the results of empirical studies in Hue. However, the results of empirical studies which include two questionnaire surveys in Hue in 2013 and 2014 are the most important foundation for making recommendations.

9.3.1 Need for An Effective Marketing Strategy

The theories of destination image formation point out that the image of a destination is shaped by the sources of information before traveling and the actual experience at the destination. Therefore, the first and important effort to improve the destination image of Hue is to map out an effectively promotional strategy with a positive and clear image of Hue destination. If this effort works well, it would create a strong impact on tourists' decision making of destination choice. However, this does not mean to draw up a very attractive destination image while the destination itself has no potential at all. Hence, the information communication messages should be formed based on the actual capacity of the destination.

The study suggests that Hue's uniqueness lies in its history, complex of monuments, food, peaceful atmosphere and hospitability. Frankly speaking, Hue tourism has great potential to differentiate its tourism product thanks to its uniqueness in tourism resources. ETCHNER/RITCHIE (1993:12) confirm the importance of holistic and unique images in tourists' mind, as the chances of being selected is reduced if the destination lacks distinctive quality in their product benefit. It is completely necessary to communicate appropriate and unique holistic imagery, both functional and psychological, to the potential tourists through the mass media like internet, TV as well as through travel guidebooks, brochures and tourism magazines, etc.

In spite of many efforts in destination marketing and promotion activities, the destination has not yet been introduced effectively to the targeted markets due to the lack of funding, human resources and experience (Expert NGUYEN 2013).

The most challenge for the destination to launch its marketing and promotional activities is the financial issue. Due to the insufficient marketing and promotion budget, the destination image of Hue has not been adequately developed and introduced to the targeted markets. Tourism experts suggest that the fund for destination promotional activities can be raised from local government and tourism businesses. Nevertheless, in reality it is extremely difficult to call for the contribution from the local tourism businesses to the collective promotional fund of the city.

In addition to the question of financing for promotional activities, another challenge needs to be addressed: The insufficiency of the human resources in destination's

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marketing and promotion jobs in terms of both quantity and quality, with an emphasis on the weakness of professional skills and foreign languages, has to be tackled as soon as possible.

It can be said that there have not been any effective marketing strategies for the destination of Hue so far. The tourism destination image and slogan have not determined yet. Several destination slogans such as "The Charm Discreet of Hue", "A Land of Happiness" used by the destination in the past time seem not impressive enough to tourists and not as effective as expected.

The timely introduction of the "Master Plan for Tourism Development in Thua Thien Hue Province Period 2013 – 2030" with comprehensive marketing guidelines is hopefully a positive sign for the destination promotion.

The prior action should be done firstly by the destination managers is to establish a Destination Management Organization (DMO). Currently, there are no professional organizations responsible for promoting the destination of Hue. So, the appearance of a DMO will take over this mission to be in charge of the destination's promotion to both domestic and international tourism markets. DMO can get operational fund from the government and from the tourism businesses in Hue. The "Master Plan for Tourism Development in Thua Thien Hue Province Period 2013 – 2030" has also mentioned the issue of establishing a DMO in Hue.

As presented in chapter 5, the surveys' result shows that internet is the most prominent tool for tourists to find or to exchange information about Hue. People can use social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. to share their good or bad experience and this kind of "word of mouth" (WOM) is spread very quickly to those who are interested in. So internet seems to be the most helpful means to promote a place as long as that place can ensure that their tourists have positive experiences there. If what the tourists experience is unlike what are committed by the destination, the destination might face a lot of difficulties because of its disrepute. Therefore, in parallel with the promotion of the destination, Hue should focus on improving the quality of its tourism offers and services.

It is recommended that the destination of Hue should effectively utilize power of internet and e-marketing in promoting the destination and continue to introduce Hue's

image in different famous travel websites. In addition, the contents and layout of the official website of Hue tourism *(www.dulich.thuathienhue.gov.vn)* should be improved and a domain name in English *(e.g.www.huetourism.com.vn)* should be created so that the international visitors can easily access to get the reliable information of Hue. Meanwhile, a more user-friendly interface and impressive contents of the websites should be invested.

9.3.2 Improvement of Hue's Offers

Highly satisfied and loyal tourists create positive WOM and it is the most powerful influence for the purchasing decision of the potential tourists. According to KOTLER et al. (2010), it costs four to six times more to attract a new customer than to retain an existing customer. A satisfied tourist tends to talk positively about their satisfaction towards a destination and will tell five others about their positive experiences, while a dissatisfied tourist will tell ten or even more others about their negative experiences (KOTLER et al. 2010).

The destination should carefully learn about their tourists and should understand what factors satisfy and dissatisfy the tourists. The study finds that there are a number of destination-related important offers which influence the tourists' satisfaction and their loyalty towards the destination of Hue, including tourism staff and service quality, cultural activities and festivals/events, shopping opportunities and local souvenirs/handicrafts, touristic information and different guided tours.

9.3.2.1 Tourism Staff and Service Quality

 "Quality of products and services" is considered an important term in destination management and marketing. When the competition among the destinations increases, the destination managers should pay more attention on quality improvement. Tourism and hospitality is a highly service-oriented industry and involves high degree of contacts and interaction between tourism staff and guests. Therefore, it has become a big challenge for the tourism marketers to go for total quality management (KOTLER et al. 2010). However, they must take the necessary actions to ensure the total quality management of the services because in the end any failures and mistakes will affect the destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

As mentioned in chapter 7, though "tourism service quality" receives the highest expectation from the visitors, their satisfaction towards this attribute is almost the lowest. With the fact that 23.0% of the surveyed tourists unsatisfied with this offer, it is apparently an alert for the tourism businesses in Hue to pay much more efforts in improving the working performance of their staffs and the quality of facilities for a better service delivery. The answers for the open-ended questions explain that the visitors are not satisfied with the unprofessional manner of the staff, with the degraded facilities, with poor recreational activities and finally with language barriers.

9.3.2.2 Cultural Activities and Festivals/Events

"Cultural activities of the destination" – which are considered the key important determinants for tourists in selecting their vacation destination - is one of the attributes dissatisfying tourists the most in this study. The results highlight that the cultural attractions and festivals/events have a positive influence on the destination image as well as the tourist satisfaction. However, while tourists highly expect on these offers, their performances are rather poor and significantly dissatisfy the tourists. As per the responses from the open-ended questions in the study's questionnaire surveys, the destination managers should create more cultural activities year-round and get the local people involved more instead of using actors.

It is worth mentioning here that festivals and special events dissatisfy tourists the most. A high proportion of visitors are not satisfied with this offer (33.1%). Although Hue Festival is considered an important occasion to attract tourists to Hue this event is still extremely seasonal. In the meantime, Hue has many other festivals but they are mostly in small scale and most of them are for religious purposes. In sum, the festivals and events in Hue are still insufficient in quantity, poor in quality and not really meeting the needs of visitors.

9.3.2.3 Shopping Opportunities and Local Souvenirs/Handicrafts

Concerning the shopping opportunities, though there are several shopping places for tourists in Hue but a worthy shopping center which meets the high demands of tourists is still missing.

There is a considerable number of tourists who are unsatisfied with "local souvenirs/handicrafts". This reflects the reality that in spite of the availability of various souvenir shops in Hue, the number of souvenirs and handicraft products which bear local identities are still missing. Hue used to be a famous place of traditional crafts, particularly royal craft products. However, these attractions are at the risk of being eroded. Nowadays, uncompetitive local souvenir products with poor quality and unattractive appearance or products from China and from other places are becoming popular in Hue. For tourists, it is not easy to find a worth-to-buy souvenir in Hue. Therefore, the destination needs to seriously figure out suitable solutions to revive and develop local souvenirs and handicrafts products with characterized local features that fit the needs of tourists.

9.3.2.4 Touristic Information and Different Guided Tours

The study discloses that tourist satisfactions towards the offers of "touristic information" and "different guided tours" are ranked at the third and the fourth low levels compared to the other offers of the city. The fact is that the guided tours in Hue are highly seasonal and not diversified. A lot of tourists are very interested in the guided tours in Hue, but except for the daily city tour there are very few guided tours to be organized on a regular basis.

At the time the questionnaire surveys were conducted in Hue in 2013 and the beginning of 2014, there was no tourist information center run by the destination's governmental organization but only available several centers operated by separated tourism businesses. After that, in the middle of 2014, a tourist information center run by HDSCT was established. However, until now this place seems to be not well-known by tourists because it is quite new to them and the staff is not capable enough to run the center effectively.

An additional concern related to touristic information in Hue is that the destination should improve the quality as well as create more public direction and information boards about the local tourists' attractions in English and other popular foreign languages. This is one of the remarkable recommendations come from the open-ended questions of the study's surveys.

9.4 Recommendations for Further Research

This paper is one of the very first comprehensive studies about destination image, tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty and the causal relationship among them. The author finds this topic really interesting and does encourage other further researches on the subject. Following are some recommendations which should be consulted when conducting the researches on this area:

- The research should be conducted intensively for only one of the targeted tourist markets, e.g. either domestic or international, or for only one specific market such as French, German or Thai as this will narrow down the scope of research and thus produce more detailed analysis.
- It had better to have the questionnaire translated into several languages such as French, Thai or Japanese. By that the survey sample will be more balanced in terms of market shares and the study findings are more representative.
- It is also strongly recommended the study on the group of visitors who has never been in Hue before and has just arrived in Hue right the time that the interviews happen. In this study, these visitors have the most positive destination image about Hue. Hence, this group should be investigated further as the findings will be very useful for the destination marketers.
- A 6- or 7-level interval scale is encouraged to use in order to measure tourists' perceptions in more detailed as well as to facilitate the analyses of the correlation and regression to be done more easily and reliably.

By taking the above recommendations into account, the author do hope that the deliverables of the other relevant researches would be better concentrated and more comprehensive, which in conjunction with this paper will contribute useful scientific justifications for the local tourism authority in developing a successful tourism marketing strategy that is able to promote effectively the destination image of Hue to the world and enhance the tourists' satisfaction and their loyalty towards the destination of Hue.

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Appendix 1: Expert interviews

	Name	Date of interview	Position and Institution
1	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bui Thi Tam	02/10/2012 05/12/2014	Dean, Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism – Hue University
2	Dr. Le Thi Kim Lien	05/10/2012 12/12/2014	Head of Division of Tourism Studies, Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism – Hue University
3	Dr. Nguyen Thi Hong Hai	15/10/2012 18/03/2015	Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism – Hue University
4	Mr. Tran Viet Luc	31/10/2012 17/09/2015	Head of Division of Tourism Planning and Development, Thua Thien Hue Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism
5	Mr. Le Huu Minh	06/11/2012 08/12/2014	Vice-Director, Thua Thien Hue Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism
6	Mr. Nguyen Bao Ky	30/11/2012 12/09/2014	Head of Centre for Tourism Information and Promotion, Thua Thien Hue Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism
7	Mr. Nguyen Minh Toan	16/10/2012 28/12/2014	Centre for Tourism Information and Promotion, Thua Thien Hue Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism
8	Mr. Tran Quang Hao	15/08/2012 12/09/2014	Director , HueTourist Company
9	Mr. Nguyen Xuan Hien	01/10/2012 17/10/2014	Director, Eco Travel Company
10	Ms. Lam Thi Thu Suu	12/10/2012 24/11/2014	Director, Centre for Social Research and Development (CSRD)

Appendix 2a: Destination Image Questionnaire (English version)

Dear visitor,

We warmly welcome you here in Hue City. This survey is part of my PhD Thesis at University of Greifswald, Germany. It runs in cooperation with the Faculty of Hospitality & Tourism, Hue University, Vietnam. Your participation can support us to create better tourism images of Hue. Of course, all of your responses are confidential.

Thank you so much for your valuable support.

1. **Are you visiting Vietnam the first time?**
   □ Yes   □ No, I've been here already ………… times

2. **The duration of your stay in Vietnam this time is:** ………….. days

3. **Are you visiting Hue the first time?**
   □ Yes   □ No, I've been here already …………times

4. **How did you become aware of Hue as a destination? (***more than one answer possible)*
   □ Magazine/Newspaper   □ Internet   □ Social network (facebook, twitter…)
   □ Words of mouth   □ TV/Radio   □ Travel guide/brochure
   □ Hue is part of my package tour   □ Others:…………………………

5. **When did you arrive here in Hue this time?**
   □ today   □ yesterday   □ 2 days ago   □ 3 or more days ago

6. **Please tell us your personal opinion about the general image of Hue:**

   very positive ⟵——————————————————————⟶ very negative
   □1   □2   □3   □4   □5   □6   □7   □8   □9   □10

7. **Please tell us your opinion regarding specific features in Hue:**

In HUE	very good/high	good/ high	fair	bad/low	very bad/ very low	Can't rate/not applicable
01 the tourism service quality is	□	□	□	□	□	□
02 public safety in the city is	□	□	□	□	□	□
03 overall cleanliness in the city is	□	□	□	□	□	□
04 the problem of cheating prices is	□	□	□	□	□	□
05 the level of annoying vendors & beggars is	□	□	□	□	□	□

7. **Gender:**   □ Male □ Female   **Age**: …..years old   **Home country**: ....

8. **Your highest level of education/training:**
   □ Primary school   □ Secondary school   □ University   □ Other: …………………

9. Please rate some offers:

Hue offers	Your opinion					How important is this to you?				
	Totally Agree		Totally Disagree		Can't rate	Very Important		Totally Unimportant		Can't rate
01 many unique historic attractions	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
02 featured architecture	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
03 a wide range of cultural activities	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
04 a unique lifestyle of local people	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
05 interesting traditional festivals and events	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
06 a peaceful atmosphere	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
07 friendly and welcoming people	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
08 delicious food and cuisine	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
09 specific performance of Hue's folk songs	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
10 local souvenirs and handicraft products	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
11 specific conical hats for women	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
12 specific traditional long dress for women	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
13 well skilled and hospitable tourism staff	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐
14 traditional means of transport	4	3	2	1	☐	4	3	2	1	☐

10. Please write down three characteristic labels which you think fit well to the city of Hue:

11. Which are the most important, recommendable attractions of Hue? *(pls name not more than 3 attractions)*

If you have any remarks or recommendations for us, please tell us:

....

....

....

....

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION!

Appendix 2b: Destination Image Questionnaire (Vietnamese version)

Xin kính chào Ông/Bà,

Tôi hiện đang là nghiên cứu sinh của Trường Đại học Greifswald, Đức. Tôi rất cảm ơn vì ông/bà đã dành chút thời gian giúp tôi hoàn thành bảng hỏi này. Mục tiêu của nghiên cứu này là đo lường hình ảnh du lịch của Huế. Những đóng góp của quý khách sẽ là nền tảng cho sự thành công của nghiên cứu này và các kết quả nghiên cứu của đề tài sẽ có những đóng góp to lớn cho ngành du lịch tỉnh nhà. Tôi xin đảm bảo những thông tin ông/bà cung cấp chỉ phục vụ mục đích nghiên cứu. Xin trân trọng cảm ơn!

1. **Đây là lần đầu tiên ông/bà đến thăm Huế?**

    ☐ Đúng   ☐ Không, tôi đã đến Huế .... lần

2. *Ông/bà biết đến Huế qua phương tiện nào?* *(có thể lựa chọn nhiều câu trả lời phù hợp)*

    ☐ Báo chí   ☐ Internet   ☐ Mạng xã hội (facebook, twitter,...)

    ☐ Thông tin truyền miệng   ☐ TV/Radio   ☐ Sách/tập gấp du lịch

    ☐ Huế là một phần trong tour du lịch trọn gói gồm cả nhiều điểm đến khác mà tôi đã mua

    ☐ Khác:………………………….………….

3. **Ông/bà đến Huế lần này lúc nào?**

    ☐ hôm nay   ☐ hôm qua   ☐ cách đây 2 ngày   ☐ cách đây 3 ngày hoặc lâu hơn

4. **Ông/bà vui lòng cho biết ý kiến của mình về hình ảnh Huế nói chung:**

    rất tiêu cực ⟵————————————————————⟶ *rất tích cực*

    ☐1   ☐2   ☐3   ☐4   ☐5   ☐6   ☐7   ☐8   ☐9   ☐10

5. **Ông/bà vui lòng cho biết ý kiến của mình về các đặc điểm sau của Huế:**

Ở Huế	rất tốt/cao	tốt/cao	trung bình	xấu/thấp	rất xấu/thấp	không có ý kiến
01 chất lượng dịch vụ du lịch	○	○	○	○	○	☐
02 an ninh nơi công cộng	○	○	○	○	○	☐
03 mức độ vệ sinh/sạch sẽ của thành phố	○	○	○	○	○	☐
04 vấn đề nói thách/gian lận giá cả	○	○	○	○	○	☐
05 mức độ quấy rầy của người bán hàng rong/ăn xin	○	○	○	○	○	☐

6. **Giới tính**: ☐ Nam ☐ Nữ **Tuổi**: ……. **Đến từ tỉnh/thành phố**: ....

7. **Trình độ học vấn:**

☐ Tiểu học ☐ Trung học ☐ Cao đẳng/Đại học ☐ Khác: …………….……

8. **Ông/bà vui lòng đánh giá về các đặc tính mà Huế có thể mang lại cho du khách theo bảng sau:**

Huế cung cấp cho du khách	Ý kiến của ông/bà					Khi đi du lịch nói chung, ông/bà có xem yếu tố này là quan trọng với mình không?				
	Rất đồng ý	Đồng ý	Không đồng ý	Rất đồng ý	Không ý kiến	Rất quan trọng	Quan trọng	Không quan trọng	Rất không quan trọng	Không ý kiến
01 nhiều sự hấp dẫn độc đáo về mặt lịch sử	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
02 kiến trúc đặc sắc	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
03 nhiều hoạt động văn hóa đa dạng	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
04 nếp sống/sinh hoạt độc đáo của người dân địa phương	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
05 các lễ hội và sự kiện truyền thống thú vị	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
06 bầu không khí thanh bình	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
07 con người thân thiện và nồng hậu	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
08 thức ăn ngon	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
09 biểu diễn ca Huế đặc sắc	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
10 đồ lưu niệm/sản phẩm làng nghề độc đáo	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
11 nón Huế đặc trưng cho phụ nữ	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
12 áo dài truyền thống cho phụ nữ	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
13 đội ngũ nhân viên phục vụ hiếu khách và có kỹ năng tốt	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐
14 các phương tiện vận chuyển truyền thống đặc sắc (xích lô, thuyền rồng, ..)	○	○	○	○	☐	○	○	○	○	☐

9. Vui lòng đưa ra 3 hình ảnh mà ông/bà cho là **phù hợp** nhất với Huế?

_____   _____   _____

10. Huế có những điểm tham quan/nét hấp dẫn nào **quan trọng nhất** đối với ông bà và ông/bà sẽ giới thiệu những hình ảnh đó cho người thân/bạn bè?

_____   _____   _____

Ý kiến hoặc đề xuất của ông/bà nhằm cải thiện hình ảnh du lịch Huế tốt hơn:

....

....

Một lần nữa, rất cảm ơn sự đóng góp của ông/bà!

Appendix 3a: Tourist Satisfaction Questionnaire (English version)

Dear visitor,

We warmly welcome you here in Hue City. This survey is a part of my PhD Thesis at University of Greifswald, Germany. It runs in cooperation with the Faculty of Hospitality & Tourism, Hue University, Vietnam. Your participation can support us to improve the quality of tourism services in Hue. Of course, all of your responses are confidential.

Thank you so much for your valuable support.

1. **Are you visiting Vietnam the first time?**

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No, I've been here already ..……… times

2. **The duration of your stay in Vietnam this time is:** ….……….. days

3. **Are you visiting Hue first time?**

   ☐ No,   ☐ Yes

   I've been her already ...... times   **How did you become aware of this destination**?
   (you can choose more than one answer)

   ☐ Magazine/Newspaper   ☐ Internet
   ☐ Tour operator/travel agency   ☐ TV/Radio
   ☐ Words of mouth   ☐ Guide book
   ☐ Social network (facebook, twitter, ..)
   ☐ Hue is part of my package tour
   ☐ Other: ………….……………….

4. **The duration of your stay in Hue this time is** ………….. days

5. **When did you arrive here in Hue?**

   ☐ today   ☐ yesterday   ☐ 2 days ago   ☐ 3 or more days ago

6. **What is the main purpose of your visit to Hue this time?**

   ☐ Holiday   ☐ Seminar/workshop/conference
   ☐ Business   ☐ Study / Research   ☐ Other: …………………

7. **How did you get to Hue?**

   ☐ by plane   ☐ by bus/train (public transport)
   ☐ by car   ☐ by coach (booked tour)   ☐ Other: ………..........

8. **In what kind of accommodation are you staying here in Hue?**

   ☐ Mini hotel   ☐ 1-2 star hotel   ☐ 3-4 star hotel   ☐ 5 star hotel

   ☐ Guesthouse   ☐ Other: …………

Please indicate the level of your satisfaction with your accommodation:

☐ very satisfied   ☐ satisfied   ☐ not satisfied   ☐ totally unsatisfied

9. **Are you travelling alone?**

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No --▶ I am traveling with ☐ my partner and …..... child(ren)
                                            ☐ a group of … people, thereof …..... children

10. How did you organize your trip?

☐ by myself   ☐ by tour operator / travel agency

11. Is your trip completely fixed?

☐ Yes   ☐ No ---------▶☐ Destinations are fixed

☐ All accommodations are booked

☐ Means of transport are booked

12. The total budget for your trip to Vietnam is about ……………………………………………………..

(this budget is for …….…. people)

13. Please indicate the importance in general and your satisfaction with following attributes in Hue:

Attributes	Importance *(rate the importance of attributes in general when you are traveling)*				Satisfaction *(rate your satisfaction towards the attributes after your visit to Hue)*			
	very important	important	unimportant	totally unimportant	very satisfied	satisfied	unsatisfied	totally unsatisfied
1 Historical attractions	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
2 Cultural attractions	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
3 Religious places	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
4 Museums/Galleries	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
5 City architecture	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
6 Festivals and special events	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
7 Local souvenirs/handicrafts	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
8 Friendliness of local people	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
9 Specific local foods	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
10 Shopping possibility	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
11 Tourism service quality	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
12 Different guided tours	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
13 Good touristic information	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

14. Did you have any images of Hue in your mind - before your visit to Hue?

☐ No   ☐ Yes ▪▪▪▪▶ *please indicate the level of image in your mind:*

very positive ⟵——————————————————⟶**very negative**

☐10 ☐9 ☐8 ☐7 ☐6 ☐5 ☐4 ☐3 ☐2 ☐1

15. **What is the image of Hue in your mind now? Please write down some keywords:**

    ……

    ……

    After you visited Hue, how is the image of Hue in your mind now?

    very positive ⟵——————————————————⟶ **very negative**

    ☐10 ☐9 ☐8 ☐7 ☐6 ☐5 ☐4 ☐3 ☐2 ☐1

16. **Overall, how satisfied are you with your visit to Hue?**

    very satisfied ⟵——————————————————⟶ **very unsatisfied**

    ☐10 ☐9 ☐8 ☐7 ☐6 ☐5 ☐4 ☐3 ☐2 ☐1

17. **Do you want to visit Hue again in the future?**

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ I don't know

18. **Will you recommend Hue to others as a good destination?**

    ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ I don't know

    If you have any remarks or recommendations for us, please tell us:

    ………

    ………

    ………

    ………

    ………

19. **Gender**: ☐ Male   ☐ Female   **Age**: …………. Years   **Home country**: …………………………

20. **Occupation:**

    ☐ Employed full-time   ☐ Self-employed   ☐ Student   ☐ Housewife/-man

    ☐ Employed part-time   ☐ Unemployed   ☐ Retired   ☐ Other: …………………

21. **Your highest level of education/training:**

    ☐ Primary school   ☐ Secondary school   ☐ University   ☐ Other: …………………

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION!

Appendix 3b: Tourist Satisfaction Questionnaire (Vietnamese version)

Xin kính chào Ông/Bà,

Tôi hiện đang là nghiên cứu sinh của Trường Đại học Greifswald, Đức. Tôi rất cảm ơn vì ông/bà đã dành chút thời gian giúp tôi hoàn thành bảng hỏi này. Mục tiêu của nghiên cứu này là đo lường sự hài lòng của du khách đối với sản phẩm du lịch Huế. Những đóng góp của ông/bà sẽ là nền tảng cho sự thành công của nghiên cứu này và các kết quả nghiên cứu của đề tài sẽ có những đóng góp to lớn cho ngành du lịch tỉnh nhà. Tôi xin đảm bảo những thông tin ông/bà cung cấp chỉ phục vụ mục đích nghiên cứu. Xin trân trọng cảm ơn!

1. **Đây là lần đầu tiên ông/bà đến thăm Huế?**

   ☐ Không, tôi đã đến Huế .... lần   ☐ Đúng

2. *Ông/bà biết đến Huế qua phương tiện nào? (có thể lựa chọn nhiều câu trả lời phù hợp)*

   ☐ Báo chí   ☐ Internet   ☐ Mạng xã hội (facebook, twitter,…)
   ☐ Thông tin truyền miệng   ☐ TV/Radio   ☐ Sách/tập gấp du lịch
   ☐ Huế là một phần trong tour du lịch trọn gói gồm cả nhiều điểm đến khác mà tôi đã mua
   ☐ Khác:……………………………………….

3. **Ông/bà sẽ ở lại Huế trong ……. ngày**

4. **Ông/bà đến Huế lần này lúc nào?**

   ☐ hôm nay   ☐ hôm qua   ☐ cách đây 2 ngày   ☐ cách đây 3 ngày hoặc lâu hơn

5. **Mục đích chính của lần đến Huế lần này của ông/bà là gì?**

   ☐ Đi du lịch   ☐ Hội thảo/Hội nghị
   ☐ Đi công tác   ☐ Học tập/Nghiên cứu   ☐ Khác: …………………….

6. **Ông/bà đến Huế bằng phương tiện gì?**

   ☐ Máy bay   ☐ Xe khách/Tàu lửa
   ☐ Xe ô tô riêng   ☐ Xe tour   ☐ Khác: …….…………….

7. **Loại hình lưu trú mà ông/bà đang sử dụng tại Huế?**

   ☐ Khách sạn nhỏ   ☐ Khách sạn 1-2 sao   ☐ Khách sạn 3-4 sao   ☐ Khách sạn 5 sao
   ☐ Nhà khách   ☐ Khác: ………………….

   Mức độ hài lòng của ông/bà đối với nơi lưu trú hiện tại:

   ☐ Rất hài lòng   ☐ Hài lòng   ☐ Không hài lòng   ☐ Rất không hài lòng

8. **Ông/bà đi du lịch một mình?**

   ☐ Đúng   ☐ Không   --▶Tôi đi với: ☐ vợ/chồng và ……. con
                                        ☐ nhóm gồm … người, trong đó có ……. trẻ em

9. Ông/bà tổ chức chuyến đi của mình như thế nào?

☐ Tự tổ chức   ☐ Thông qua công ty lữ hành

10. Chuyến đi của ông/bà có hoàn toàn được sắp xếp cố định trước không?

☐ Có   ☐ Không, chỉ có ---▶ ☐ các điểm đến cố định

☐ các nơi ở được đặt sẵn

☐ các phương tiện vận chuyển được đặt sẵn

11. Tổng ngân sách cho toàn bộ chuyến đi của ông/bà vào khoảng …………………………… trong đó ngân sách dành cho chuyến đi đến Huế chiếm khoảng …………%

(ngân sách này tính cho ………. người)

12. Ông/bà vui lòng cho biết tầm quan trọng nói chung và mức độ thỏa mãn của mình khi đến Huế nói riêng đối với các đặc tính sau của Huế:

Đặc tính	Tầm quan trọng *(xếp loại tầm quan trọng của từng đặc tính đối với ông/bà khi đi du lịch nói chung)*				Mức độ thỏa mãn *(xếp loại mức độ hài lòng của ông/bà đối với từng đặc tình của du lịch Huế)*			
	Rất quan trọng	*Quan trọng*	*Không quan trọng*	*Rất không quan trọng*	*Rất thỏa mãn*	*Thỏa mãn*	*Không thỏa mãn*	*Rất không thỏa mãn*
1 Sự hấp dẫn về lịch sử	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
2 Sự hấp dẫn về văn hóa	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
3 Những địa điểm tôn giáo	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
4 Bảo tàng/Phòng trưng bày	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
5 Kiến trúc thành phố	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
6 Lễ hội và các sự kiện đặc biệt	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
7 Đồ lưu niệm/sản phẩm làng nghề của địa phương	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
8 Sự thân thiện của người dân địa phương	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
9 Món ăn đặc sản địa phương	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
10 Mua sắm dễ dàng	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
11 Chất lượng dịch vụ du lịch	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
12 Các tour du lịch có hướng dẫn đa dạng	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
13 Thông tin du lịch tốt	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

13. Trước khi đến Huế, ông/bà có bất kỳ hình ảnh nào về Huế không?

☐ Không   ☐ Có ▪▪▪▪▶ *vui lòng chỉ ra mức độ hình ảnh của ông/bà về Huế:*

rất tích cực ◀————————————————▶ **rất tiêu cực**

☐10 ☐9 ☐8 ☐7 ☐6 ☐5 ☐4 ☐3 ☐2 ☐1

14. Hiện tại khi đã đến Huế, thì hình ảnh về Huế trong ông/bà như thế nào? Ông/bà vui lòng viết ra vài từ chính tiêu biểu nhất để mô tả:

………

………

Hình ảnh về Huế trong tâm trí của ông/bà hiện tại như thế nào?

rất tích cực ⟵————————————————⟶ rất tiêu cực

☐10 ☐9 ☐8 ☐7 ☐6 ☐5 ☐4 ☐3 ☐2 ☐1

15. Một cách tổng thể, ông/bà có thỏa mãn với chuyến thăm Huế của mình không?

rất thỏa mãn ⟵————————————————⟶ rất không

thỏa mãn ☐10 ☐9 ☐8 ☐7 ☐6 ☐5 ☐4 ☐3 ☐2 ☐1

16. Ông/bà có muốn quay lại thăm Huế trong tương lai không?

☐ Có   ☐ Không   ☐ Không biết

17. Ông/bà có sẽ giới thiệu Huế như là một điểm đến tốt cho những người khác đến thăm không?

☐ Có   ☐ Không   ☐ Không biết

Ý kiến hoặc đề xuất của ông/bà nhằm cải thiện hình ảnh du lịch Huế tốt hơn:

………

………

………

18. Giới tính: ☐ Nam   ☐ Nữ   Tuổi: …… Đến từ tỉnh/thành:………………………

19. Nghề nghiệp:

☐ CBVC   ☐ Kinh doanh   ☐ Học sinh/SV   ☐ Nội trợ/ở nhà

☐ Công nhân   ☐ Thất nghiệp   ☐ Nghỉ hưu   ☐ Khác: ………………

20. Trình độ học vấn:

☐ Tiểu học   ☐ Trung học   ☐ Đại học/cao đẳng   ☐ Khác: ………………

Một lần nữa, rất cảm ơn sự đóng góp của ông/bà!

Appendix 4: Location of key monuments of Hue's heritages
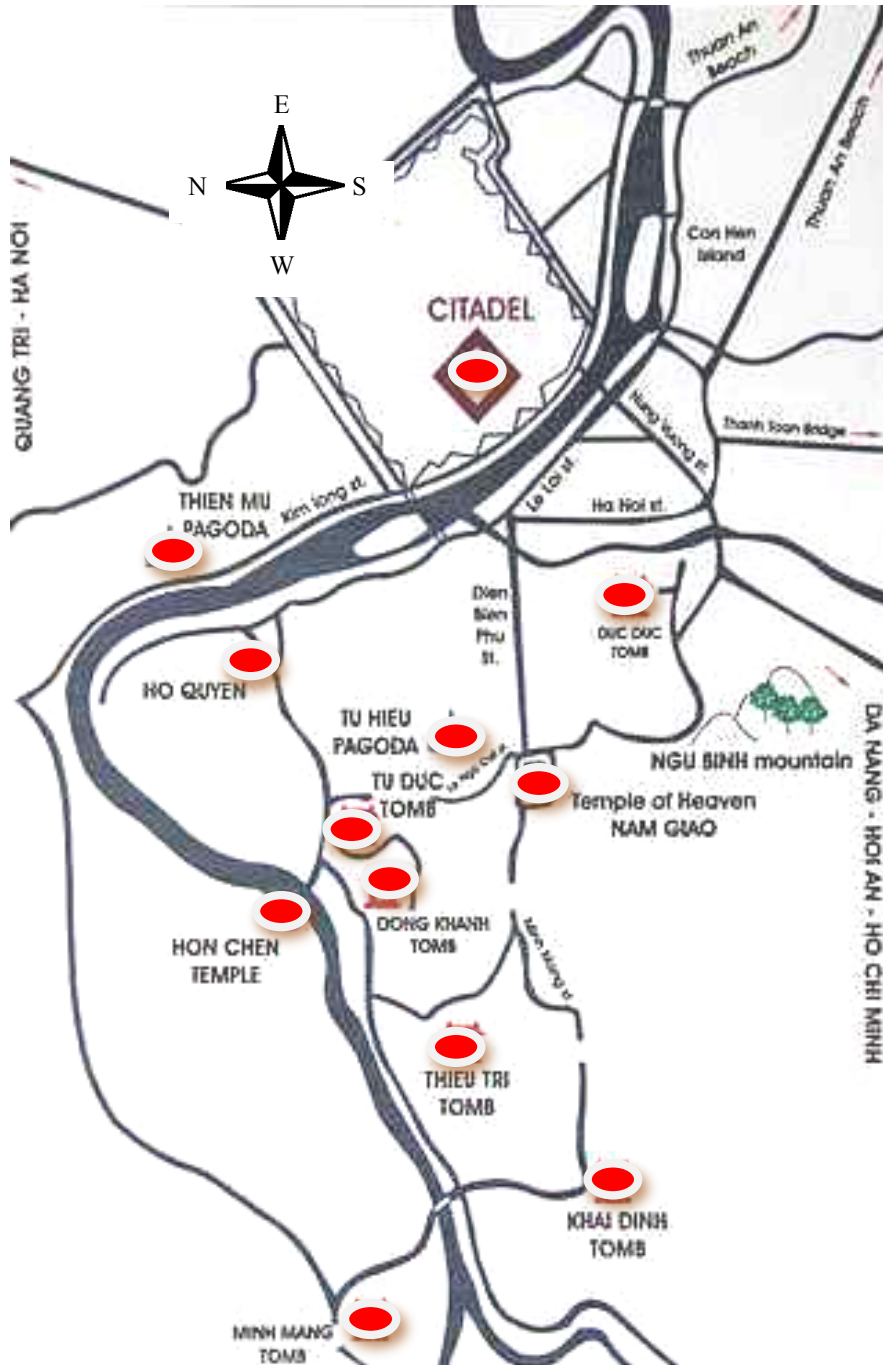
Appendix 5: Cronbach's alpha of the importance

The overall Cronbach's alpha = 0.777

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Many unique historic attractions	70.30	15024.588	0.386	0.770
Featured architecture	70.44	15515.516	0.171	0.779
A wide range of cultural activities	69.62	14883.086	0.318	0.771
A unique lifestyle of local people	69.03	14456.364	0.399	0.765
Interesting traditional festivals and events	69.01	14548.944	0.355	0.768
Peaceful atmosphere	69.29	14665.756	0.354	0.768
Friendly people	70.26	14978.969	0.410	0.769
Delicious food	70.22	14713.755	0.476	0.765
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	56.36	11011.064	0.515	0.764
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	66.33	13068.579	0.514	0.752
Specific conical hats for women	60.96	11471.803	0.578	0.745
Specific traditional long dress for women	64.21	12085.574	0.608	0.739
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	70.45	15073.282	0.360	0.771
Specific traditional means of transport	65.02	13162.119	0.423	0.762

Appendix 6: Sample T-Test of the importance by tourists' nationality

	Mean 4=totally important ➔ 1=totally unimportant		Levene's Test		t Test	
	International	Domestic	F value	p value	t value	p value
Many unique historic attractions	3.64	3.47	14.750	0.000	-4.868	0.000
Featured architecture	3.57	3.42	0.902	0.342	-3.933	0.000
A wide range of cultural activities	3.50	3.41	0.751	0.386	-2.243	0.025
Unique lifestyle of local people	3.47	3.23	1.757	0.185	-5.887	0.000
Interesting traditional festivals and events	3.41	3.43	5.027	0.025	0.275	0.783
Peaceful atmosphere	3.42	3.40	8.533	0.004	-0.627	0.531
Friendly and welcoming people	3.59	3.43	0.787	0.005	-4.848	0.000
Delicious food and cuisine	3.63	3.71	16.263	0.000	2.503	0.012
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	3.07	3.11	12.717	0.000	0.626	0.532
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	3.32	3.36	11.043	0.001	0.768	0.443
Specific conical hats for women	3.03	3.11	9.737	0.002	1.453	0.147
Specific traditional long dress for women	3.01	3.27	3.756	0.053	4.667	0.000
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	3.75	3.65	18.665	0.000	-2.619	0.009
Traditional means of transport (cyclo, dragon boats, etc.)	3.24	3.13	15.388	0.000	-2.268	0.024

Appendix 7: Sample T-Test of the importance by tourists' gender

	Mean *4=totally important* ➔ *1=totally unimportant*		Levene's Test		t Test	
	Male	**Female**	**F value**	**p value**	**t value**	**p value**
Many unique historic attractions	3.56	3.55	0.294	0.588	-0.132	0.895
Featured architecture	3.51	3.49	0.019	0.889	-0.611	0.541
A wide range of cultural activities	3.43	3.48	0.277	0.599	1.261	0.208
Unique lifestyle of local people	3.34	3.36	0.101	0.750	0.393	0.695
Interesting traditional festivals and events	3.39	3.45	0.973	0.324	1.464	0.144
Peaceful atmosphere	3.40	3.42	2.116	0.146	0.461	0.645
Friendly and welcoming people	3.53	3.50	0.027	0.871	-0.823	0.411
Delicious food and cuisine	3.62	3.72	28.963	0.000	2.818	0.005
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	3.04	3.13	5.175	0.023	1.713	0.087
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	3.28	3.40	17.645	0.000	2.293	0.022
Specific conical hats for women	2.98	3.15	0.086	0.769	3.043	0.002
Specific traditional long dress for women	3.00	3.27	0.357	0.550	4.845	0.000
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	3.66	3.74	16.976	0.000	2.226	0.026
Traditional means of transport	3.15	3.22	3.995	0.046	1.540	0.124

Appendix 8: One-way ANOVA of the importance by tourists' age

	Mean*				p value
	≤30	**31 - 45**	**46 - 60**	**> 60**	
Many unique historic attractions	3.40	3.62	3.63	3.54	0.183
Featured architecture	3.27	3.60	3.60	3.42	0.067
A wide range of cultural activities	3.31	3.51	3.52	3.47	0.002
Unique lifestyle of local people	3.20	3.41	3.39	3.50	0.004
Interesting traditional festivals and events	3.25	3.48	3.51	3.52	0.002
Peaceful atmosphere	3.30	3.45	3.46	3.42	0.091
Friendly and welcoming people	3.45	3.52	3.55	3.59	0.467
Delicious food and cuisine	3.60	3.71	3.71	3.53	0.038
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	2.84	3.14	3.25	3.33	0.002
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	3.07	3.44	3.48	3.51	0.405
Specific conical hats for women	2.80	3.17	3.20	3.05	0.548
Specific traditional dress for women	2.84	3.28	3.25	3.12	0.108
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	3.57	3.76	3.77	3.68	0.235
Traditional means of transport	3.09	3.22	3.25	3.11	0.501

Appendix 9: One-way ANOVA of the importance by tourists' time of arrival

	Mean*				p value
	Today	Yesterday	2 days ago	≥3 days ago	
Many unique historic attractions	3.57	3.56	3.56	3.39	0.001
Featured architecture	3.55	3.40	3.58	3.21	0.000
A wide range of cultural activities	3.51	3.31	3.54	3.26	0.000
Unique lifestyle of local people	3.44	3.22	3.39	2.97	0.000
Interesting traditional festivals and events	3.52	3.19	3.52	3.15	0.009
Peaceful atmosphere	3.49	3.33	3.32	3.41	0.125
Friendly and welcoming people	3.59	3.45	3.45	3.39	0.649
Delicious food and cuisine	3.78	3.52	3.64	3.55	0.002
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	3.27	2.72	3.09	2.95	0.016
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	3.56	3.02	3.30	2.95	0.066
Specific conical hats for women	3.28	2.73	3.02	2.78	0.002
Specific traditional dress for women	3.35	2.80	3.13	2.88	0.002
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	3.78	3.61	3.69	3.49	0.021
Traditional means of transport	3.27	3.09	3.12	3.12	0.754

Appendix 10: One-way ANOVA of the importance by tourists' age

	Mean*				p value
	≤30	31 - 45	46 - 60	> 60	
Many unique historic attractions	3.34	3.33	3.26	3.29	0.183
Featured architecture	3.28	3.31	3.19	3.32	0.067
A wide range of cultural activities	2.98	3.12	3.12	3.32	0.002
Unique lifestyle of local people	2.89	3.06	3.03	3.23	0.004
Interesting traditional festivals and events	3.07	3.27	3.31	3.40	0.002
Peaceful atmosphere	3.27	3.34	3.29	3.19	0.091
Friendly and welcoming people	3.31	3.35	3.36	3.48	0.467
Delicious food and cuisine	3.49	3.47	3.52	3.29	0.038
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	2.97	3.17	3.15	3.19	0.002
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	3.02	3.12	3.13	3.14	0.405
Specific conical hats for women	3.19	3.26	3.28	3.17	0.548
Specific traditional dress for women	3.24	3.33	3.36	3.15	0.108
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	3.05	3.01	3.12	3.09	0.235
Traditional means of transport	3.10	3.05	3.08	3.09	0.501

Appendix 11: One-way ANOVA of the importance by tourists' time of arrival

	Mean*				p value
	Today	Yesterday	2 days ago	≥3 days ago	
Many unique historic attractions	3.35	3.32	3.20	3.39	0.001
Featured architecture	3.34	3.20	3.23	3.17	0.000
A wide range of cultural activities	3.19	3.03	2.97	2.94	0.000
Unique lifestyle of local people	3.13	2.87	2.97	3.00	0.000
Interesting traditional festivals and events	3.29	3.08	3.21	3.13	0.009
Peaceful atmosphere	3.32	3.24	3.32	3.40	0.125
Friendly and welcoming people	3.37	3.31	3.33	3.33	0.649
Delicious food and cuisine	3.55	3.42	3.41	3.39	0.002
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	3.15	2.97	3.08	3.31	0.016
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	3.11	2.99	3.17	3.12	0.066
Specific conical hats for women	3.23	3.11	3.34	3.35	0.002
Specific traditional dress for women	3.27	3.21	3.38	3.50	0.002
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	3.12	3.07	2.99	2.97	0.021
Traditional means of transport	3.06	3.05	3.08	3.11	0.754

Appendix 12: Cronbach's alpha of the performance

The overall Cronbach's alpha = 0.857

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Many unique historic attractions	320.77	98053.910	0.069	0.862
Featured architecture	320.54	97621.581	0.124	0.862
A wide range of cultural activities	297.64	86471.895	0.425	0.853
A unique lifestyle of local people	287.66	81137.374	0.587	0.843
Interesting traditional festivals and events	289.64	83427.976	0.500	0.849
Peaceful atmosphere	313.14	89935.335	0.477	0.850
Friendly people	311.90	89485.692	0.469	0.851
Delicious food	313.30	90314.259	0.452	0.851
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	278.07	79528.429	0.621	0.841
Specific local souvenirs and handicraft products	289.07	78859.554	0.691	0.836
Specific conical hats for women	296.68	82412.355	0.593	0.843
Specific traditional long dress for women	298.88	84205.964	0.533	0.847
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	292.16	80576.713	0.638	0.840
Specific traditional means of transport	296.46	81187.321	0.649	0.839

Appendix 13: Sample T-Test of the performance by tourists' nationality

	Mean 4=totally agree➔ 1=totally disagree		Levene's Test		t Test	
	International	Domestic	F value	p value	t value	p value
Many unique historic attractions	3.23	3.40	78.517	0.000	5.535	0.000
Featured architecture	3.16	3.39	124.765	0.000	7.136	0.000
A wide range of cultural activities	3.06	3.10	33.283	0.000	1.089	0.277
Unique lifestyle of local people	3.01	3.02	4.960	0.026	0.252	0.801
Interesting traditional festivals and events	3.17	3.25	2.506	0.114	1.483	0.138
Peaceful atmosphere	3.18	3.43	21.772	0.000	7.021	0.000
Friendly and welcoming people	3.36	3.32	10.745	0.001	-0.882	0.378
Delicious food and cuisine	3.32	3.62	0.178	0.673	8.320	0.000
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	2.97	3.17	14.935	0.000	3.191	0.002
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	3.07	3.11	1.294	0.256	0.807	0.420
Specific conical hats for women	3.10	3.33	39.762	0.000	5.233	0.000
Specific traditional long dress for women	3.10	3.44	47.642	0.000	8.104	0.000
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	3.08	3.03	1.262	0.262	-1.305	0.192
Traditional means of transport	3.07	3.07	0.052	0.820	-0.101	0.919

Appendix 14: Sample T-Test of the performance by tourists' gender

	Mean 4=totally agree➔ 1=totally disagree		Levene's Test		t Test	
	Male	Female	F value	p value	t value	p value
Many unique historic attractions	3.37	3.26	25.643	0.000	-3.664	0.000
Featured architecture	3.28	3.27	4.344	0.037	-0.177	0.859
A wide range of cultural activities	3.12	3.04	0.344	0.558	-1.873	0.062
Unique lifestyle of local people	3.06	2.97	1.961	0.162	-2.118	0.035
Interesting traditional festivals and events	3.25	3.19	1.828	0.177	-1.272	0.204
Peaceful atmosphere	3.28	3.32	0.580	0.447	1.216	0.224
Friendly and welcoming people	3.36	3.32	0.562	0.454	-0.891	0.373
Delicious food and cuisine	3.48	3.48	0.142	0.707	0.089	0.929
Specific performance of Hue's folk songs	3.13	3.08	2.460	0.117	-0.852	0.394
Local souvenirs and handicraft products	3.03	3.15	0.725	0.395	2.413	0.016
Specific conical hats for women	3.2	3.27	0.178	0.673	1.740	0.082
Specific traditional long dress for women	3.22	3.37	1.305	0.254	3.595	0.000
Well-skilled and hospitable tourism staff	3.08	3.03	1.626	0.203	-1.171	0.242
Traditional means of transport	3.08	3.06	14.083	0.000	-0.758	0.449

Appendix 15: Cronbach's alpha of the importance

The overall Cronbach's alpha = 0.883

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Historical attractions	19.53	26.266	0.525	0.876
Cultural attractions	19.55	25.834	0.621	0.872
Religious places	19.20	25.101	0.628	0.871
Museums/Galleries	19.14	24.868	0.641	0.870
City architecture	19.34	25.781	0.559	0.875
Festivals and special events	19.28	24.774	0.578	0.874
Local souvenirs/handicrafts	19.10	24.567	0.579	0.874
Friendliness of local people	19.49	26.888	0.416	0.881
Specific local foods	19.57	26.897	0.420	0.881
Shopping possibility	19.28	24.552	0.626	0.871
Tourism service quality	19.59	25.966	0.571	0.874
Different guided tours	19.21	24.491	0.653	0.869
Good touristic information	19.46	25.951	0.567	0.874

Appendix 16: Sample T-Test of the importance by tourists' nationality

	Mean 4=totally important ➜ 1=totally unimportant		Levene's Test		t Test	
	International	Domestic	F value	p value	t value	p value
Historical attractions	3.55	3.52	1.205	0.273	-0.759	0.448
Cultural attractions	3.57	3.56	1.125	0.289	-0.374	0.708
Religious places	3.22	3.20	0.041	0.840	-0.392	0.695
Museums/Galleries	3.24	3.06	17.242	0.000	-4.165	0.000
City architecture	3.40	3.3	20.23	0.155	-2.573	0.010
Festivals and special events	3.20	3.38	28.419	0.000	3.892	0.000
Local souvenirs/handicrafts	3.02	3.20	16.161	0.000	3.535	0.000
Friendliness of local people	3.52	3.48	1.894	0.169	-1.160	0.246
Specific local foods	3.52	3.64	27.906	0.000	3.441	0.001
Shopping opportunities	3.18	3.42	22.268	0.000	5.260	0.000
Tourism service quality	3.61	3.62	7.085	0.008	0.472	0.637
Different guided tours	3.17	3.29	12.128	0.001	2.719	0.007
Touristic information	3.51	3.46	1.138	0.286	-1.568	0.117

Appendix 17: Sample T-Test of the importance by tourists' gender

	Mean *4=totally important* ➜ *1=totally unimportant*		Levene's Test		t Test	
	Male	**Female**	**F value**	**p value**	**t value**	**p value**
Historical attractions	3.55	3.52	0.995	0.319	-0.708	0.479
Cultural attractions	3.56	3.57	1.135	0.287	0.264	0.792
Religious places	3.19	3.23	0.322	0.570	1.114	0.266
Museums/Galleries	3.15	3.15	0.555	0.457	-0.080	0.936
City architecture	3.33	3.37	1.090	0.297	1.026	0.305
Festivals and special events	3.21	3.37	0.207	0.649	3.341	0.001
Local souvenirs/ handicrafts	3.00	3.23	0.031	0.860	4.699	0.000
Friendliness of local people	3.50	3.50	1.246	0.265	0.054	0.957
Specific local foods	3.56	3.60	0.381	0.537	0.920	0.358
Shopping opportunities	3.21	3.38	0.098	0.755	3.827	0.000
Tourism service quality	3.57	3.66	15.743	0.000	2.333	0.020
Different guided tours	3.22	3.24	0.259	0.611	0.607	0.544
Touristic information	3.46	3.52	0.232	0.630	1.703	0.089

Appendix 18: Sample T-Test of the importance by tourists' age

	Mean*				p value
	≤30	**31 - 45**	**46 - 60**	**> 60**	
Historical attractions	3.46	3.60	3.57	3.55	0.100
Cultural attractions	3.52	3.61	3.59	3.45	0.128
Religious places	3.11	3.27	3.30	3.26	0.003
Museums/Galleries	3.09	3.19	3.19	3.27	0.159
City architecture	3.28	3.41	3.41	3.24	0.011
Festivals and special events	3.25	3.34	3.38	2.97	0.016
Local souvenirs/handicrafts	2.99	3.18	3.24	2.94	0.001
Friendliness of local people	3.50	3.47	3.51	3.42	0.187
Specific local food	3.59	3.61	3.55	3.18	0.000
Shopping opportunities	3.20	3.36	3.47	2.95	0.000
Tourism service quality	3.51	3.68	3.70	3.63	0.000
Different guided tours	3.14	3.25	3.40	3.13	0.002
Touristic information	3.44	3.50	3.55	3.49	0.310

Appendix 19: One-way ANOVA of the importance by tourists' time of arrival

	Mean*				p value
	Today	Yesterday	2 days ago	≥3 days ago	
Historical attractions	3.50	3.59	3.51	3.43	0.031
Cultural attractions	3.53	3.56	3.61	3.47	0.131
Religious places	3.10	3.26	3.25	3.01	0.001
Museums/Galleries	3.06	3.20	3.21	2.89	0.000
City architecture	3.26	3.34	3.46	3.24	0.001
Festivals and special events	3.25	3.28	3.38	3.09	0.014
Local souvenirs/handicrafts	2.99	3.13	3.19	2.92	0.006
Friendliness of local people	3.51	3.51	3.48	3.45	0.795
Specific local food	3.57	3.58	3.60	3.50	0.562
Shopping opportunities	2.97	3.31	3.42	3.36	0.000
Tourism service quality	3.41	3.59	3.76	3.60	0.000
Different guided tours	3.00	3.26	3.32	3.16	0.000
Touristic information	3.32	3.48	3.60	3.47	0.000

Appendix 20: Cronbach's alpha of the satisfaction

The overall Cronbach's alpha = 0.827

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Historical attractions	23.28	14.937	0.496	0.814
Cultural attractions	23.23	14.682	0.555	0.810
Religious places	23.12	15.102	0.457	0.816
Museums/Galleries	22.96	15.064	0.472	0.815
City architecture	23.13	14.794	0.480	0.814
Festivals and special events	22.82	13.972	0.458	0.819
Local souvenirs/handicrafts	22.93	14.573	0.399	0.822
Friendliness of local people	23.26	14.896	0.402	0.820
Specific local foods	23.34	14.855	0.428	0.818
Shopping possibility	22.91	14.603	0.485	0.814
Tourism service quality	22.86	14.499	0.506	0.812
Different guided tours	22.90	14.853	0.534	0.811
Good touristic information	22.96	14.928	0.535	0.812

Appendix 21: Sample T-Test of the satisfaction by tourists' nationality

	Mean *4=totally satisfied* ➔ *1=totally unsatisfied*		Levene's Test		t Test	
	International	Domestic	F value	p value	t value	p value
Historical attractions	3.23	3.40	35.138	0.000	3.781	0.000
Cultural attractions	3.25	3.36	47.961	0.000	3.122	0.002
Religious places	3.11	3.28	111.109	0.000	5.079	0.000
Museums/Galleries	3.04	3.06	1.771	0.184	-0.638	0.523
City architecture	3.17	3.28	6.779	0.009	2.042	0.041
Festivals and special events	2.73	3.07	30.984	0.000	7.046	0.000
Local souvenirs/handicrafts	3.00	3.08	6.513	0.011	1.709	0.088
Friendliness of local people	3.35	3.29	0.109	0.742	-1.829	0.068
Specific local foods	3.29	3.49	5.516	0.019	5.595	0.000
Shopping opportunities	2.95	3.10	4.002	0.046	4.779	0.000
Tourism service quality	2.84	2.96	58.627	0.000	3.406	0.001
Different guided tours	2.97	2.97	0.206	0.650	0.510	0.610
Touristic information	3.00	3.01	1.733	0.188	0.398	0.690

Appendix 22: Sample T-Test of the satisfaction by tourists' gender

	Mean *4=totally satisfied* ➔ *1=totally unsatisfied*		Levene's Test		t Test	
	Male	Female	F value	p value	t value	p value
Historical attractions	3.38	3.28	24.532	0.000	-3.469	0.001
Cultural attractions	3.34	3.24	17.989	0.000	-3.160	0.002
Religious places	3.16	3.15	0.024	0.877	-0.323	0.746
Museums/Galleries	3.02	3.00	0.001	0.980	-0.779	0.436
City architecture	3.21	3.17	6.446	0.002	-1.180	0.238
Festivals and special events	2.78	2.9	2.721	0.099	2.419	0.016
Local souvenirs/ handicrafts	2.88	3.04	0.242	0.623	3.701	0.000
Friendliness of local people	3.32	3.29	1.443	0.230	0.954	0.340
Specific local foods	3.38	3.37	0.970	0.325	-0.339	0.735
Shopping opportunities	2.94	3.00	0.376	0.540	1.529	0.127
Tourism service quality	2.93	2.85	10.127	0.002	-2.080	0.038
Different guided tours	2.91	2.96	4.684	0.031	1.677	0.094
Touristic information	2.98	3.01	1.218	0.270	1.079	0.281

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