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JOURNEY OF SACREDNESS:
ASSESSING HOW COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES IN CHINA AFFECT
RELIGIOUS TOURISTS' SPIRITUAL VALUES

Thesis submitted by

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Publication title	Contribution
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I really enjoyed the life and study for my PhD at JCU in Townsville. It has been a wonderful journey full of good memories and experiences. I have learnt a lot from this journey, and I believe that it is one of the best decisions I have made throughout my lifetime. I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisors, friends and families.

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Finally, I should express my great love to my family. I understand the essence and meaning of life from you. My little boy came to this world at the beginning of my study, and the girl will be born at the end of this journey. They are the best gifts and rewards for my hard work. I will try my best to be a good scholar, husband and father.

THESIS ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with the commercialization of religious sites and tourists' spiritual values. The studies also explore the effects of religious commercialization on tourists' spiritual values. To answer the research questions and topics, considerable data, comprising 80 interviews, 438 blogs and 800 questionnaires, were collected and analyzed. The thesis has seven chapters in total.

The first chapter introduces the global development of religious tourism. Two core concepts, religious commercialization and spiritual values, are then discussed and clarified. This chapter also presents the research questions, aims and procedures.

A second chapter reviews much highly relevant literature. It consists of five sections: global religious tourism, Chinese religious tourism, religious commercialization, tourist experience, and spiritual values. This chapter provides a basis for research on commercialization and the tourist experience, and aims to better understand the relationships between religious commercialization and tourists' spiritual values as identified in previous studies.

The third chapter introduces the research methodology and the location of the studies. This chapter describes the Four Great Buddhist Mountains (FGBMs) in China, and then discusses the relevant methods and methodological framework of the research. An emphasis is placed on using multiple methods to enrich the work.

The fourth chapter evaluates the level of commercialization at the FGBMs. Both qualitative and quantitative tools were employed to assess tourists' attitudes towards different types of commercial activity. The commercial activities can be identified in three domains and

divided into seven categories. The results were discussed and then this study built a model about religious commercialization. It was found that food and drinks, shopping, and accommodation were the most commercial categories. Many tourists were influenced by the shopping stores, street stalls, and mobile vendors. Some behaviours, such as indeterminate price, bad service and forced consumption, made tourists feel annoyed.

The fifth chapter tries to assess tourists' spiritual values in religious places. Interviews and a survey were selected as the research methods. The interview analysis was used to investigate tourists' subjective themes about spiritual values. And the objective survey analysis was employed to extract factors of spiritual values and measure their relative importance. The extracted factors of spiritual values are transcendence, general connectedness, inner balance, positive life direction, and specific religious feelings.

The sixth chapter explores how commercial activities in religious places affect tourists' spiritual values. Two kinds of interviews were conducted at the FGBMs. The first interview focuses on tourists' perceived level of religious commercialization and spiritual values, and how commercial activities affect their feelings. The second interview tried to understand the general impression of religious tourists towards destination images and ascertain the factor influencing their views. The second objective assists in contextualising the relative importance of commercialization in the overall views of a destination. It was found that Tourists' spiritual values were enhanced by others' Buddhist beliefs, devoted acts, traditional rituals, cultural architectures, and natural features. But many commercial activities, non-standard staff services, low quality of tourism products, and environmental pollution appeared to negatively affect tourists' impressions on religious sites.

Finally the last chapter considers the key points from the research findings. These findings contribute to the academic literature, and practical management for religious tourism. In addition, this chapter reviews the limitations of the current studies, and proposes directions for further research. Further, the trajectory of religious tourism development in China has been predicted. Some possible opportunities and challenges for developing religious tourism sustainably are highlighted.

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Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

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1.1 The development of global religious tourism

People have been making journeys to religious sites for thousands of years. In the 20th century in particular, religions have gradually spread all over the world. The distribution of world religions has changed because of the rise of socialist countries and the World Wars (Matthews, 2011). The number of atheists increased in countries where the majority of people started to believe in communism. Further, millions of Jews were killed in the holocaust, an event with major moral dimensions, but also negative consequences for the number of religious followers. In the late years of the 20th century, rapid globalization also lead to the immigration of large numbers of religious believers with some negative effect on their traditional beliefs.

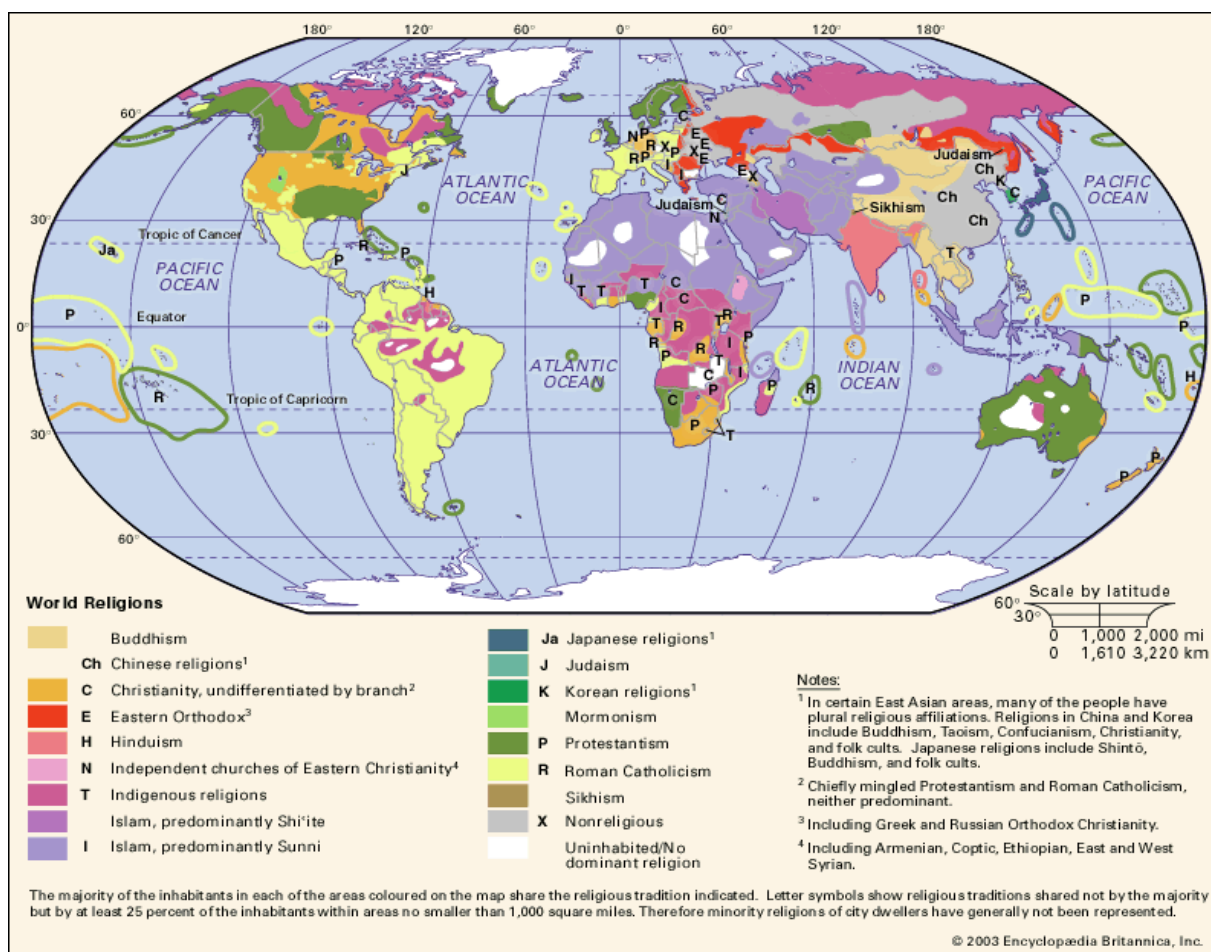


Figure 1.1 Map of Modern Distribution of World Religions

Source: From Matthews. (2011). World Religions (7th edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Nevertheless, over the recent years the number of Christians has grown in Africa and China, as well as in Russia. The number of Muslims in Europe has risen; and Buddhism is becoming popular in Asia Pacific regions. Figure 1.1 plots the modern distribution of religions around the world. At the present time, the major religions in the world are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. The number of believers for the main religions are described in Table 1.1. Overall, religions play a very important role for millions of people in their daily life. The large numbers of religious believers provide an essential foundation for the development of religious tourism (Raj & Morpeth, 2007).

Table 1.1 Major religions in the world

Religion	Number of followers (in millions)	Percentage of the world population	Cultural tradition	Founded
Christianity	2,200	31.43%	Abrahamic religions	Middle East
Islam	1,703	24.33%	Abrahamic religions	Middle East
Hinduism	1,100	15.71%	Indian religions	Indian subcontinent
Buddhism	488	6.97%	Indian religions	Indian subcontinent
Folk religion	400	5.71%	Chinese religions	China
Shinto	100	1.43%	Japanese religions	Japan

Source: Adapted from "The Global Religious Landscape". The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life. Pew Research centre. 18 December 2012. Retrieved 18 March 2013. And according to the United Nations, world population reached 7 Billion on October 31, 2011. And retrieved from http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/mysticism/world_religions_populations.htm.

Religious tourism is thought to be the oldest form of tourism. Religion, heritage and tourism is highly associated with each other. Travelling to religious or sacred sites can be regarded as one specific type of cultural heritage tourism (Shackley, 2001). In terms of spirituality, religious tourism can also be named as spiritual or faith-based tourism. As defined by Gabor (2016), “religious/spiritual or faith-based tourism is travel to religious sites to experience religious forms or to learn and admire their related arts, architecture, food and other traditions” . People used to take a pilgrimage predominantly to seek spiritual support and fulfill their religious belief. But it is worthy to note that people can obtain spiritual values both in religious and non-religious places. That is, people’s spirituality depends not only on the environment where they are, but also their feelings or attitudes towards the environment. Further, people can be attracted to religious sites by diverse factors. While some tourists are motivated mainly by religious reasons, others may travel to holy destinations for leisure, sightseeing, or escaping from routine life. Actually, for each tourist, he/she can be influenced by different factors at the same time.

Starting from the second half of the 20th century, travellers have looked for more diverse vacations, including more adventure trips, sports, and other fitness places (Gabor, 2016). Now many more spas, wellness centers, farm visits and green food destinations are becoming very popular, because many want to stay young and healthy. But people who care about their mental and spiritual health also travel and an expansion of this interest would create a golden age for religious tourism. Current holy sites do attract millions of tourists every year, and have often become centers of both religion and the economy and culture of that area. The leading locations are Jerusalem, Rome, Mecca, and the Buddhist mountains of China. Relevant religious tourism products are Paths of Abraham in the Middle East, Roads of

Wisdom around the Mediterranean, or Spirits of the Mediterranean for rural tourism (Lanquar, 2011).

A series of conferences have been held to discuss religious tourism. The first International Conference on the Spiritual Values of Tourism was held in Rome, Italy, 1967. The conference emphasised the sociology of the religions (Lanquar, 2011). Then in 2007, the World Tourism Organization (now known as UNWTO) organized a prominent international conference on “Tourism and Religions: A Contribution to the Dialogue of Cultures, Religions and Civilizations” in Cordoba, Spain. Around 250 participants from over 80 countries attended the conference. The conference analyzed the relationships between tourism and religions and offered orientations and recommendations for religious sites. The event was seen as beneficial for the dialogue among civilizations, cultures and faiths, and at the same time it promoted the sustainable development of religious tourism. Later, the World Religious Travel Association (WRTA) designated 2009 as The Year of Faith Tourism. In this year, many sectors of society including the media, governments, travel providers/suppliers, faith communities, and individuals were encouraged to participate in a suite of celebrations and activities. The purpose of this Year of Faith Tourism was to “(1) Highlight the New Era of Faith Tourism; (2) Increase the awareness of the personal and communal benefits of Faith Tourism; and (3) Contribute to the overall growth and health of the global economy, travel industry, and individual travel providers”. Moreover, WRTA identified fifteen ways to promote the further development of Faith tourism (Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 Fifteen ways to promote the development of faith tourism

Participants	Ways
Individuals	Individuals embark on travels with their faith community and/or to any faith-related destination.
	Individuals become group travel planners for their faith communities.
	Tourist boards and CVB's dedicate resources towards attracting, growing, and measuring Faith Tourism.
Communities	Faith communities launch a formal travel program (or travel ministry).
	Faith communities host one or more group trips.
Religious staff	Religious leaders preach on travel as ministry.
Travel industry	Travel and hospitality providers integrate the faith market and consumer into their overall product, sales, and marketing plans/efforts.
	The travel industry further develops and enriches Faith Tourism educational resources and business materials.
Training institutions	Tour director schools integrate faith tourism curriculum.
	Colleges and universities undertake the study of Faith Tourism and/or offer Faith Tourism classes.

Source: Adapted from “The Year of Faith Tourism 2009”, World Religious Travel Association, Jul 9, 2008, retrieved from <http://www.christianpost.com/news/the-year-of-faith-tourism-2009-33180/>.

Table 1.3 Fifteen ways to promote the development of faith tourism (Continued)

Participants	Ways
Media organizations	<p>Media feature and report on stories about Faith Tourism.</p> <p>Film and other related companies produce faith travel programs, documentaries, and series.</p> <p>Publishers launch or expand faith travel publications including guidebooks, magazines, and other periodicals.</p> <p>Religious bookstores and gift-stores implement Travel sections.</p>
Regulator	<p>Religious governing bodies promote and advance the theology of Faith Tourism.</p>

Source: Adapted from “The Year of Faith Tourism 2009”, World Religious Travel Association, Jul 9, 2008, retrieved from <http://www.christianpost.com/news/the-year-of-faith-tourism-2009-33180/>.

From a macro perspective, religious tourism is of considerable influence in both western and eastern societies. Religious tourism is a large global business (Tourism & More, 2014). It influences various economic sectors, including hotels, restaurants, arts, cultural rituals, and even weddings, bar mitzvahs or funerals. Religious tourism has attracted a large number of visitors from all ages and all nationalities. According to online report of TravelStyles (Askin, 2012), the annual value of religious tourism is worth approximately \$20 billion. The UNWTO suggests that an estimated 300-330 million pilgrims visit the world’s key religious sites every year (Gabor, 2016). In spite of the difficult economic conditions, since 2007 the number of religious tourists has grown by about 5 percent (Askin, 2012). Around 35 percent of outbound tourists are interested in taking a religious vacation, and 17 percent of them hope to do it in the next 5 years (Askin, 2012).

More specifically, in western countries Abrahamic religions are quite popular. Many cathedrals have historic, aesthetic and cultural values (Davie, 2000; Hughes, Bond, & Ballantyne, 2013). Although the number of people taking part in regular church services is in decline (Berger, 1999; Davie, 2000), the majority of the population maintains ties to Christianity. The research of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary claims that every year there are around 3.3 billion Christian domestic tourists, 250 million Christian foreign tourists, and 150 million potential Christian pilgrims (World Religious Travel Association, 2008). Globus and Cosmos also report that since 2009 the number of Christian tourists has risen 164% and by 59% in 2013 (Globus Offers Chance to Immerse in Religion, Culture and History, 2014). For western faith-based tourists, the most popular religious destinations are in Europe and the Middle East - especially Germany, Poland, Ireland, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, Israel and Jordan. The largest number of Christian tourists are interested in Israel followed by Italy.

Taking the United States as an example, about one quarter of tourists show interest in faith-based tourism (Peterson, 2015). In 2008, more than 900,000 people travelled to other countries because of religious reasons (Saltzman, 2010). The past and potential religious tourism market can be up to 16.6 million people. While 95% of them are Christians (2/3 Protestants and 1/3 Catholics), the rest are Jewish and other believers (Burns, 2014). Most faith-based tourists prefer to experience their religious trips by joining in a group tour rather than travel alone (Globus Offers Chance to Immerse in Religion, Culture and History, 2014). The traditional destinations are The Holy Land (sites in Israel, Jordan, Egypt and Turkey), Fatima (Portugal), Lourdes (France), and Guadalupe in Mexico (Saltzman, 2010).

In Asia, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam have great impacts on people's daily life. Literally, millions of tourists undertake religious or spiritual voyages in this region (Religious Tourism in Asia and the Pacific, UNWTO, 2011). Many religious sites have been well developed to attract both domestic and international tourists. Meanwhile, tourism products, services and modern transport are all provided by local communities and governments to meet tourists' diverse needs.

In China and Southeast Asian countries, Buddhism plays an important role in cultural development. Buddhism, starting in the 5th century BC in ancient India, spread from the Indian subcontinent to Central, East, and Southeast Asia and then to North America and other western countries (Eller, 2007). Today, there are around 468.7 million Buddhism adherents in the world (Melton & Baumann, 2010). Hinduism is a more geographically restricted religion than Buddhism. Even though there are many more people believing in Hinduism, most of them are Indians and practice their beliefs in their own country. Both Buddhism and Hinduism originated from ancient India. The countries of the Himalayas and the southern shores of the Indian Ocean are thought to be the most spiritual area for Buddhists and Hindus (Religious Tourism in Asia and the Pacific, UNWTO, 2011). In China, India and Nepal, larger numbers of hotels and restaurants have been built in this area to promote the pilgrimages or spiritual tourism.

Like Buddhism, Islam is also a well-known religion in Asia (Religious Tourism in Asia and the Pacific, UNWTO, 2011). The major countries with dense population of Muslims are Indonesia: 203 million; Pakistan: 174 million; India: 161 million; Bangladesh: 145 million; and Iran: 74 million. According to Islamic beliefs, it is desirable and meaningful for Muslims to perform the Haji or Ziyarat at least once in lifetime (Oktadiana, Pearce, & Chon, 2016). As

a result, more products, like Halal food, dress and souvenirs, are emerging in tourism markets to attract Islamic travelers. For instance, Indonesia is both a Muslim country and secular state. On the one hand, every year a large number of Indonesia Muslims travel to the Middle East to realize their religious goals. On the other hand, millions of people, including Javanese, Balinese and other Indonesians, visit domestic sacred sites for praying, meditation and making offerings. These sites are the graves of religious or political leaders, certain caves and springs and ancient shrines.

China is a socialist country, with a political system which is quite different from other countries. The conception of the government is dominated by Communism. But while Communism mainly works in the Chinese Communist Party, other cultural thoughts, like Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism, together play an important role in behaviours of non-communists. By December 31 of 2015, the number of Chinese Communists reached 88.76 million, but they only accounted for about 6.39% of national population (Xinhua Agency, 2015; Renkou, 2012). Meanwhile, there are at least 100 million religious believers across the country (Religious Tourism in Asia and the Pacific, UNWTO, 2011). Besides Communists and religious believers, many more people show great interests in different types of religious cultures. A large number of people visit religious sites regularly.

China changed dramatically after the implementation of reform and opening-up policy of 1978. It has experienced a rapid increase in the tourism economy in the past forty years. A variety of cultural resources, including both religious sites and other forms of traditions and rituals, have been selected as tourist attractions to protect traditional cultures and develop local economies at the same time. In 2011, more than 85,000 cultural sites (monasteries, temples, and historic relics.) were closely associated with various religions (Religious

Tourism in Asia and the Pacific, UNWTO, 2011). On these sites, there were around 300,000 working staff and more than 3,000 governing groups. By the end of 2015, 48 sites in China, which is only behind Italy in the world, have been selected as UNESCO World Heritage properties (Kelly, 2016). The list comprises 37 Cultural Heritage, 8 Natural Heritage, and 3 Cultural and Natural Heritage.

More specifically, there are more than 200 sacred Buddhist mountains, 1,500 Taoists temples, and 20,000 mosques. And every year more than 50 million trips fit into the destination of religious tourism. In the UNESCO's World Heritage List, there are 20 religious sites (Religious Tourism in Asia and the Pacific, UNWTO, 2011). About 70% of these religious sites are related to Buddhism (Figure 1.2). This figure establishes that there are many more well-known Buddhist sites than Taoist and Confucian sites. Moreover, Buddhism is much more popular and widely spread than Chinese indigenous beliefs.



Figure 1.2 Distribution of world heritage site and religious world heritage site

Source: religious tourism in Asia and Pacific, 2011.

Buddhism was brought to the Chinese mainland in the 1st century BC (Liu, Zhang, & Zheng, 2009). From that time, emperors, scholars, businessmen and later ordinary citizens travelled around the country to learn about Buddhism. Thus these are sacred places of worship which have promoted this traditional form of tourism. Unfortunately, Buddhism suffered seriously during many political or cultural revolutions. In these revolutions, a large number of temples and works of art were ravaged, while monks and nuns were forced to return to secular life. Now two major branches of Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhism, exist and are reviving, because of a combination of economic, cultural, and political, as well as religious, reasons (Ryan & Gu, 2009). Many types of Buddhist culture, including temples,

rock caves, and pagodas, have been developed as tourism products (Plan and creativity of Shaolian, 2013). The resources of Buddhism are distributed all over the country (Table 1.3 and Figure 1.3).



Figure 1.3 Distribution of Chinese Buddhist sites and Tibetan Buddhist sites

Source: Investigation report on religious tourism resources in China's mainland. Retrieved from Netease.com, Feb. 27, 2013, Plan and creativity of Shaolian, <http://www.mzb.com.cn/html/report/376006-1.htm>.

Table 1.3 The number and percentage of Buddhist sites in China mainland

Type		Shanxi	Hebei	Henan	Sichuan	Shan'Xi	Beijing	Gansu	Zhejiang
Chinese	Number	104	45	38	33	29	20	19	19
	Percent.	25.2%	10.9%	9.2%	8.0%	7.0%	4.9%	4.6%	4.6%
Tibetan	Number	0	4	0	4	0	2	3	0
	Percent.	0	6.1%	0	6.1%	0	3.0%	4.5%	0
Type		Yunnan	Fujian	Jiansu	Qinghai	Inner Mongolia	Tibet	Sinkiang	
Chinese	Number	14	13	12	0	0	0	0	
	Percent.	3.4%	3.2%	2.9%	0	0	0	0	
Tibetan	Number	3	0	0	6	12	26		2
	Percent.	4.5%	0	0	9.1%	18.2%	39.4%		3.0%

Source: Investigation report on religious tourism resources in China mainland. Retrieved from Netease.com, Feb. 27, 2013, Plan and creativity of Shaolian, <http://www.mzb.com.cn/html/report/376006-1.htm>.

1.2 The impacts of developing religious tourism

The development of religious tourism has many positive impacts on society. It contributes to tourists, local communities, and communication between East and West. Firstly, tourists are connected to religious places through a series of symbolic aspects. These symbols are traditional architecture, Buddha statues, and sacred acts like ritual and pilgrimage (Ruback, Pandey, & Kohli, 2008; Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). Individuals travel all around the world to seek their spiritual home. In spite of the differences in belief, religions are closely related to the origin and meaning of the world and of human life as well as provides guidelines for moral behaviours (Sperry, 2007). In general, religion affects both individual

and social life (Homayouni, 2011) through generating meaning in life (Fletcher, 2004). More specially, religion not only helps people know themselves better (Vorzák & Gu, 2009), but also helps them achieve mental health (Bergin, 1983). Secondly, local government and communities benefit a lot from religious tourism (Business Mirror, 2016). Religious tourism can promote the steady increase of the economy and improve living standards. Moreover, it creates many job opportunities for local people. And a low unemployment rate can assist the construction of a harmonious society. Finally, from a more macro point of view, religious tourism builds a new bridge of communication between East and West (Religious Tourism in Asia and the Pacific, UNWTO, 2011). On one hand, the development of religious tourism in Asia can learn from successful practices in Europe, such as the most famous pilgrimage route, “Camino de Santiago”. On the other hand, it is beneficial for the West to understand more about Easterners and their unique cultures.

However, several factors will limit the further development of religious tourism. Firstly, over development of religious tourism can result in heavy visitor-traffic, the waste of resources, environmental pollution, a lack of food security and safety, and low service quality. So in order to handle the potential problems, it is important for the more developed pilgrimage or holy sites to share expertise with the least-developed sites (Gabor, 2016). Further, to maintain the sustainable development of religious tourism, it is necessary to create more benefits and business opportunities based on faith or religious belief. At the same time, many more qualified guides might be needed to lead spiritual and religious tours. Finally, the secularization and commercialization of sites can be one of the most challenging issues in religious tourism.

The lucrateness of religious tourism leads to emerging commercial activities (Huang, 2011; Huang & Chen, 2009). Some scholars have regarded religion as one part of secular tourism (Cohen, 1976), and so it should cater for both religious and secular visitors to holy places at the same time (Chen, 2006; Hughes et al., 2013; Wong, Ryan, & McIntosh, 2013). In addition, the blending of religious and secular culture appears to be a global trend because of the de-differentiation of religion and other systems in a modernized society (Knoblauch, 2008; Howell, 2013). As a result, the world's sacred sites are being converted from religious to touristic function (MacCannell, 1976). That is, it can be argued that religion tries to satisfy the needs of secular tourists more than those of religious pilgrims in order to gain more economic benefits. Furthermore, Joseph and Kavoori (2001) claim that tourism poses a threat to tradition and religion, due to inherent conflicts among the different stakeholders. Kasim (2011) also, claims that over-commercialized products and services will overshadow the glory of religious spirits. So in these views it is difficult to sustain the real value of religions and traditions as there is a shift from a world of spirituality to one of materialistic enjoyment (Huang, 2011; Huang & Chen, 2009; Ming & Zhang, 2008; McKercher & du Cros, 2002; Olsen, 2006).

Overall, the debate about the commercialization of religious culture is still controversial. Although this controversy has existed since the commencement of religious tourism, both sides still lack substantial qualitative or quantitative evidence. Further, no valid measurement scales are available to assess the degree of commercialization and tourist spiritual values at religious sites. In this thesis, the researcher seeks to assess how commercial activities affect the spiritual values of religious tourists. Before presenting the specific research aims, this study directs attention to the definitions and meaning of two concepts.

1.3 Research questions and objectives

The research background shows that religious commercialization may have impacts on tourists' spiritual values to some extent. Yet several questions have not been answered. These questions include (1) what are main categories of commercial activities at religious sites? (2) what is the general attitude of religious tourists towards these commercial activities? (3) what are the key factors of commercialization that affect religious tourists' attitudes? (4) what are general spiritual values of religious tourists? (5) which factors extracted from spiritual values are more important to tourists? and (6) how does religious commercialization affect the spiritual values of tourists?

Therefore, to answer the above questions, this research has three sub-studies which aim to:

(1) assess the level of perceived commercialization of religious tourism.

- ▶ categorize types of commercial activities;
- ▶ assess general attitudes of religious tourists towards commercial categories;
- ▶ identify key factors of commercialization that affect religious tourists' attitudes.

(2) assess the level of perceived spiritual values of religious tourists.

- ▶ explore general factors of spiritual values of religious tourists;
- ▶ confirm the validity and reliability of the extracted factors of spiritual values;
- ▶ measure which factors are more important to religious tourists;
- ▶ assess how the degree of belief affects spiritual values of religious tourists.

(2) test the relationship between religious commercialization and spiritual values .

- ▶ explore the linkage between religious commercialization and spiritual values of religious tourists;
- ▶ analyse perceived impacts of commercialization on spiritual values based on religious tourist types;

- analyse perceived impacts of commercialization on spiritual values based on religious tourism destination image;
- determine if there are any influence of demographic characteristics on different types of religious tourists.

1.4 Research procedures

Based on the above research aims, the work in this thesis tries to explore systematically the perceived level of religious commercialization, spiritual values of tourists, and their relationship. In total, six steps are adopted to achieve the research aims efficiently and effectively.

Step 1: Preparatory work. Literature will be reviewed to identify pre-existing knowledge and gaps, research questions and aims. Relevant secondary data related to the development of world's religions and religious tourism will be included in this review.

Step 2: Blog study. Mafengwo (mafengwo.com.cn) will be selected as a data source for considering religious tourists' travel blogs. All valid blogs collected will focus on religious commercialization and the spiritual values of tourists at Four Great Buddhist Mountains.

Step 3: Scale development. Building on the literature review and the blog study, a standardized open-ended interview and survey will be designed to further collect field data. While the interview investigates the subjective impression of religious tourists towards commercial activities and spiritual values, the survey will assess tourists' perception of these topics through more quantitative data.

Step 4: Data collection. Three fieldwork studies will be reported in this research. The first fieldwork trip will conduct an indicative number of interview and questionnaires from Mount Emei and Mount Putuo. Based on the feedback of these on-site tourists, the interview and survey will be modified as necessary. Then further fieldwork about 20 interviews and 200 questionnaires at each of the Four Great Buddhist Mountains respectively will be

considered. Meanwhile, the researcher will also take photos and collect visual records for these mountains. These resources will be used to describe commercial activities and tourist behaviours clearly. More supplementary data may be needed in the third fieldwork to make sure that all the research questions are well answered.

Step 5: Data analysis. To achieve all the research aims, corresponding research methods will be presented to analyse the blogs, interviews and surveys. Software, Excel and SPSS, will be applied to undertake descriptive work, factor analysis, and correlation analysis. Photographic techniques and visual records will also be employed for accessing different forms of visual data.

Step 6: Results discussion. After data analysis, results about religious commercialization and spiritual values of tourists will be discussed in detail. And the differences and similarities among Four Great Buddhist Mountains will also be reviewed.

1.5 Thesis structure

To clearly understand the research structure of this thesis, an outline framework has been drawn as follows (Figure 1.4).

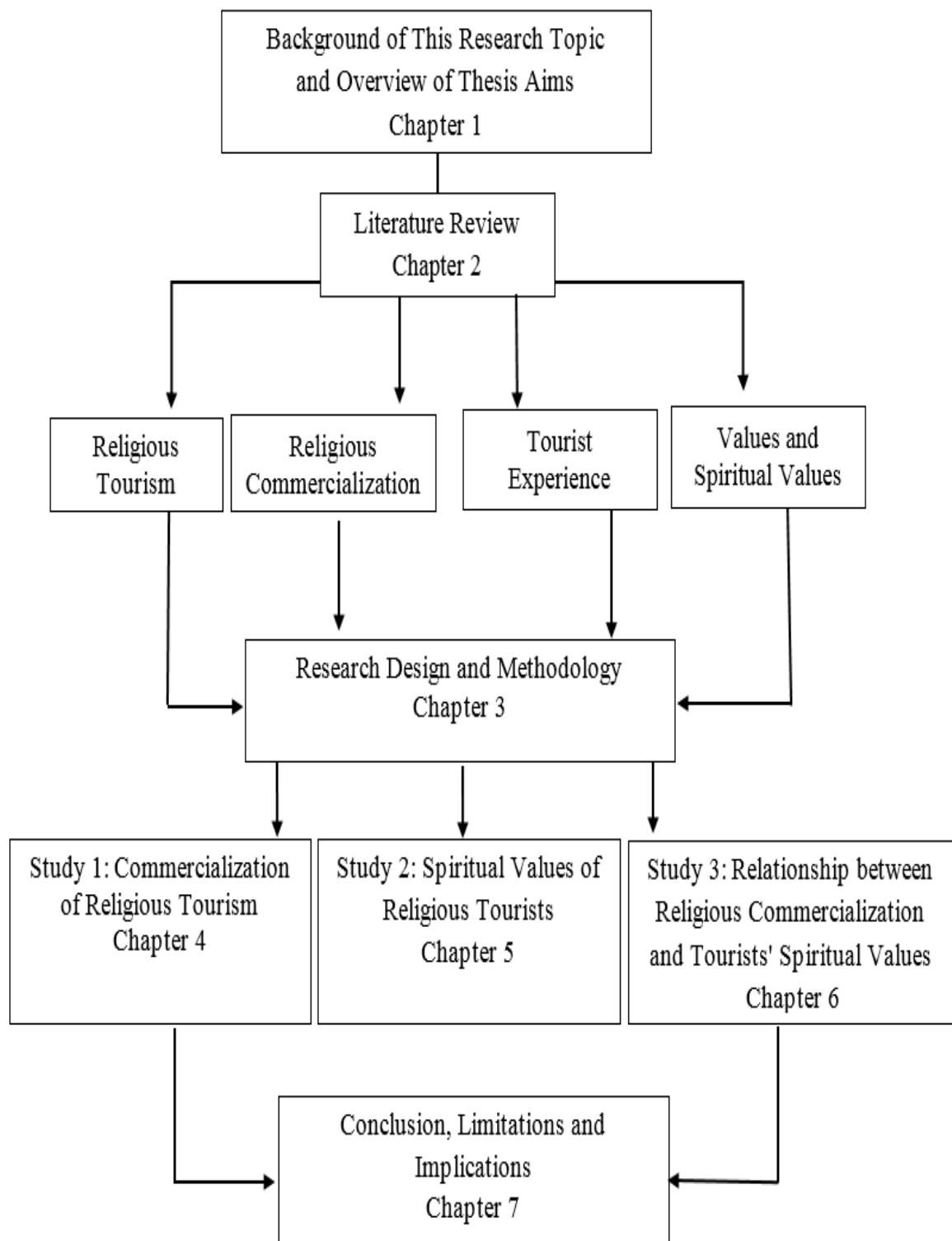


Figure 1.4 Thesis structure

Chapter 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

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2.1 Chapter introduction

Based on the foundation research questions and aims in Chapter 1, this chapter tries to review all the highly related literature. It consists of five sections: global religious tourism, Chinese religious tourism, religious commercialization, tourist experience, and spiritual values (Figure 2.1). Religious tourism studies around the world provide a basis for research on commercialization and tourist experience. Religious commercialization has been an emerging research topic in recent years. And spiritual values generated by the process of tourist experience play an important role in guiding tourists' behaviours and post trip life. Thus this chapter aims to better understand the relationships between religious commercialization and tourists' spiritual values in previous studies.

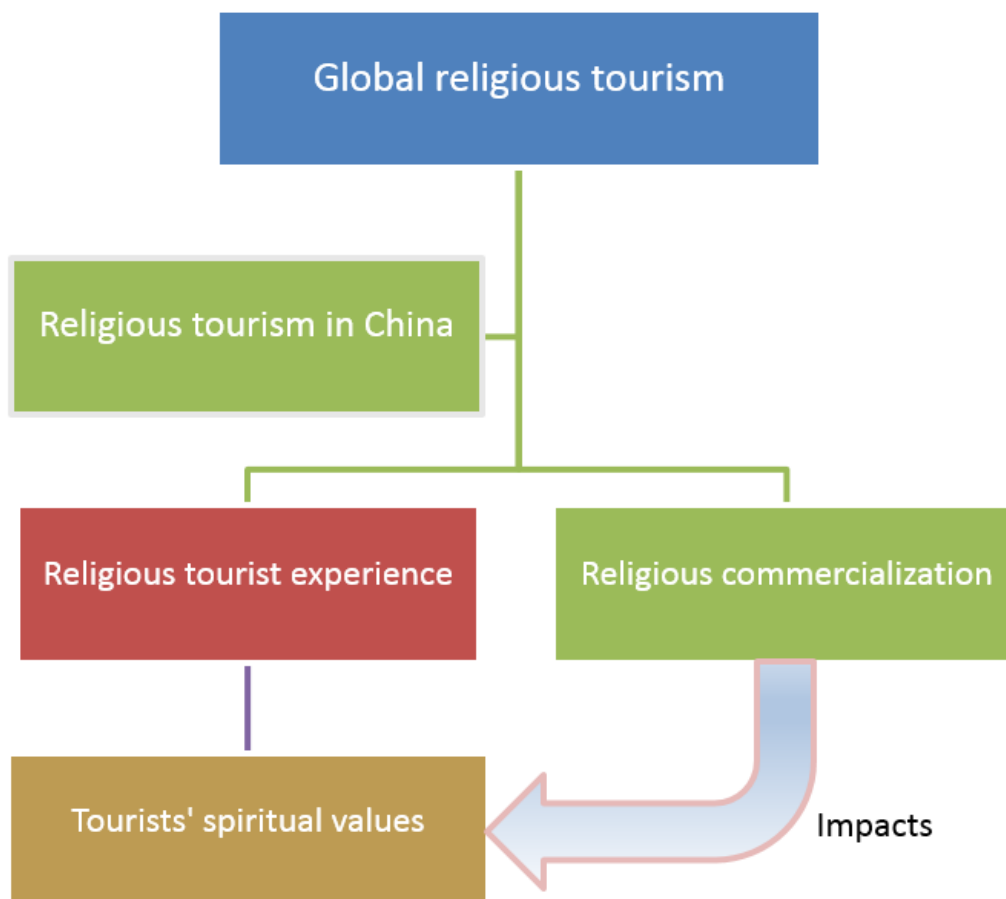


Figure 2.1 Structure and internal logic of literature review

2.2 Studies on global religious tourism

Religious tourism is spread across the world (Rinschede, 1992). The pilgrimage appears to be the oldest form of tourism (Rinschede, 1992), and is regarded as part of religious tourism. Tourism and religion are highly connected with each other (Stausberg, 2011), since the latter motivates the travel and is the source of traditional culture and faith that attracts diverse visitors (Henderson, 2011). Through the process of socialization involving rituals, use of artefacts, storytelling, and visits to sacred places, religious tourists become attached to a sacred site with a particular history and physical characteristics (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). In addition, religious tourism has significantly interacted with holiday and cultural tourism, social and group tourism, as well as economic and political aspects (Rinschede, 1992). Stausberg (2011) compares the differences between tourism and pilgrimage, tourist and pilgrim respectively in a clear and systematic way (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 The binary tourism-pilgrimage scheme

Tourism	Pilgrimage
Secular	Religious
Pleasure	Faith
Curiosity	Duty
Commercial	Ascetic
Evil	Good
Material	Spiritual
End in Itself	Progression
Holiday	Ritual
Presence	History/Myth/Future Salvation
Modern	Pre- or Anti-modern

Source: Stausberg. (2011). Religion and tourism: Crossroads, destinations and encounters. London and New York: Routledge.

Table 2.1 The binary tourist-pilgrim scheme (Continued)

Tourism	Pilgrimage
Confirming	Transformative
Relaxing	Meritorious
Distraction	Intensification
Directed towards Centre	Directed towards Periphery
Profane	Religious
Superficial	Deep
Playful	Committed
This-Worldly	Other-Worldly
Pleasure-Seeking	Salvation-Seeking
Hedonism	Quest
Consumerism	Renunciation

Source: Stausberg, (2011). Religion and tourism: Crossroads, destinations and encounters. London and New York: Routledge.

Since pilgrims have different needs to other kinds of religious visitors, they are firstly divided into two polarized categories: pilgrims and secular tourists (Adler, 1989). While the former are exclusively or dominantly motivated by religious reasons, the latter prefer to participate in conferences, festivals, and rituals at sacred sites (Rinschede, 1992). However, there are many possible combinations of sacred-secular motives for religious visitors (Smith, 1992) (Figure 2.2). Actually, religious tourists are motivated by diverse reasons, such as experiencing unique lives and cultures, pursuing their religious faith, visiting inspiring destinations, exploring historic roots of their religion on a faith-based vacation, escaping from daily life, and simply having fun on their journey (Digance, 2003; Hyde & Harman, 2011; Lankford, Dieser, & Walker, 2005; MacCannell, 1973; Shuo, Ryan, & Liu, 2009; Wong et al., 2013;

Wu & Pearce, 2012). Thus, Smith (1992) develops a Pilgrim-Tourist Path (Figure 2.2) to interpret the multi-motivational mix of tourist aspirations (Pearce, 1993).

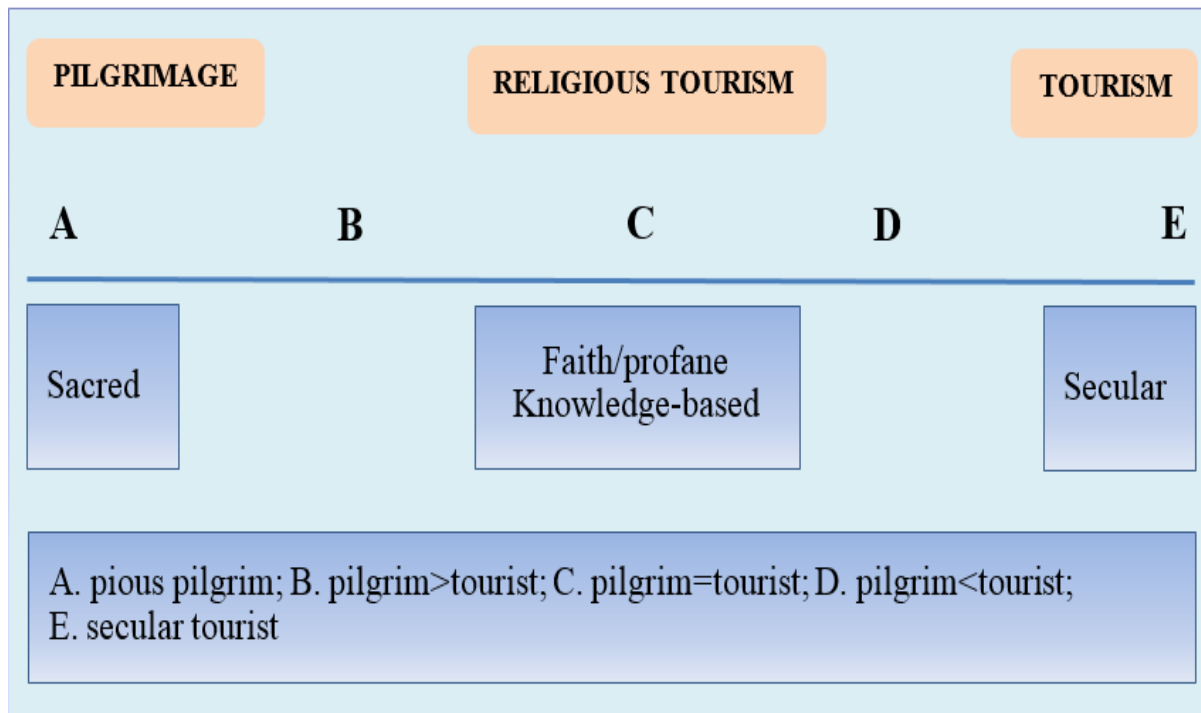


Figure 2.2 The pilgrim-tourist path

Source: Smith. (1992). The quest in guest. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 19(1), 1-17.

Following the previous models (Adler, 1989; Collins-Kreiner & Kliot, 2000; Smith, 1992), Triantafillidou, Koritos, Chatzipanagiotou, and Vassilikopoulou (2010) identify five general types of travellers who visit sacred sites (Table 2.2). Similarly, Wong, Ryan, and McIntosh (2013) classify visitors into four types, including Xiankes (Worshippers), Jushi (Pilgrims), Sightseers, and Cultural/Heritage Visitors, within the typical Chinese context.

Table 2.2 Profiles of travellers to sacred places

Type of traveller	Characteristics	Examples
Pilgrim	Religious and spiritual motives (Rinschede, 1992);	Buddhist pilgrims in Asia (Smith, 1992) ;
	Emphasis of the devotional aspect of the journey (Shalini Singh, 2005);	Pilgrims of Bahá'í religion (Gatrell & Collins-Kreiner, 2006);
	Activities like praying, holding candles and worship (Jansen & Kühl, 2008).	Spiritual travellers to Mount Sasha (Huntsinger & Fernández-Giménez, 2000).
Pilgrim>Tourists	Prevalence of religious motives Tourist aspect exists to a limited extent	Travellers from Holland to Lourdes (Post, Pieper, & van Uden, 1998); Pilgrimage for Hindus (Sagar Singh, 2002).

Source: Triantafillidou, Koritos, Chatzipanagiotou, & Vassilikopoulou. (2010). Pilgrimages: the “promised land” for travel agents? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(3), 382-398.

Table 2.2 Profiles of travellers to sacred places (Continued)

Type of traveller	Characteristics	Examples
Religious Tourists	Cultural, educational and experiential inspiration (Bar & Cohen-Hattab, 2003); Seek pleasurable and religious experience (Hudman & Jackson, 1992); Members of the upper middle and upper classes (Cormack, 1998); More profitable market segment than traditional pilgrimages (Smith, 1992).	Pilgrims to Shikoku in Japan(Reader, 1987); Travellers to the Indian Himalayas (Singh, 2005); Pagan believers in the ancient Goddess (Rountree, 2002); Protestants to the Holy Land (Collins-Kreiner & Kliot, 2000).
Tourists>Pilgrims or Secular Tourists	Self-improvement motives (Smith, 1992); Hedonic desires (Fleischer, 2000).	Voyagers from Europe and North America (Nolan & Nolan, 1989).

Source: Triantafillidou, Koritos, Chatzipanagiotou, & Vassilikopoulou. (2010). Pilgrimages: the “promised land” for travel agents? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(3), 382-398.

However, post-modern perspective offers a new way to see the classification of religious visitors. In Berger’s view (2014), both religious and secular pluralism are able to exist together because of the blurring boundaries in different social domains. Further, Woodhead (2016) pointed out a pluralism of religious dedifferentiation. It implies that visitors are not necessarily neatly religious or secular in religious places. Similarly, Collins-Kreiner (2010)

claimed that there is no place which is intrinsically sacred. So it seems to be of little value to differentiate pilgrims and tourists (Collins-Kreiner & Kliot, 2000; Maoz & Bekerman, 2010). As a result, a middle category, “religious tourist”, has been proposed by many researchers (Cohen, 1992; Badone & Roseman, 2004; Shepherd, Yu, & Gu, 2012). In this thesis, religious tourists have been used to represent all kinds of visitors, including both pilgrims and tourists.

In addition to the classification of religious tourists, scholars have done much work on the satisfaction and behaviours of religious tourists (Chen, 2004; Shuo et al., 2009; Fleischer, 2000; Wong et al., 2013). Meanwhile, local residents’ perception and the various effects of religious tourism are also well studied (Uriely, Israeli, & Reichel, 2003). Religious tourism not only affects the population, settlement, and the economy in religious places (Rinschede, 1992), but also positively influences individual mental health (Homayouni, 2011).

Homayouni (2011) state that religious beliefs have positive impacts on healing anxiety and depression, increasing self-esteem and responsibility towards their community and self. Moreover, many stakeholders have gained economic benefits from the growing religious tourism industry.

2.3 Studies on Chinese religious tourism

In China, religious tourism studies have experienced a gradual rise over the past 20 years (Gao & She, 2010). Scholars analyse the concept of religious tourism, and discuss the relationship between religion and tourism. Religious tourism is generally divided into four categories: peripheral, semi-peripheral, semi-core, and core religious tourism (Zhang & Sun, 2008) (Table 2.3). Religious attractions mainly consist of traditional rituals, unique culture, natural scenery, special food, educational excursion, and spiritual recovery (Gao & She, 2010). After the definition of religious tourism, most studies start to discuss the importance

and sustainable development of religious resources. While some scholars emphasise the importance of religious culture and sustainable tourism, others work on the effects of religious tourism on tourists, local communities and ecology (Liu, et al., 2009; Ming & Zhang, 2008; Fang, 2001; Zheng, Lu, & Yang, 2004).

Table 2.3 The basic categories of religious tourism

Categories	Contents	Characters	The degree of interaction	Suggestions
Peripheral religious tourism	Travelling for missionary work	Potential destruction	Low degree of interaction between religion and tourism	Strong resistance
	Travelling for missionary work	Potential destruction	Low degree of interaction between religion and tourism	Strong resistance
	Travelling for missionary work	Potential destruction	Low degree of interaction between religion and tourism	Strong resistance
	Travelling for missionary work	Potential destruction	Low degree of interaction between religion and tourism	Strong resistance

Source: Zhang & Sun. (2008). Types, characteristic, and development of religious tourism. *Studies in World Religions*, 4(130), 128-139.

Table 2.3 The basic categories of religious tourism (Continued)

Categories	Contents	Characters	The degree of interaction	Suggestions
Semi-core religious tourism	Travelling for local customs, festivals, temple fairs, or rural religions	Culture or custom oriented	Moderate degree of interaction between religion and tourism	Active guidance
Core religious tourism	Travelling for sightseeing, leisure, experience, and pilgrimage	The mainstream	High degree of interaction between religion and tourism	Active promotion

Source: Zhang & Sun. (2008). Types, characteristic, and development of religious tourism. *Studies in World Religions*, 4(130), 128-139.

Researchers do pay attention to the history and importance of religious resources. From the perspective of sociology, Ming and Zhang (2008) claims that religious culture plays an essential role in the development of human beings and it affects people's thoughts, values and daily behaviours. In particular, Liu, et al. (2009) analyse the great influence of Buddhism on Chinese people. They mainly study the development of Buddhist tourism in several dynasties and its impacts on emperors, noblemen, monks and public people. In addition, Huang and Chen (2009) identify the multi-dimensional values of religious culture for tourists, local community, religious staff and the whole society (Figure 2.3). It is necessary to notice that

religious staff are people who believe in a particular religion and live in religious places, for example, monks and nuns living in temples.

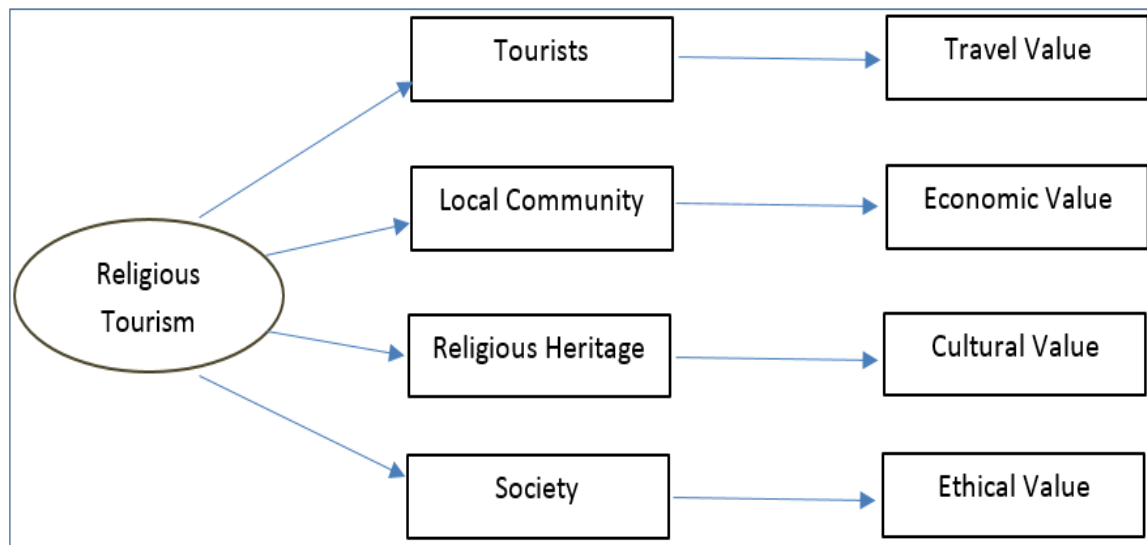


Figure 2.3 Multi-dimensional values model for the development of religious tourism

Source: Huang, & Chen. (2009). Study on the multiple value and development of religious tourism. *Religious Studies*, (1), 143-147.

Further, to make full use of religious resources and develop multi-dimensional values, planning should deal with the conflicts among different stakeholders. Gao (2010) demonstrates that there exists serious conflicts among religious staff, tourists, local governments, communities, travel agents, and others related to the holy lands (Figure 2.4).

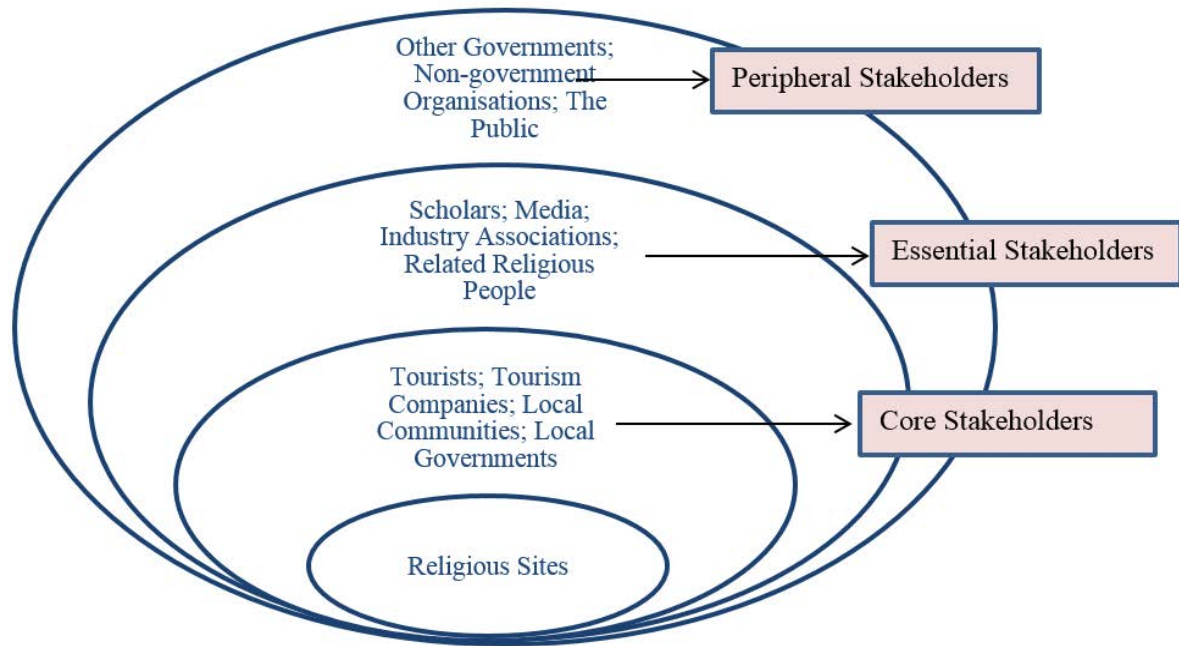


Figure 2.4 The stakeholder map of religious tourism

Source: Gao. (2010). Preliminary Study on Stakeholders and Coordination Mechanism of Religious Tourism in China. *Guangxi Ethnic Studies*, (3), 184-190.

Figure 2.4 implies that religious tourism is a comprehensive system, in which various stakeholders are involved. So it is hard to deal with the relationships among these stakeholders. Since religious sites are regarded as economic capital, all stakeholders want to make profits by taking advantage of these resources. As a result, commercial activities start to emerge in order to develop the local economy.

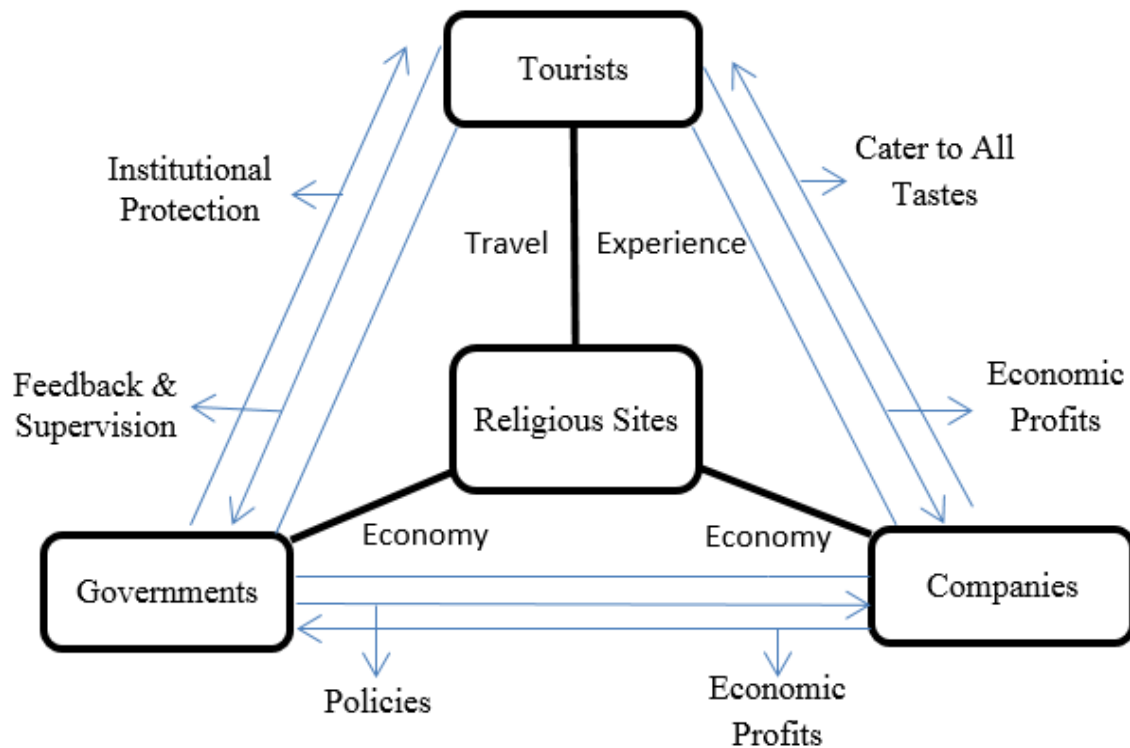


Figure 2.5 The interactive triangle profit relationship among religious stakeholders

Source: Gao. (2010). Preliminary Study on Stakeholders and Coordination Mechanism of Religious Tourism in China. *Guangxi Ethnic Studies*, (3), 184-190.

Figure 2.5 suggests that tourists, governments, and companies are core stakeholders. Religious tourists want to protect traditional culture, because they seek authentic experience. But religious tourists also want to have good accommodation, food and entertainment services. So companies develop multiple products and services to meet tourists' needs and make economic profits at the same time. In terms of governments, they are responsible to supervise companies and send feedback to tourists.

However, a series of conflicts do exist in the development of religious tourism. Ming and Zhang (2008) points out several conflicts among different stakeholders. For instance, the high price of entrance tickets may stop many religious believers from visiting sacred places; government departments rather than religious organizations have the right to manage religious sites causing limit to development; behavioural conflicts between religious believers

and non-believers do exist; and conflicts between tourists and local community because of fake tourism products and forced consumption are possible. If these conflicts cannot be solved over time, serious negative impacts on all stakeholders follow. Therefore, Ming (2008) also suggests that a multi-dimensional win-win space, called a “social field”, should be set up in religious tourism in order to cope with the conflicts between the host and guest. In this field, every stakeholder can find a particular position and cooperate with others in religious activities self-consciously. Further, Gao (2010) designs a framework to reconcile different views that would be an impossible contradiction. The framework provides a systematic way to solve the conflicts among all stakeholders of religious tourism. But whether or not this way works in religious sites is still controversial. In this thesis, the research will try to explore more issues related to the commercialization of religious tourism.

Finally, how to develop religious tourism sustainably has been a topic of attention for researchers. Fang (2001) emphasises the importance of protecting ecology in religious places. He argues that the critical step to maintain a sustainable ecology is to change the consumption mindset of religious tourists. By way of contrast, Ruan and Yu (2007) claim that religious staff and administration departments play an important role in sustaining religious tourism. To protect the authentic and traditional religious culture, the number of tourists should be controlled and perhaps not allowed to participate in critical religious rituals. In addition, Zheng et al. (2004) also provide several methods for developing religious tourism in a sustainable way. For instance, they suggest that religious places should develop diverse and unique tourism products systematically, improve the quality guarantee system, implement related religious policies, and strengthen efficient protection and management of religious resources.

Overall, Chinese scholars mainly study the general practices of religious tourism rather than focus on tourist behaviours. They tend to use descriptive analysis, whereas western studies have more diverse perspectives that make use of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Gao (2009) has compared the difference between domestic and international religious tourism research in detail (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 Comparison between Chinese and global religious tourism research

Items	Chinese research	Global research
Research Contents	Definition and characteristics of religious tourism; Resource evaluation and product design; Marketing strategies of religious tourism.	Tourist research (motives, behaviours, and impact factors); Tourism destination research (policy, management, and development of resources); Tourism impacts (economy, social culture, and environment); Sustainable development of religious tourism.
Research Perspectives	Mainly focusing on the development of religious tourism based on the perspective of tourism.	Research from various perspectives, including tourism, sociology, economics, geography, and psychology.
Research Methods	Mainly adopting qualitative research methods.	Adopting both qualitative and quantitative research methods, such as survey and interview.

Source: Gao. (2009). On progress and inspiration of abroad religious tourism research. *Tourism Research*, (3), 54-60.

2.4 Religious commercialization

There are diverse commercial activities in both eastern and western religious places (Jones-Evans, 1998; Singh, 2004). This is not a newly emerging phenomenon in religious studies. The commercialization of religions can be traced back to the late medieval period, when the religious souvenir industry started to flourish. Such commercial efforts signalled the beginning of a new era, when religion started to serve multiple purposes (Cohen, 1976). In this thesis, religious commercialization will refer to and embrace the provision of religious souvenirs, accommodation and guest house offerings, food and restaurant offerings, currency exchange facilities, photographic options as well as transport and guide services which charge fees at or near the site of sacred value.

Religious commercialization is a social phenomenon. It reflects public attitudes towards religion and the mainstream beliefs of the host society (Cohen, 1976; Winzeler, 2008). Further, the transition of sacred sites from religious to touristic function reveals deeper social roots (MacCannell, 1999; Stausberg, 2011). Due to forces of consumer society, many people desire material needs. Religious tourists, especially secular tourists and sightseers, want to stay in comfortable hotels and have high quality food during the journey. To meet multiple needs and promote the local economy, religious places are willing to provide various types of tourism products and services. As a result, varied forms of commercialization may exist in different religious places.

Firstly, globalisation makes it possible and convenient to undertake long-distance pilgrimages. With the fast development of modern transportation and multi-national communication, many religious believers can travel from one country to another to worship their god(s). In the sacred journey, these people are not only seeking spiritual support, but experiencing exotic

customs and enhancing relations with their families or friends. Thus in recent years, there has been an increasing number of people travelling abroad every year because of religious reasons (Askin, 2012). But globalization also fosters the commercialization of religious tourism by transforming it into a globally marketable product (Religious Tourism in Asia and the Pacific, UNWTO, 2011).

All importantly, modern society, and the businesses which define it, are driven by economic growth and can make money from religious tourism. Religious organizations, too want to sustain their further development by collecting money from business investors and tourists. In return, the growth of tourism helps to popularize religion as well (Stausberg, 2011). For local government, the sustainable development of religious tourism can contribute significantly to economic growth. Tourism is an aggregation of businesses, and growth in one facet of demand can build economic momentum and promote employment beyond the obvious confines of sacred sites.

For local communities, providing services and products to attract and satisfy different types of visitors can improve their living standards (Hughes et al., 2013). Now various commercial services are being supplied by religious sites. Holy sites have improved the quality of religious products and services in order to attract ever-larger numbers of “clients” (Raj & Morpeth, 2007; Singh, 2004). In Asian countries such as India and China, local entrepreneurs have taken advantage of modern religious tourism to gain economic benefits. On the way to the Himalayas, the price of accommodation and meals is now much higher than in the past (Singh, 2004). Meanwhile, to make money from transportation, many locals have bought four-wheel-drive vehicles and taxis to drive tourists or pilgrims to sacred locations. Chinese Buddhist Mountains like Mount Putuo have multiple commercial activities (Wong, et al.,

2013). Monks working at these sacred mountains have become very rich because of the expensive entrance tickets to temples, the tourists' donations, and the high price of souvenirs, meals, accommodation and other commercial products (Huang, 2011; Huang & Chen, 2009; Zhang & Sun, 2008). In this regard, Kasim (2011) claims that faith-based travel appears to be a money-spinner.

Finally, modernization can stimulate people's material desires. Arguably, the acquisition of material goods influenced by modern science and technology, promotes people to seek a high level of material enjoyment instead of spiritual satisfaction (Huang, 2011; Huang & Chen, 2009; Ming & Zhang, 2008; Wong, et al., 2013). Even in religious places, people would expect material needs to be adequately met. As a result, a variety of services and products have been supplied by religious sites to meet tourists' needs.

The commercialization of religious tourism has both positive and negative impacts on local community and tourists. On the one hand, it can create more job opportunities and promote the development of the economy (Jones-Evans, 1998; Kasim, 2011; Stausberg, 2011).

Meanwhile, the income from religious tourism can also be used to preserve and manage traditional architecture and customs (Jones-Evans, 1998; Vijayanand, 2012). Joseph and Kavoori (2001) point out that tourism poses a threat to traditions and religions. It not only increase expenses for local communities (Jones-Evans, 1998), but also results in segregation between tourists and locals (Vijayanand, 2012). In addition, the increased traffic and waste, have led at times to the pollution of the local environment (Shackley, 1999; Singh, 2004).

Further, inherent conflict among pilgrims, secular tourists and religious staff seems to be irreconcilable (Gao, 2010; Gatrell & Collins-Kreiner, 2006; Nolan & Nolan, 1992), because their basic needs are different.

Overall, the commercialization of religions appears a growing, possibly an inevitable global issue. That is, religion is often now treated as one kind of cultural capital, from which both economic and spiritual benefits can be derived at the same time. But previous studies suggested that it is difficult to sustain the real value of religions and traditions by moving from a spiritual orientation to one accommodating materialistic enjoyment (Huang, 2011; Huang & Chen, 2009; Ming & Zhang, 2008; Wong et al., 2013). Kasim (2011) claimed that over-commercialized products and services will overshadow the glory of the religious spirit. If religion loses its authentic religiousness and sacredness, it would lose its distinctiveness and social capital and then weaken visitors' travelling motives (Pearce, et al., 2011, p.74). Therefore religious places with high commercialization may have a shorter life cycle than less commercial ones (McKercher, & Du Cros, 2002, p.10). In short, tourism can make people become more commercial (Pearce, et al., 1996) and the success of tourism will be the tragedy of religion (Picard, 1995, p.65).

Although some scholars emphasise the potential threat of over-commercialization on the glory of religious spirit, it is still controversial to decide whether or not material enjoyment and spiritual sublimation are incompatible (Kasim, 2011; Pearce, et al., 2011, pp.74; Pearce, Moscardo, & Ross, 1996; McKercher, & Du Cros, 2002, pp.10). Further, few studies discuss the attitude of religious tourists towards commercial behaviours. This thesis therefore, as a key goal, explores how tourists respond to various kinds of commercial activities.

2.5 Personal values in research

In 1931, Allport and Vernon analysed the values of people. From then on, many scholars, like Adler, Dichter, Erikson, Freud, Fromm, Horney, and Jung, developed a series of psychological theories which can be used to further explain values. Rokeach (1973) tried to analyse values independently rather than treated them as a sub-category of attitudes. He

defined and systematically investigated values on an individual basis. Later, following Rokeach, many theories and measurement scales have been provided by researchers to better understand the values in specific areas, such as consumer behaviour, environmental perspectives, and tourist motivation (Gountas, Carey, & Oppenheim, 2000).

Values have been defined in different ways. In Rokeach's view (1973: 5), a value is "an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end state of existence." Later he redefined value as "an organized set of preferential standards that are used in making selections of objects and actions, resolving conflicts, invoking social sanctions, and coping with needs or claims for social and psychological defences of choice made or proposed" (Rokeach, 1979, p. 20). In 1987, Schwartz and Bilsky defined values as "cognitive representations of universal human requirements: biological needs, social interactional requirements, and social institutional demands on the individual". They extracted five factors to define personal values, including "(1) concepts or beliefs, (2) desirable end states or behaviours, (3) transcending specific situations, (4) guide selection or evaluation of behaviour and events, and (5) ordered by relative importance".

Rokeach's values theory is the most well-known and widely applied in research. Derived from consistency theory, Rokeach's values theory can be effectively employed to explain human behaviours, because people are comfortable with constancy. Human behaviours can be influenced by both their attitudes and values. Before Rokeach, researchers usually regarded values as a sub-category of attitudes, but actually values and attitudes are different concepts. According to Rokeach (1973), while attitudes focus on specific objects or situations, values emphasise more abstract ideals. Therefore, people may have a variety of attitudes, but

only several core values (Munson, 1984). Further, in comparison with attitudes, values are more stable and occupy a more central position within a person's cognitive system (Kamakura & Novak, 1992). Actually, attitudes keep changing and are adapted to new settings and interpersonal contexts. In other words, attitudes are catering for the needs of society and cognitive activity (Tedeschi, Schlenker & Bonoma, 1971; Wicklund & Brehm, 1976). The social adaptation theory suggests that value development and value fulfilment can influence people's attitude change (Kahle, 1983; Kahle, Kulka & Klingel, 1980). Consequently, values are deeper sources than attitudes in determining people's motives and behaviours in daily life (Rokeach, 1973).

To measure values, many scales have been developed. According to Rokeach (1968, 1973), values can be categorized as two types: terminal values and instrumental values. Rokeach's value survey (RVS) includes 18 terminal values (ideal end-state existence) and 18 instrumental values (ideal modes of behaviour). The terminal values are social recognition, harmony, accomplishment, equality, and happiness. Instrumental values are logical, ambitious, intellectual, broadminded, and polite. Based on Rokeach's terminal values, as well as Maslow's hierarchy of needs and various other contemporary treatments (e.g., Feather, 1975) in values research, Kahle (1983) developed a simplified alternative value measurement scale. The list of Values (LOV) includes nine items: warm relationships with others, self-respect, sense of accomplishment, fun and enjoyment in life, self-fulfilment, being well respected, security, sense of belonging and excitement. Similarly, based on Maslow's (1943) and Riesman's (1950) theoretical ideas, Mitchell (1983) developed a Values and Lifestyles instrument (VALS). In Mitchell's study, human behaviours can be mainly divided into three groups: need driven (driven more by needs than values or attitudes), outer directed (influenced by social factors), and inner directed (predicated on personal needs). Additionally,

Hofstede (1980) developed a Value Survey Model (VSM), in which he studied culture-related work values and found significant differences among national cultures. Seven dimensions can be employed to understand a culture clearly. They are power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term versus short-term orientation, indulgence versus restraint, and monumentalism versus self-effacement. In addition, Value-Orientation Model (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961) and Low-context and High-context Cultural Dimensions Model (Hall, 1976) have also been used to analyse cultural values.

2.6 Chinese values in research

Personal values vary from country to country. The formation of personal values can be greatly influenced by the individual's sociocultural environment. According to social adaptation theory, people want to seek balance in life so that they continuously adapt to change in their environment (Kahle, 1983; Kahle, et al., 1980). The environment where people live will affect their attitudes and further shape their values towards life and the world. As a result, there exist significant differences in values between the West and East.

China, with its long history and unique culture, is a large and traditional eastern country. The Chinese have been significantly influenced by the combination of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Due to the successive support of emperors in nearly all ancient Chinese dynasties, Confucianism has had a profound impact on the Chinese for more than 2000 years. It has been regarded as the dominated ideology from the days of the Han dynasty. The imperial examination system lasting for thousands of years was developed and based on Confucianism. The core values of Confucianism are loyalty, kindness, politeness, wisdom, and integrity. It emphasises the importance of harmonious human relationships (Bond, 1986; Moise, 1995). Further, to live in harmony with each other, Confuciusism emphasises the importance of the

group and the role of authority. In other words, Confucius believes that collectivism is more essential than individualism for the stability of the family, community, and the whole society (Mok & DeFranco, 2000). Therefore, a set of strict rules have been made for people, from ordinary farmers to honoured emperors, to obey in daily life.

Taoism is one of the most famous Chinese aboriginal religions. The majority of Taoist organizations were formed in the late Eastern Han Dynasty (Yuan, 2003). There are more than 2,000 Taoist temples and 30, 000 priests all around the country. Tao can represent the laws of nature. It is thought that universe is working under two forces: Yang (the positive or the male elements of being) and Yin (the negative or female elements) (Shin, 2001). These forces exist both in human beings and nature. Taoism emphasises that human beings are one part of nature. People can experience the unity of heaven and man by practising alone regularly and devotionally. So it is important for everything in the universe to be in a harmonious relationship. In addition, Taoism emphasises the shapeless and nonmaterial characters (Choi, 1978). Most Taoists prefer to live far away from the worldly life by practising their religion in remote mountains.

Different from Confucianism and Taoism, Buddhism was brought into China from ancient India. But while the glories of Confucianism and Taoism are arguably fading, Buddhism is becoming more popular in the 21st century. Buddhism can be thought of as both eastern philosophy and psychology (Liang, 1922). It has a systematic knowledge system, rituals, and practices. The supreme aim of the Buddhist is the nirvana of the body, which means that a person will not fall into the endless rounds of rebirth (Xu, 2004). More importantly, Buddhism also encourages people to be kind, merciful, compassionate, and they should understand the truth of causes and effects (Herbrechtsmeier, 1993). People should keep

learning and practising to know more about the essence and meaning of life, so that they can obtain greater happiness.

Overall, being influenced by the combined cultures for a long time, the Chinese have their typical values. Yau (1988) has adopted the value-orientation model to explore Chinese cultural values. The findings suggests that Chinese are man-nature oriented, man-himself oriented, relational oriented, time oriented, and personal activity oriented. In perhaps a clearer statement, Mok and De Franco (2000) developed a conceptual framework of dominant Chinese cultural values (Figure 2.6).

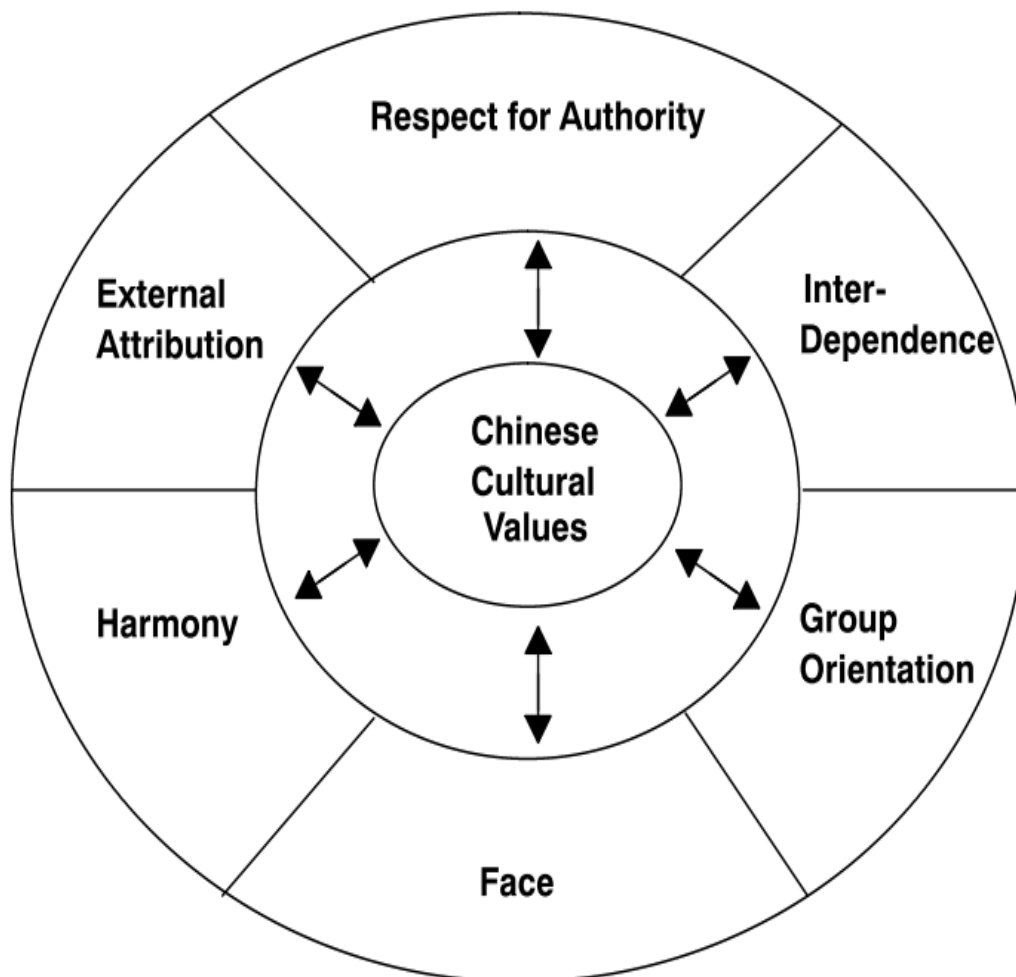


Figure 2.6 A conceptual framework of dominant Chinese cultural values

Source: Mok, C., & DeFranco, A. L. (2000). Chinese cultural values: Their implications for travel and tourism marketing. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 8(2), 99-114.

Figure 2.7 suggests that China has a more hierarchical society than Western countries. This framework will help to better understand religious tourists' spiritual values at Buddhist sites in this thesis. Chinese respect authority strongly, because they are affected by Confucius's five cardinal relations, between sovereign and minister, father and son, husband and wife, old and young (Hofstede, 1980; Yau, 1988). Meanwhile, the Chinese are very concerned about interpersonal relations and the face or Mien-tzu. Here, face refers to "allowing others to escape the humiliation implicit in not knowing, failing to understand, having been mistaken, or being inferior to others" (Mok & De Franco, 2000). So Chinese pay more attention to the way or skills to keep good relationships with others. In addition, Chinese are group oriented, and they emphasise the importance of living with both other people and nature in a harmonious way. So they are more likely to attribute outcomes to fate or the external natural environment. However, it is necessary to mention that Chinese cultural values are changing with the development of modern society. Many younger generations are being affected by Western ideology and culture (Mok & De Franco, 2000; Zhang, 1980).

2.7 Personal values in tourism study

Values have been widely used in tourism research. Consumers' values and behaviours have been analysed. From the perspective of psychology, values play an important role in people's attitudes, motivations, preferences, and lifestyles. Thus many researchers have studied how values influence tourists' leisure and travel behaviours (Pitts & Woodside, 1986; Fall, 2000). Meanwhile, based on personal values and tourist behaviours, international tourism markets have been segmented in different ways (Muller, 1991; Mehmetoglu, Hines, Graumann, & Greibrokk, 2010; Watkins & Gnoth, 2011). Service behaviours in hospitality and tourism industry have been discussed. In Tsang's study, Chinese cultural values (CCVs) are closely associated with service provision (Tsang, 2011).

More specifically, the list of values (LOV) approach is widely used in tourism study. Muller (1991) employed LOV to divide the international tourism market into three segments: fun-and-enjoyment oriented, security conscious, and art, culture and environmentally cognizant. Similarly, Madrigal and Kahle (1994) found that tourists on vacation can be grouped into different segments on the basis of their value systems. Their values mainly comprise of internally-oriented values (self-fulfilment, fun and enjoyment, excitement, accomplishment, warm relationships with others, and self-respect) and externally-oriented values (a sense of belonging, being well-respected, and security). In addition, based on both LOV and Plog's (1972) allocentrism-psychocentrism scale, Madrigal (1995) found that allocentrism is positively related to values of self-fulfillment, accomplishment, fun and enjoyment in life, excitement and self-respect, while it is negatively related to security, belonging and being well-respected.

In comparison with LOV which focuses on individuals, the Norwegian Monitor Approach (NMA) tries to segment tourism markets on a national and cultural level. So Dalen (1989) adopted NMA to divide the Norwegian population into four types: traditional idealists, modern idealists, traditional materialists, and modern materialists. This approach could also be used to better understand tourist types and behaviours in other cultural contexts. By using a different approach, Japanese tourists' values have been evaluated through a Means–End investigation (Watkins & Gnoth, 2011). Watkins and Gnoth suggested that cultural values can be good predictors of tourist behaviours (Table 2.5).

Table 2.5 Values and related area of travel behaviour

Values	Travel behaviour
Inner harmony/spirituality	Nature
<i>Relax oneself</i>	
<i>Clear oneself</i>	
Immediate/practical concerns	Travel style
<i>Security (physical)</i>	
<i>convenience</i>	
<i>Privacy</i>	
<i>Freedom (from restrictions)</i>	
People	Travel style
<i>Security (psychological)</i>	
<i>Human relationships</i>	
<i>Being taken care</i>	
Inner-directed values	Destination
<i>Warm relationships</i>	
<i>Fulfillment</i>	
<i>Freedom</i>	
<i>Satisfaction</i>	
<i>Self-respect</i>	
<i>Knowledge/ expand horizons</i>	

Source: Adapted from Watkins, L. J., & Gnoth, J. (2011). Japanese tourism values: A means-end investigation. *Journal of Travel Research*, 50(6), 654-668.

Table 2.5 Values and related area of travel behaviour (Continued)

Values	Travel behaviour
Outer-directed values	Activity
<i>Accomplishment</i>	
<i>Happiness</i>	
<i>Refresh</i>	
<i>New experience/knowledge</i>	

Source: Adapted from Watkins, L. J., & Gnoth, J. (2011). Japanese tourism values: A means–end investigation. *Journal of Travel Research*, 50(6), 654-668.

Besides consumer behaviours, service behaviours are measured based on value systems as well. Tsang (2011) developed a five-component construct to explain how values affect the attitudes and behaviours of employees in providing service. The five factors were attitude towards work, attitude towards people, moral discipline, status and relationships, and moderation.

Past value studies will provide a solid foundation for this research. This thesis will explore what kinds of spiritual values religious tourists can obtain at Buddhist sites. Further, this thesis also tries to understand how spiritual values affect religious tourists' attitudes towards commercial behaviours.

2.8 Tourist experience in religious places

Five tourist experience modes, including recreational, diversionary, experiential, experimental, and existential, have been identified by Cohen (1979). The existential one focuses on those travelling to sacred shrines for a quest of spirituality. In sacred shrines, people are able to experience authenticity of unique culture and mythical religions. The

authentic experience can be influenced by many factors. According to Wang's argument, authenticity can be divided into two categories: Object-based (e.g., objective and constructive) and activity-based (e.g., existential) authenticities (Wang, 1999).

On the one hand, tourist settings play a direct role in influencing authenticity (MacCannell, 1973). From the view of both objective and constructive authenticity, tourists depend much on local settings including front and back stages. In MacCannell's view, tourists only gain access to front stages and experience staged authenticity. Similarly, physical arrangements of sacred places will affect visitors' perception of religious ideals, spirituality, and community (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). In such settings, tourists may have a sense of enlightenment or existential authenticity. Stokols (1990) also suggests that the environment has symbolic and affective properties, which are of great importance in cultivating human values. That is, specific places in religion can help a person to know more about their identity and true self (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). In addition, sacred places are always located at sites beyond the common living space, where people can escape from the chaos of the secular world. This is the original pilgrimage, questing for separated spaces of pristine existence, without chaos and suffering.

Wang (1999) also suggests that tourists' authentic experiences can be influenced by other individuals and may be a shared experience (Belhassen, Caton, & Stewart, 2008). Since pilgrimage is usually a collective activity, especially in traditional religious festivals, one's feelings are easily related to others' behaviours (Pearce, 2005; Wang, 1999; Yagi & Pearce, 2007). So a pilgrim's feeling of being authentic emerges from the process of their group actions rather than from the originality of toured objects. In addition, this experience is also affected by the characteristics of visitors (Collins-Kreiner, 2010) and their spiritual or secular

needs (Hughes et al., 2013). For instance, religion has a totally different influence on men and women's perceived interpersonal network (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992). In sum, social meanings, physical environment, personal characteristics, and tourist actions are closely intertwined in shaping religious visitors' experiences.

2.9 Spiritual values of religious tourists

Without doubt, nearly all people need to feed themselves physically and spiritually. Many people visit religious sites regularly to seek spiritual nourishment. In religious places, people can have a sense of belonging by gaining respect and love from others. Additionally, religious beliefs address the fundamental meaning of life (Fletcher, 2004; Stark, 1999) through positive rituals, symbols, traditions, and support (Hadaway, 1978; Hadden, 1995). In particular, this meaning is of great importance to many older people, when they have fewer social roles and opportunities, and are nearer to the end of their lives (Fletcher, 2004). Even though individual standards of living have improved significantly in the 21st century, millions of people still have an affinity with religion (Hughes et al., 2013). For example, 85% of the population in China have a certain degree of religious belief, whether that be Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, or Christianity (Centre on Religion and Chinese Society, 2010).

There are two basic forms of religious orientation, internal and external religious orientation (Allport & Ross, 1967). The former tends to focus on the presence of gods, whereas the latter is connected with utilitarian values, including status, comfort, and social interaction (Allport & Ross, 1967). But only the internal religious orientation influences visitors' mental health positively (Bergin, 1983). More specifically, Homayouni (2011) claims that the internal religious orientation develops individual personality, attitude, and life, because the power of faith makes a person hopeful and optimistic in the face of difficulties and frustrations.

Likewise, Kirkpatrick and Shaver (1992) also assert that people with a strong religious belief obtain greater life satisfaction and less anxiety, loneliness and depression, and physical illness than others.

The most meaningful experiences for religious visitors arise from the pilgrimage itself (Collins-Kreiner, 2010). This experience is also affected by the characteristics of the visitors (Collins-Kreiner, 2010), their spiritual or secular needs or motives (Hughes et al., 2013), and the behaviours of other visitors (Pearce, 2005; Yagi & Pearce, 2007). Furthermore, the physical appearance of religious sites has an effect on visitors' perception of religious ideals, spirituality, community, and place as well (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004).

Today, many studies have tried to explore people's spirituality. Some studies mainly focus on the specific life events including life treatment events in nursing (Carson, Winkelstein, Soeken & Brunins, 1986; Fehring, Brennan, & Keller, 1987; Reed, 1987). These events such as terminal illness, impending death, depression, or suffering are not only health-related concerns, but prompt a quest for meaning and spiritual value. In Howden's view (1992), spirituality can be defined as "the dimension of one's being that is an integrating or unifying factor which is manifested through unifying interconnectedness, purpose and meaning in life, innerness or inner resources, and transcendence". Spiritual values can be measured through different scales. The major three measurement scales are the Spiritual Well-being Scale (Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982), the Spiritual Perspective Scale (Reed, 1987), and the Spirituality Assessment Scale (Howden, 1992).

Entirely all of these instruments however were developed within the western context, which may not be applicable to all religious experience and sites, including the typical Chinese

Buddhist Mountains. So one of the goals of this thesis is to develop a spiritual values instrument which may be usefully applied in the Chinese context.

2.10 Impacts of commercialization on tourists' spiritual values

The process of pilgrimage and place visits can be one of the most important experiences for religious tourists (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). In this process, they cultivate their spiritual values through sacred sights (temples/churches, relics, icons, monuments), euphonic sounds (church and temple bells, drum beats, chanting, singing, the call to prayer), special diet (vegetarian food and consecrated food), and unique aromas (incense and fresh flowers) (Eck, 1981, p: 9). But a variety of commercial activities have weakened the atmosphere of religious culture and traditions. And this further affects on-site experience and spiritual values of religious tourists.

First of all, economic behaviours in tourism pose a threat to religious traditions (Joseph & Kavoori, 2001). Religious buildings can be surrounded by many modern restaurants, hotels and souvenir shops (Huang, 2011). And even some traditional buildings have been demolished to make room for entertainment facilities. Meanwhile, a series of tourism services and products are provided everywhere at sacred sites by the local community. In this case, the reminders of the past and repositories of religious heritage may be overwhelmed by modern constructions and services (Henderson, 2011). Furthermore, the excitement of making a profit may also overshadow the role of religious ceremonies in cultivating tourists' spiritual values (Kasim, 2011). So it is difficult for tourists to develop place attachment if the typical characteristics of the religion or site have been weakened.

Moreover, there exist inherent conflict among the stakeholders in religious tourism. The conflict seems to be complex, since the basic needs of pilgrims, secular tourists and local

community are quite different. While the local community provides services and products to earn money, pilgrims seek a genuine experience and pursue spiritual enrichment. And secular tourists may be motivated by multiple reasons. So conflicts among these stakeholders often occur in the pilgrimage process. For example, tourists can be annoyed by locals who solicit clients on the way to sacred sites. Meanwhile, the casual behaviours and clothes of secular tourists sometimes cause distress to loyal pilgrims (Ming & Zhang, 2008). Not all of the influences and interactions lead to a loss of spiritual values. The sense of sacredness can be transferred from pilgrims to secular tourists (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). Then both pilgrims and secular tourists can experience intense personal and emotional experiences (Irimias & Michalko, 2013).

2.11 Synthesis of the chapter

This chapter has reviewed key literature related to the research questions. It has covered religious tourism, commercialization, tourist experience, and spiritual values (Figure 2.1). Firstly, religious tourism has been discussed. The discussion focused on the difference between tourism and pilgrimage, tourists and pilgrims. Meanwhile, studies have analyzed tourists' motivations and general impacts of religious tourism. Secondly, this chapter described the development of Chinese religious tourism. In China, studies pay much attention to tourism products design and their economic and environmental impacts. Overall, both international and Chinese scholars have conducted a large number of religious tourism studies, but their discussions tend to be at a general level. Although tourists' motivations have been well documented, their deep experiences, for example, the cultivation of the mind and the formation of spiritual values, are not fully explored. Thirdly, the emerging commercial activities at sites are a global issue. But nearly all previous studies are qualitative descriptions, lacking systematic quantitative analysis. Finally, it is still controversial to determine whether commercialization has any influence on tourists' spiritual values. Spiritual values are

generated from tourists' deep experiences, but they have a long-term influence on religious tourists' post trip life. Therefore, it is necessary to find the internal relationship between religious commercialization and religious tourist' spiritual values.

The literature reviewed here supports and informs the aims of the research outlined at the end of Chapter 1. It provides a context for developing research measures and represents a background of ideas to contextualize the findings of the present set of studies. It also assists in the selection of methods to undertake the research as reviewed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3. RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

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3.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter introduces the research methodology and the location of the studies (Figure 3.1). Firstly, the Four Great Buddhist Mountains in China will be described. This material covers their histories, locations, and tourism development. Photos of these scenic sites will be presented. In addition, this chapter will discuss the methods and methodological framework of the research. Further, three rounds of data collection for this thesis were described. Finally, relevant research methods will be reviewed, and their adoption in this thesis will be explained.

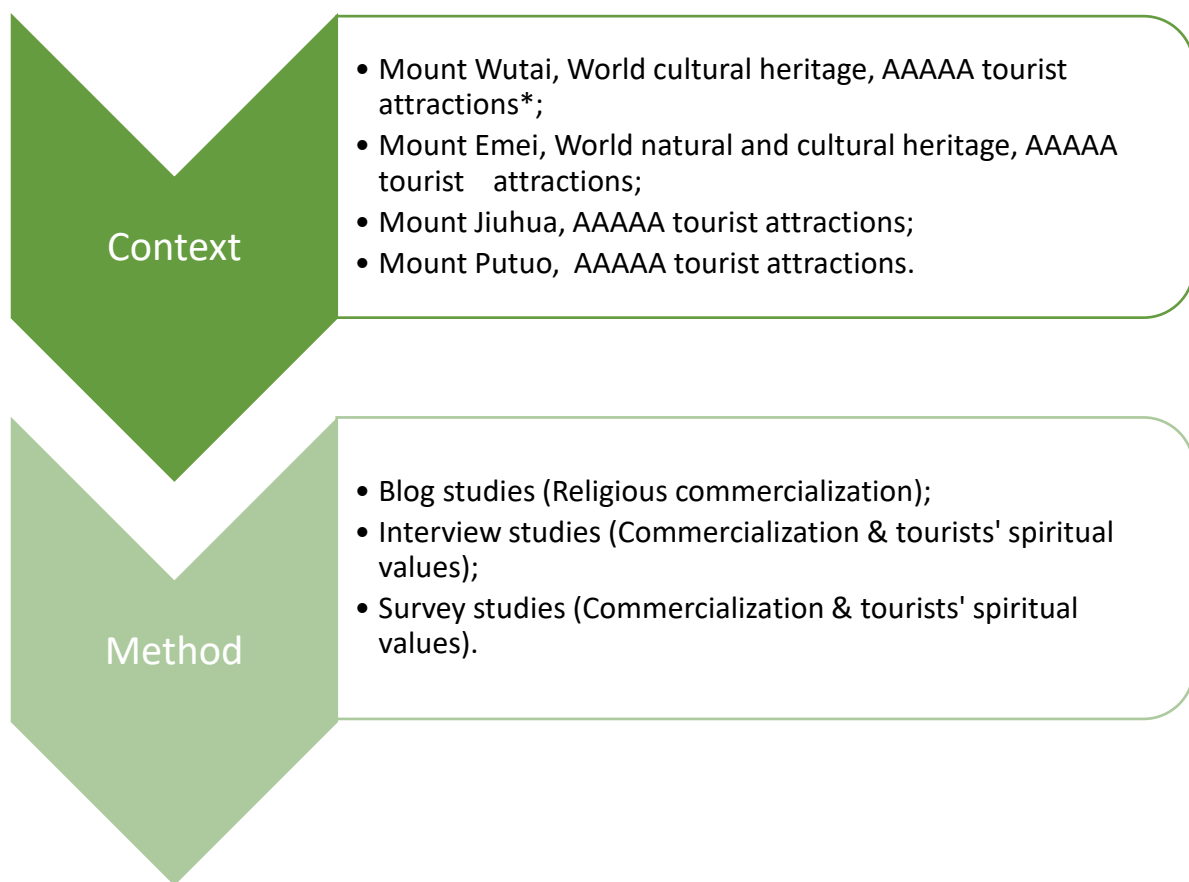


Figure 3.1 Framework of the research context methodology

Note: Chinese authorities use a rating system to determine the quality of the attraction relative to its peers in terms of safety, cleanliness, sanitation and transportation. It is divided into five categories, from A (or 1A, the lowest level) to AAAAA (5A, the highest level). Source: From Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourist_Attraction_Rating_Categories_of_China.

3.2 Research context

The Four Great Buddhist Mountains in China are Mount Wutai, Mount Jiuhua, Mount Emei, and Mount Putuo (Figure 3.2). All of them have a long and specific eventful history. They are places for publicizing Buddhism mainly by different Bodhisattvas, so they are regarded as the origin of Samantabhadra, Ksitigarbha, Manjushri, and Avalokitesvara respectively. In the past, monks wanted to escape from earthly matters and political or ideological revolutions, so temples were located in the remote and natural mountains. However, the sites still suffered damage from political turmoil (Gao, 1994; Wong et al., 2013).



Figure 3.2 Locations and symbols of the Four Great Buddhist Mountains in China

Source: Adapted from Baidu pictures.

In contemporary times, as China's mainstream religions are reviving, these mountains have become popular tourist attractions. They are particularly famous for their beautiful scenery, unique arts and enduring religious ideals. These four mountains, where earth and heaven are believed to touch, have attracted millions of pilgrims and secular tourists from both domestic and international tourist markets. Table 3.1 is the brief introduction to each mountain.

Table 3.1 Tourism development at Four Great Buddhist Mountains

Items	Mount Wutai	Mount Emei	Mount Putuo	Mount Jiuhua
Acreage	593 km ²	154km ²	13 km ²	100 km ²
Annual number of tourists	3.2 million	5.0 million	4.8 million	4.0 million
Tourist market	Shanxi, Beijing, Tianjin, Mongolia , Hebei	Sichuan, Guangdong, Shanxi, Xijiang, Tianjin, and Shanghai	East areas in China	Anhui, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Henan
Annual tourism revenue	2.2 billion RMB	1.9 billion RMB	2.7 billion RMB	3.9 billion RMB
Expense per person	No information	500-1000 RMB, 3days and 2 nights	400-800 RMB , 2 days and 1 night	No information

Source: Xiao (2011). Rankings of National 5A tourist attractions in 2010: Mount Wuyi currently maintains first place. Feb. 18, 2011, People's Daily Online. Retrieved from <http://travel.people.com.cn/GB/13950076.html>.

Table 3.1 Tourism development at Four Great Buddhist Mountains (Continued)

Items	Mount Wutai	Mount Emei	Mount Putuo	Mount Jiuhua
Price of entrance tickets	148 RMB for low season, 168 RMB for peak season, with 5 RMB insurance fees	110 RMB for low season, 185 RMB for peak season	140 RMB for low season, 160 RMB for peak season, with 5 RMB insurance fees	140 RMB for low season, 190 RMB for peak season, with 5 RMB insurance fees
Accommodation	459 blogs, 78 hotels (1 five-star, 2 four-star, 5 three- star, 2 two- star , and others), rural folk inns, and beds in temples	664 blogs, 103 hotels (2 five-star, 2 four-star, 5 three- star, 3 two- star , and others), rural folk inns, youth hostels, and beds in temples	592 blogs, 49 hotels (2 four-star, 2 three- star , 6 two-star and others), rural folk inns , youth hostels and beds in temples	519 blogs, 11 hotels (1 five-star, 2 four-star, more than 3 three- star and others), rural folk inns, and beds in temples
Entertainment activities	Spring, recreation activities provided by luxury hotels	Spring, ski resort, recreation ground, recreation activities provided by luxury hotels	Swimming and recreation activities provided by luxury hotels	Spring, outdoor shows, recreation activities provided by luxury hotels and public cultural venues

Source: Xiao (2011). Rankings of National 5A tourist attractions in 2010: Mount Wuyi currently maintains first place. Feb. 18, 2011, People's Daily Online. Retrieved from <http://travel.people.com.cn/GB/13950076.html>.

Table 3.1 Tourism development at Four Great Buddhist Mountains (Continued)

Items	Mount Wutai	Mount Emei	Mount Putuo	Mount Jiuhua
Food and drinks	Hotels, restaurants, and vegetarian food in temples	Hotels, restaurants, snacks street, food stores, bars, vegetarian food in temples	Hotels, restaurants, food stalls and vegetarian food in temples	Hotels, restaurants, snacks street and vegetarian food in temples
Transportation	Sightseeing bus, ropeways, and rental cars	Sightseeing bus, ropeways, and self-driven cars	Ships and ropeways	Sightseeing bus and ropeways

Source: Xiao (2011). Rankings of National 5A tourist attractions in 2010: Mount Wuyi currently maintains first place. Feb. 18, 2011, People's Daily Online. Retrieved from <http://travel.people.com.cn/GB/13950076.html>.

3.2.1 Mount Wutai

Mount Wutai, located in Shanxi province, is a site of world cultural heritage (Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.4). It is not only the leading example of the Four Great Buddhist Mountains, but also one of World's Five Great Buddhist Mountains together with Lumbini in Niebuhr, and Migadaya, Bodh Gaya and Kushinagar in India. Wutai got its name from the five highest mountains standing in the centre of this area, because the meaning of "Wu" is five, and that of "Tai" is terrace. Many pilgrims come from India, Japan, Korea and Sri Lanka, and respect the sacredness of Mount Wutai. The majority of Mount Wutai's domestic tourists are from nearby provinces such as Beijing, Tianjin, Inner Mongolia and Shanxi. The average number of tourists received is around 3.2 million with more than RMB 2.2 billion in revenue annually (Xiao, 2011).



Figure 3.3 Map of Mount Wutai

Source: Baidu picture.



Figure 3.4 Photo of Mount Wutai

Source: Photos taken by the author, Mafengwo (<http://www.mafengwo.cn/>) and Baidu pictures.

3.2.2 Mount Emei

Mount Emei is a site of both world natural and cultural heritage (Figure 3.5 and Figure 3.6).

The average number of tourists visiting Mount Emei is the largest among the Four Great Buddhist Mountains with about 5.0 million annually, while its tourism revenue is around RMB 1.9 billion followed by Mount Wutai, Mount Putuo and Mount Jiuhua (Xiao, 2011).

More than two-thirds of the tourists are sightseers and about 26.8% of them are travelling for holiday, business or conference reasons (Du, 2003). Thirty five percent of them are attracted specifically by the religious culture at Mount Emei (Du, 2003; Liao, 2010). The statistics suggest that recreational activities and the natural views of Mount Emei are more attractive than its religious culture.

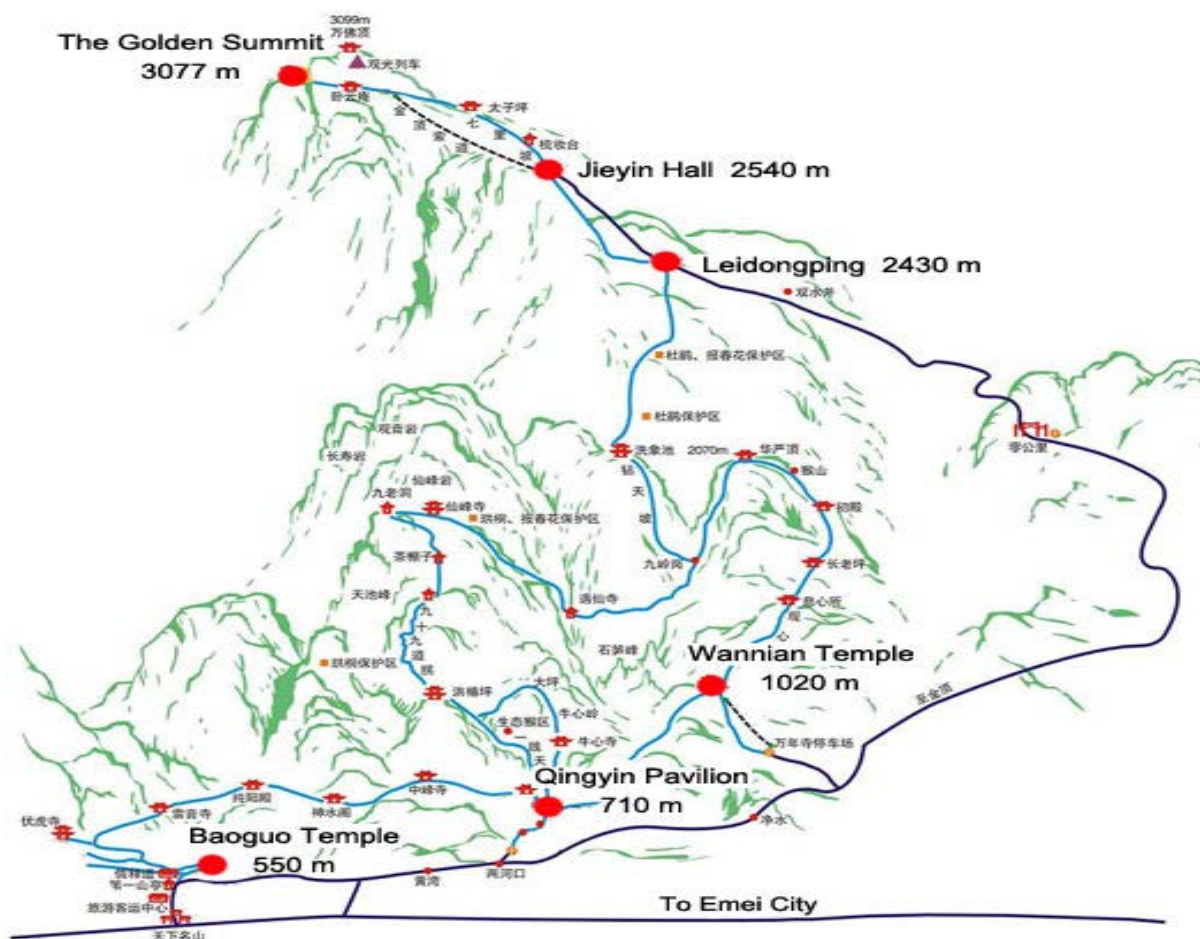


Figure 3.5 Map of Mount Emei

Source: Baidu picture.



Figure 3.6 Photos of Mount Emei

Source: Photos taken by the author, Mafengwo (<http://www.mafengwo.cn/>) and Baidu pictures.

3.2.3 Mount Jiuhua

Mount Jiuhua, is a 100 km² site located in Anhui province (Figure 3.7 and Figure 3.8). It has the most tourism revenue (around RMB 3.9 billion) annually of all the study sites (Xiao, 2011). Unlike the tourists visiting Mount Emei, the majority of visitors to Mount Jiuhua are very satisfied with its strong Buddhist atmosphere (Jiang, 2010). Meanwhile, tourist loyalty to this religious site is high: a large portion of tourists intend to revisit and they are likely to recommend the place to their relatives, friends or other people (Liu, 2013).

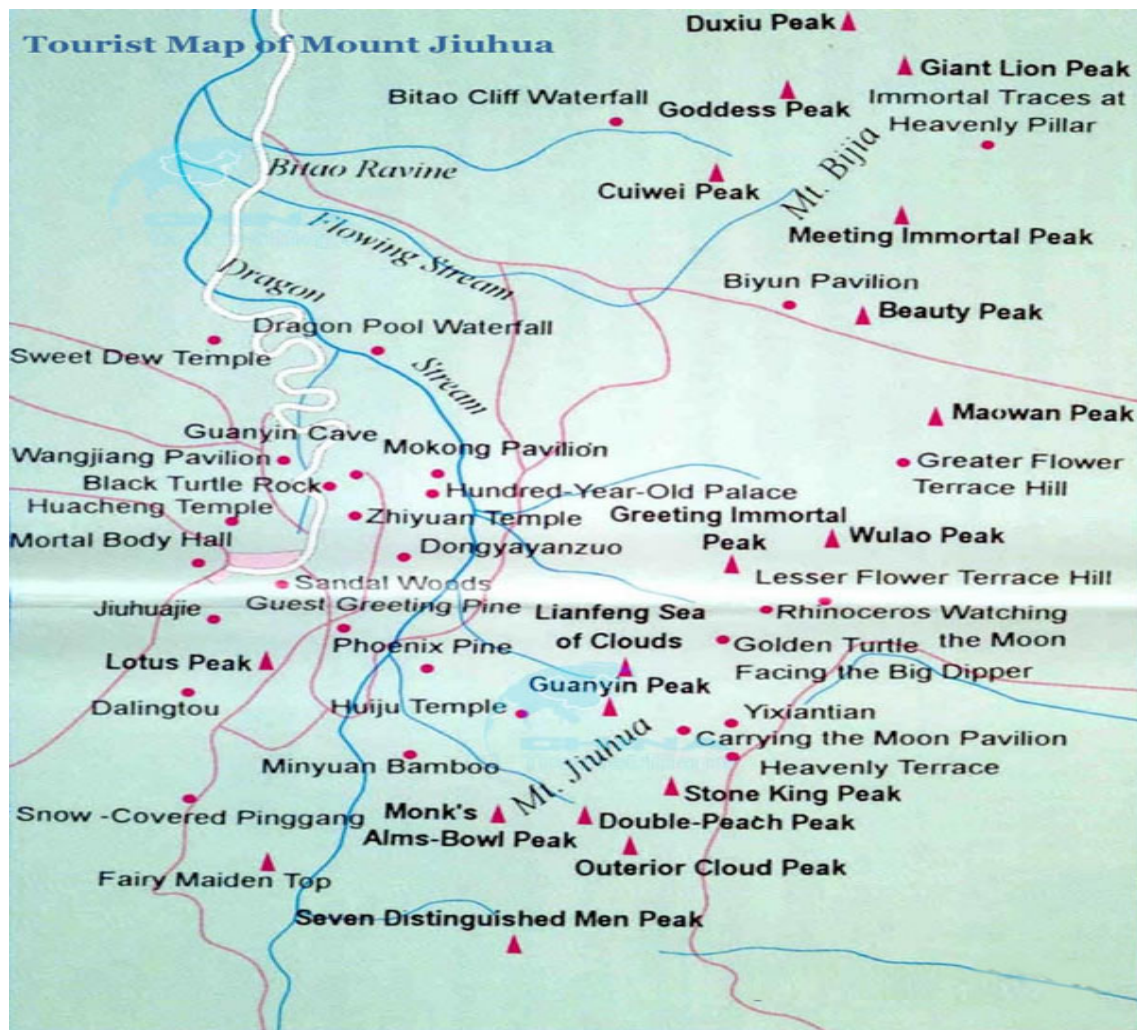


Figure 3.7 Map of Mount Jiuhua

Source: Baidu picture.



Figure 3.8 Photos of Mount Jiuhua

Source: Photos taken by the author, Mafengwo (<http://www.mafengwo.cn/>) and Baidu pictures.

3.2.4 Mount Putuo

Mount Putuo, is an isolated island located in Zhejiang province (Figure 3.9 and Figure 3.10). It is the smallest case being considered with an area of only 13km². The average number of tourists is about 4.0 million with revenue of more than RMB 3.9 billion annually (Xiao, 2011). About 68% of tourists are pilgrims, and most of them come from eastern areas in China, such as Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Shanghai and Fujian (Yang, 2003). Even though 8.0% of the tourists are not satisfied with the commercial practices, 66.4% of them intend to pray here again (Yang, 2003).



Figure 3.9 Map of Mount Putuo

Source: Baidu picture.



Figure 3.10 Photos of Mount Putuo

Source: Photos taken by the author, Mafengwo (<http://www.mafengwo.cn/>) and Baidu pictures.

3.3 Research methods

3.3.1 Blog studies

The term “Blog” was created by Merholz (1999) and grew in popularity from about 2004 (Comscore Networks, 2005). The statistics show that there are more than 20 million blogs with around 70,000 new blogs posted each day and the blogosphere doubles every 5.5 months (Perlmutter, & McDaniel, 2005; Jarvis, 2006). Now blogs have become one of the most important information sources together through multiple social media, including virtual communities, microblogs, reviews, emails, bulletins, newsgroups, and discussion boards/forums (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan 2008). Blogs act as both a diary and a guide on the web, and may combine a person’s life experience and readers’ comments or information (Thevenot, 2007). But blogs are different from traditional diaries, because they offer open access and allow two-way interaction between bloggers and readers (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan 2008). Actually, all participants become part of a conversation by expressing their comments or adding more information on an article posted by sharers (Thevenot, 2007).

According to the types of information shared, blogs also can be divided into four basic classifications: 1) Individual blogs; 2) Topic or industry blogs; 3) Publication based blogs;

and 4) Corporate blogs (Mack, Blose, & Pan, 2008). Individual blogs are casual expression of personal thoughts, convictions, observations or suggestions through many kinds of forms, for example, daily experience, videos, and pictures. A second type of blog is related to given subject areas or industries. They may be a white paper or a keynote speech. A third type of blog is usually posted by editors, reporters and freelancers on topics of immediacy in media outlets. The fourth type of blog refers to information shared by corporate executives, and board members, and seek to spread particular company messages to the public.

Although the types of blogs are different, they can provide rich information. The information is valuable because of its detail, the quality of content, and readers' comments (Thevenot, 2007). Nevertheless, the credibility of Internet information is controversial in many research fields. Johnson and Kaye (2002) find that perceived credibility of Internet information depends on the users and their preferred social media. The more users surf websites, the more credibility they give to the online information (Johnson & Kaye, 2004; Kwak, Fox, & Zinkhan, 2002). Similarly, it has been argued that blogs are not as credible as word-of-mouth. The study of Mack et al. (2008) shows that only active bloggers tend to equate the authoritativeness of traditional word-of-mouth with that of both corporate and personal blogs. But regardless of the debate over Internet credibility, blog based information does play an essential role in both academic research and market management (Johnson & Kaye, 2003). That is, the use of blogs should not be discredited in developing a link between customers and marketers or institutions (Mack et al., 2008).

In the tourism industry, travel blogs have been widely used because of the rich and accessible information extracted from them. These blogs not only affect the research methods of tourism scholars, but also change the way tourists search, trust and produce information about

suppliers and destinations (Sigala, Christou, & Gretzel, 2012). Furthermore, by analysing tourists' stories, experience and recommendations, suppliers can improve their promotion strategies and the quality of tourism products (Zehrer, Crotts, & Magnini, 2011). Therefore, tourism destinations are able to manage brand images by listening to the natural voices of tourists from their personal blogs.

In this thesis, travel blogs will be analysed according to the procedures of netnography.

Netnography is actually the combination of Inter[net] and Eth[nography] (Kozinets, 2002). It has been widely used for analysing online community behaviours and other cultural phenomena, since an increasing number of consumers depend on message boards, chatting rooms, email services and other communities for sharing ideas. In the Web 2.0 age, netnography offers the advantages of both ethnography and a modern technical platform.

Compared to traditional ethnography and focus groups, Kozinets (2002) claims that netnography is able to collect rich data with much less time and lower costs in multi-regional groups through the Internet technology. Netnography has been used to study some emerging tourist behaviours. For example, it is difficult to collect surveys from gap year participants or couch surfers on a large scale, but they are accessible online because they prefer to post their unique feelings and experience in blogs (Kozinets, 1997). The voices of travel bloggers can truly express their inner feelings without being influenced by researchers or their companions. Further, their privacy has been protected in the virtual online community.

Due to the advantages of netnography, many more social science researches have started to adopt this method. Kozinets (2002) studied the perceived culture of an online coffee newsgroup and discussed its marketing implications. Langer and Beckman (2005) employed netnography to explore sensitive research topics: a Danish internet message board

on cosmetic surgery. Nelson and Otness (2005) identified the construct of cross-cultural ambivalence and examined how it influenced brides-to-be while they planned cross-cultural weddings. Recently, researchers have also explored the newly emerging tourism phenomena through using netnography, including motivations of gap year takers (Wu, Pearce, Huang, & Fan, 2014), Chinese recreational vehicle tourists' safety concerns and coping techniques in Australia (Wu, 2014), emotional contagion and topographic comparison in dark tourism (Podoshen, 2013), the othering of food in touristic entertainment (Mkono, 2011), and travelers' online discussions of risks (Bjork & Kauppinen-Raisanen, 2012).

Since netnography can be regarded as adapted ethnography, it follows the typical procedure of using a research plan: entree, data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, research ethics and member checks (Kozinets, 2002). Through these research procedures, this study will analyse Chinese tourists' attitudes towards emerging commercial behaviours at sacred sites.

3.3.2 Interview studies

The interview is another tool that can be designed to obtain rich and useful data in the social science research field. According to the form of questions being asked by the researcher, interviews can be divided into three general types, including an informal conversational interview (less formally structured interview), the general interview guide approach (semi-structured interview), and a standardized open-ended interview (structured interview) (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003) (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Comparison between different types of interviews

Types of Interview	Forms of structure	Advantages	Disadvantages
Informal conversational interview	Less formally structured	High flexibility; Rich information and many emerging topics	Lack of consistency; Very difficult to code data
General interview guide approach	Semi-structured	A certain degree of flexibility and adaptability; Rich information; Instant feedback to interviewees	Lack of consistency
Standardized open-ended interview	Extremely structured	High consistency; Easy to code data	Less flexibility; Powerless interviewees

Source: Written by the author.

The informal conversational interview is less formally structured, but flexible and natural. In this typical type of interview, respondents are able to express whatever they want to without being influenced by the researcher's thoughts. Many unique or unexpected topics, some of which may not be relevant to the study, will emerge during the conversation process. These topics can be surprisingly important for the researcher to generate new ideas about the study. But the problem is that the consistency of interview questions can be unstable or unreliable. Meanwhile, the wealthy but unstructured information sourced can make it difficult to code data (Creswell, 2007). To choose this type of interview, the researcher should pay attention to several factors. For example, the level of accuracy of responses, the potential for social

desirability bias, and the environmental or setting factors shaping the readiness to answer questions in detail. (Gideon, 2012).

The general interview guide approach can be more structured than the informal approach. During this interview, a series of predetermined questions and special topics will be covered, and with a certain degree of flexibility and adaptability, other topics can also emerge. Thus, except for predetermined questions, additional clarifying questions related to more details can be sought by the interviewer. In addition, the interviewer is able to provide feedback to interviewees with a feeling that their stories or experiences are meaningful and unique, which in turn can translate to higher quality information (Gideon, 2012). But respondents may not consistently answer the same question(s), because the interviewer can interchange the way of posing them (McNamara, 2009).

Among all three types of interviews, the standardized open-ended interview can be the most consistent. It relies on participants' willingness to respond to the questions in a structured order. In the interview, respondents will be asked carefully worded identical questions and are able to express their viewpoints and experiences to these specific questions (Turner III, 2010). Such interviews can be very long and in-depth and do rely on the researcher's previous knowledge (Gideon, 2012). So if the interviewer has not been conscious of interviewees' cultural differences, the respondents may refuse to answer specific questions with which they do not feel comfortable. Consequently, this will lead to the biased information and the validity of results can be questioned. Further, the interviewer holds the power and directs the conversation. That is, interviewees have to follow the direction and questions of the interviewer and have less freedom to engage with new topics.

Building on the semi-structured interviews with religious tourists, this study will employ grounded theory to categorize the interview contents. Grounded theory is widely used in many sociological studies (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). American sociologists Glasser and Strauss (1967) first developed grounded theory, and then they continually improved the theory. Grounded theory is primarily used to construct themes from data and deals with philosophical and theoretical dimensions of this approach (Connell & Lowe, 1997). But since Glasser and Strauss came from two different sociological schools: Columbia University positivism and Chicago school pragmatism and field research respectively, their versions of grounded theory later become different as well. As a result, grounded theory is now divided into two branches: Glasserian and Straussian versions of grounded theory (Mehmetoglu & Altinay, 2006). While Glasser focuses on dispassionate empiricism, rigorous codified methods and emergent discoveries, Strauss brings notions of human agency, emergent processes, social and subjective meanings, problem-solving practices, and the open-ended study of action to grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014). Further, according to Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba's (2011) study on research paradigms, Matteucci and Gnoth (2017) divided grounded theory into three main versions (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Characteristics of the different versions of grounded theory

	Objectivist GT	Post-positivist GT	Constructivist GT
Ontology	Realism	Realism	Realism
Epistemology	Positivist empiricism/ Objectivism	Pragmatism	Relativism
Methodological characteristics	-Researcher as a neutral observer -Value-free inquiry -Emergence -Data speak for themselves -Aims at the discovery of abstract generalizations -Answers why questions -Rigorous coding procedure drives the research -The number of cases studied make data objective -Conducting the literature review after the data analysis	-Reflexive researcher -Value-laden inquiry -Application of preconceived analytical framework to data -Aiming at the discovery of middle-range theories -Defining variation in the research findings -Conducting literature review before, during, and after the data analysis	-Reflexive researcher -Value-laden inquiry -Emergence from interactions -Aiming at the construction of middle-range theories -Generalizations are contingent, agentic, and conditional -Attempting to answer <i>what</i> and <i>how</i> questions -Defining variation in the research findings -Flexible analytical procedures -Conducting literature review before, during, and after the data analysis -Welcoming storytelling

Source : Matteucci & Gnoth. (2017). Elaborating on grounded theory in tourism research. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 65, 49-59.

Objectivist grounded theory emphasises the importance of process and rigorous coding procedure, which means that methodology should not be confined by any research paradigm (Glaser, 2002). Researchers need to work as a neutral observer. Further, Glaser's view is that researchers should avoid being influenced by past literature on the topic they study. In contrast, post-positivist grounded theory emphasises the importance of using a coding paradigm (Strauss & Cobin, 1990). The preconceived analytical model can help researchers to structure data and connect codes more systematically. Constructivist grounded theory suggests that research should be closely connected to large discourses and social context. So it is important for researchers to interact with the social context in the process of data production and data analysis. Further, researchers should rethink their positions and prior knowledge to better understand participants' meanings and actions.

As is the case with other disciplines, the theory is also useful to describe and explain tourism phenomena broadly and comprehensively (Jennings & Juneke, 2007; Matteucci & Gnoth, 2017). Grounded theory can help to create a theoretical model, conceptualize data with labels, and interpret relationships among individuals and groups in the fields of hospitality and tourism (Mehmetoglu & Altinay, 2006). Several facets of tourists' experiences have been studied through grounded theory (Hardy, 2005). For example, Kim, Eves, and Scarles (2009) have used grounded theory to study local food experiences in tourism destinations. Hardy (2005) developed a model of experience and interactions of visitors travelling to Thai World Heritage Sites. In addition, scholars have also adopted the approach to explain tourists' purchase behaviours (Papathanassis & Knolle, 2011) and the travel motivations of Chinese seniors (Hsu, Cai, & Wong, 2007).

In this thesis, grounded theory will be used to propose conceptual categories of commercial activities, and create a model to categorise the key factors of commercialization that affect religious tourists' attitude. Further, specific themes of religious tourists' spiritual values will also be elicited from the interview study.

3.3.3 Survey studies

Before adopting a survey study, clear research aims should be listed. Then the survey should be closely related to the research aims. Researchers should always keep one maxim in mind: the survey should be fit for purpose. The basic procedures that can be followed for a successful survey study include attention to questionnaire design, mode of data collection, sample selection, data collection, and data analysis (Gideon, 2012).

Questionnaire Design. Questionnaires are different from interviews. The questionnaires are self-report data collection instruments that can be distributed to a large number of participants in various locations (Johnson & Christensen, 2010). When designing a questionnaire, researchers should think about the type of question items (open or closed). The response format, the number and order of alternatives, the tone of the questions, and the data collection context (Schuman & Presser, 1981). More specially, there are seven steps to design a questionnaire according to the research objectives of any study (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Seven steps to design a survey questionnaire

Steps	Description
Step 1:	Define conceptual and construct variables according to the research objectives
Step 2:	Formulate preliminary survey items according to the above constructs
Step 3:	Examine preliminary questionnaire items for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevance to the main research topic Relevance to other questionnaire items Logical flow Avoid double-barreled questions Avoid double negative questions Avoid unnecessary repetitiveness Avoid “leading” or “loading” questions Avoid biased questions Use simple and direct language Items should be short, clear, and precise Determine what type of item will best examine the concept (e.t., an open-ended, close-ended/multiple-choice, or ranking question) Make sure all possible responses are included Use simple items to measure complex concepts Triangulate items to introduce complex concepts and ensure reliability
Step 4:	Run an empirical examination in a small representative study (pilot study)
Step 5:	Correct and rephrase items according to findings from previous stage
Step 6:	Write an introduction and instruction
Step 7:	Make any final adjustment and modification

Source: Gideon (2012). Handbook of survey methodology for the social sciences: Springer.

Mode of Data Collection. Once the questionnaire has been designed, the researcher should choose the mode to collect data. The common ways of data collection are face-to-face, telephone, mail, and the internet. Each mode has its advantages and disadvantages, and many researchers select a mixed of modes to maximise coverage and minimise costs (Dillman, Phelps, Tortora, Swift, Kohrell, Berck, & Messer, 2009).

Sample Selection. Ideally, the selection of research sample should use some form of random or probability sampling. For example, the researchers can choose simple random sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling, or random-digit dialling.

Data Collection. After the selection of the sample, the researcher should train interviewers to select right respondents for the study and to foster their cooperation. Meanwhile, all interviewers should follow general principles for the ethical conduct of survey research. The principles are: (1) respondents should provide willing and informed consent; (2) do no harm to participants; (3) minimize deception; (4) protect respondent confidentiality; (5) manage the issue of refusal conversions; and (6) employ incentives.

Data Analysis. Before undertaking data analysis, all invalid responses should be deleted; otherwise, the invalid data will have an influence on the precision of the results. Many ways are used to remove invalid questionnaires in a study. For example, the researcher can delete (1) those who have many unanswered questions; (2) those have same answer for the inverse questions; (3) those have same answer for all the questions; and (4) those who were not collected in a random way. Furthermore, the researcher can also make full use of professional software to determine which data are unusual, and therefore identify those containing errors or mistakes.

3.4 Data collection and analysis

3.4.1 Blogs collection

Before the fieldworks, four hundred and thirty eight travel blogs were collected from Manfengwo (Table 3.5). Mafengwo (<http://www.mafengwo.cn>) is one of the most popular online travel communities in China. Initially 1,202 travel blogs related to FGBMs were examined, but only 438 valid blogs (216 in Mount Emei, 80 in Mount Wutai, 94 in Mount Putuo and 48 in Mount Jiuhua) were kept for further research. The rejection of the invalid blogs was due to (1) entries with only photos and very few words of description; (2) blogs containing too much information on recommendations; (3) and those having no content related to the current research questions. These blogs were collected to examine tourists' attitudes towards different categories of commercial activities. The content of these blogs was analysed according to the procedures of netnography.

In the online community, there were more female tourists (61%) expressing their ideas in the online community. More than two thirds of bloggers were in their 20s and 30s, but only 4% of them are were over 40 years of age. Among these tourists, about 86% of them were young travellers, and could be labelled as backpackers. There were 10% who drove themselves, while very few participated in the tourist group. Most people travelled together with their partners, families or friends, and only 27% of them were alone. The majority of the tourists came from well-developed regions, such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong, while a few others were from local areas. Generally, they chose to visit religious sites on weekends or holidays, so the duration was no longer than 3 days.

Table 3.5 Demographic characteristics of participants in online community

Demographic	Items	Frequency (N=438)	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	171	39.04
	Female	267	60.96
Age	Younger than 20	39	8.90
	20s	229	52.28
	30s	93	21.23
	40s or above	16	3.65
	Missing	61	13.93
Year	Year 2011 and before	60	13.70
	Year 2012	152	34.7
	Year 2013	147	33.56
	2014 Jan. 1-Sept.30	79	18.04
Travel companion	Alone	117	26.71
	With friends	150	34.25
	With family	65	14.84
	Couple	93	21.23
	Missing	13	2.97
Duration	No more than 2 days	218	49.77
	3 days	147	33.56
	No less than 4 days	57	13.01
	Missing	16	3.65

Table 3.5 Demographic characteristics of participants in online community (Continued)

Demographic	Items	Frequency (N=438)	Percent (%)
Origin	Shanghai and around	104	23.74
	Guangzhou and around	40	9.13
	Beijing and around	89	20.32
	Chengdu and around	128	29.22
	Not specified	77	17.58
Travel group	Self-drivers	44	10.05
	Tourist group	19	4.34
	Backpackers and others	375	85.62

3.4.2 The first fieldwork

Following the blogs collection, two Buddhist mountains were selected as the first fieldwork sites. Fourteen interviews were conducted at Mount Emei and Mount Putuo (October 27 - November 6, 2014). Interviewees were asked to express their general feelings about emerging commercial activities at religious sites. Further, whether they could obtain different kinds of spiritual values were interviewed. These interviews were coded and then transferred into words. The interview analysis provided an general impression of commercial activities and tourists' spiritual values, which laid a solid foundation for further fieldworks.

For the first interviews with 14 religious tourists, it was noted that they came from different provinces (Table 3.6). The majority of the participants ranged in age from 18 to 55 years. Compared with female tourists, males were more willing to express their feelings about commercial activities. In addition, while the participants with secondary education tended to be in business for themselves, those with higher education levels were more likely to work in companies. The level of education and occupation appeared to be irrelevant to their degree of

Buddhism belief. But the greater their commitment to Buddhism, the more times they travelled to religious sites.

Table 3.6 Profiles of the first round of interviewees

Code	Gender	Age	Education	Occupation	Buddhism Belief	Religious Travelling	Origin
EI-1	Male	36-55	Secondary	Other	Weak	Few times	Hubei
EI-2	Female	18-35	Undergraduate	Company	Weak	Few times	Shandong
EI-3	Male	18-35	Secondary	Business	Weak	Few times	Sichuan
EI-4	Female	36-55	Secondary	Other	Strong	Many times	Zhejiang
EI-5	Male	18-35	Secondary	Business	Neutral	Many times	Sichuan
EI-6	Male	36-55	Undergraduate	Company	Strong	Many times	Beijing
EI-7	Male	18-35	Undergraduate	Company	Weak	Few times	Shandong
EI-8	Male	18-35	Junior College	Business	Strong	Few times	Sichuan
PI-9	Male	36-55	Secondary	Other	Strong	Many times	Liaoning
PI-10	Male	18-35	Undergraduate	Education	Strong	Many times	Henan
PI-11	Female	18-35	Postgraduate	Student	Strong	Many times	Zhejiang
PI-12	Male	36-55	Junior College	Business	Neutral	Few times	Hubei
PI-13	Male	18-35	Undergraduate	Company	Strong	Few times	Shanghai
PI-14	Male	36-55	Undergraduate	Company	Neutral	Many times	Zhejiang

3.4.3 The second fieldwork

Later, the second round of fieldwork were conducted at FGBMs. Both the content of interviews and surveys were designed based on the first fieldwork. The semi-structured interview included two parts: demographic information and open-ended questions. The open-ended questions focused on tourists' feelings about commercial activities and their perceived

categories of tourists' spiritual values. The survey included three parts: demographic information, tourists' marking on each item of commercial activities and spiritual values.

The researcher approached every 5th visitors he met in the main exit of the main site and explained his research to him/her. If declined, he approached the next 5th visitor. In total, 80 face to face tourist interviews and 800 questionnaires were obtained from the FGBMs in 2015. The fieldwork lasted for several months, from January to March, and May to August, 2015. Twenty interviews were conducted and 200 questionnaires collected for each mountain. Since most interviewees were reluctant to have their views recorded, the researcher noted down what they talked about in shorthand. The interviews, lasting from 10 to 30 minutes. The interviews were coded as MWI^{2nd}:1-20, MEI^{2nd}:1-20, MJI^{2nd}:1-20, and MPI^{2nd}:1-20. In terms of the surveys, 784 samples were kept for further analysis after deleting invalid ones. The percentage of valid surveys was 98%, which suggested a good data base for academic research. The following section provides basic information for all the participants from the interviews and the survey work.

For the second round of fieldwork, male tourists were more willing to participate in the interviews (Table 3.7). Most participants were young tourists less than 45 years old, and the majority of them had been married. Post high school education was common and many respondents worked in companies or ran their own business. The percentages of participants who had weak versus strong belief of Buddhism were similar, but 54% of them held a neutral attitude towards Buddhism. Short trips such as two day holidays or weekend travel was the usual visit time.

Table 3.7 Demographic characteristics of the second round of interviewees and survey participants

Demographic	Items	Interviewees		Survey Participants	
		Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
		(N=80)		(N=784)	
Gender	Male	46	57.50	438	55.9
	Female	34	42.50	334	42.6
	Missing	0	0	12	1.5
Marriage	Married	43	53.80	430	54.8
Status	Single	31	38.80	303	38.6
	Missing	6	7.40	51	6.6
Age	Younger than 18	3	3.80	47	6.0
	18-30	45	56.30	383	48.9
	31-45	27	33.80	236	30.1
	Above 45	5	6.30	118	15.0
Education	Under high school	18	22.50	163	20.8
	Junior colleges	16	20.00	174	22.2
	Undergraduates	34	42.50	287	36.6
	Graduate or above	12	12.00	85	10.8
	Missing	0	0	75	9.6
Occupation	Companies	25	31.30	216	27.6
	Government departments	10	12.50	65	8.3
	Private business	13	16.30	126	16.1
	Education or research	7	8.80	57	7.3
	Students	11	13.80	157	20.0
	Others	14	17.50	116	14.8
	Missing	0	0	47	6.0

Table 3.7 Demographic characteristics of the second round of interviewees and survey participants (Continued)

Demographic	Items	Interviewees		Survey Participants	
		Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
		(N=80)		(N=784)	
Buddhism	Very weak	17	21.30	138	17.6
Belief	Neutral	43	53.80	383	48.9
	Very strong	18	22.80	164	20.9
	Missing	2	2.50	99	12.6
Frequencies	Very few	46	57.50	410	52.3
of Religious	Neutral	15	18.80	191	24.4
Travel	Very often	19	23.80	155	19.8
	Missing	0	0	28	3.5
Living or	Shanghai and around	35	35.00	325	41.5
Working	Beijing and around	25	25.00	143	18.2
Places	Sichuan and around	20	20.00	232	29.6
	Missing	0	0	84	10.7

3.4.4 The third fieldwork

The third and supplementary round of fieldwork was needed. Because there was no enough information in the last two fieldworks, more interviews should be conducted at FGBMs to better understand the linkage between commercial activities and tourists' spiritual values well. Totally 60 interviews were conducted in the June and July of 2016. They were coded as MWI^{3rd}: 1-15, MEI^{3rd}: 1-15, MJT^{3rd}: 1-15, and MPI^{3rd}: 1-15. The researcher was aware of religious tourists' basic information from earlier interviews, so only necessary information was included on this occasion (Table 3.8). Again, the data revealed that more male tourists were willing to participate in the project, and the majority of them were under 40 years old.

Additionally, tourists were required to express their level of Buddhist beliefs. The level of Buddhist beliefs were divided into five categories, from not at all to very strong. The results found that more than half of participants held a neutral attitude towards Buddhist beliefs, while around 22% of them were loyal believers.

Table 3.8 Demographic characteristics of interviewees for the third round of interviews

Demographic	Items	Frequency (N=60)	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	40	66.7
	Female	20	33.3
Age	Under 18 years old	2	3.4
	18-30 years old	24	40.7
	31-40 years old	14	23.7
	41-60 years old	15	25.4
	Above 60 years old	4	6.8
Buddhist belief	Very strong	3	5.0
	Strong	10	16.7
	Neutral	32	53.3
	A little	3	5.0
	Not at all	12	20.0

3.4.5 Data used for each study

In this thesis, there were three studies. The collected data were used for different studies (Figure 3.11). In study 1, blog analysis through the procedures of netnography provided an overview of tourists' impressions of the commercial activities at the Four Great Buddhist Mountains. Meanwhile, the second round of interviews and surveys were analyzed to examine tourists' immediate attitudes towards religious commercialization. In study 2, the second round of interviews and surveys were also adopted to understand tourists' spiritual

values. The second and third rounds of interviews were employed in study 3 to link tourists' perceived commercialization and spiritual values.

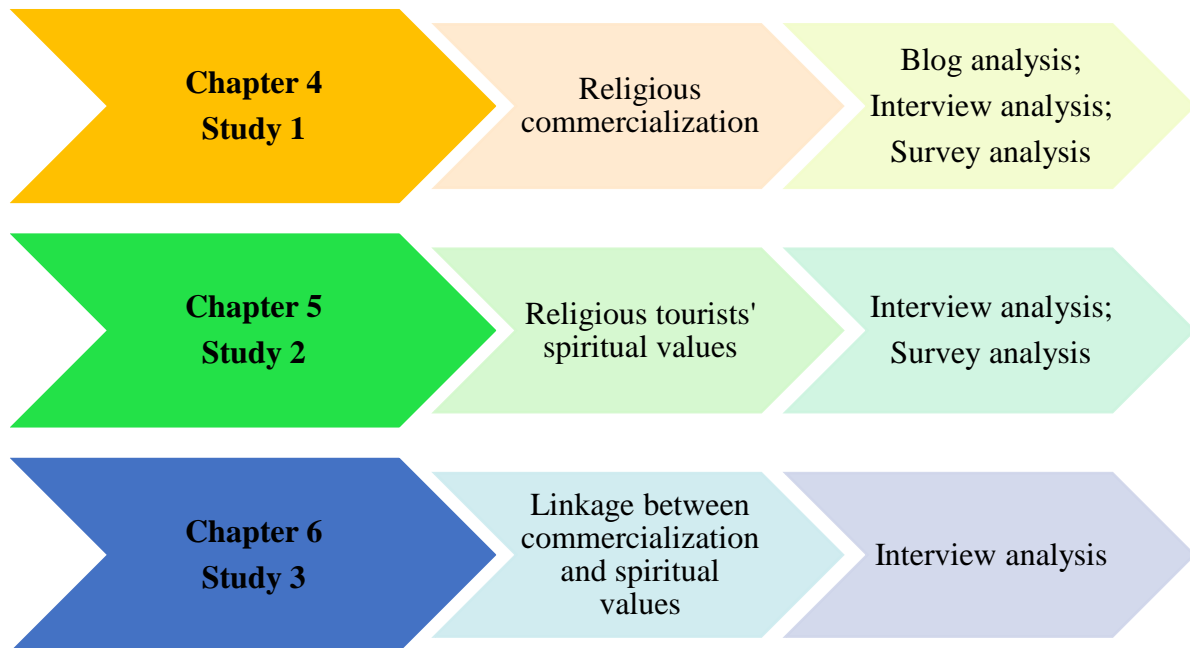


Figure 3.111 Framework of studies and relevant data analyses

3.5 Synthesis of the chapter

This chapter has presented the research context, a selection of methods, and data collection and analysis in a systematic way. Four Great Buddhist Mountains were described as the leading Buddhist sites in China, and they are located in different economic and cultural areas. Meanwhile, all of them have long histories and large tourist markets. Thus it is suitable and representative to select the Four Great Buddhist Mountains (FGBMs) as research sites. Specific research methods have been chosen to collect data. Data were collected through three rounds of fieldworks. Overall, this chapter lays a solid foundation for subsequent data analysis and discussion. In the following three chapters, the presentation will focus in turn on religious commercialization, tourists' spiritual values, and their relationship.

Chapter 4. COMMERCIALIZATION OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM

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4.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter aims to assess the level of commercialization at the FGBMs. Additionally, tourists' attitudes towards different types of commercial activities will be evaluated. Initially, this chapter describes the main locations of commercial centres at the Buddhist sites. Secondly, the linked research methods, including blogs, interviews and surveys to collect data, will be discussed. The chapter will review the online travel blogs about commercial behaviours from Mafengwo, and report the interviews conducted and the questionnaires collected in the centre of the commercial areas. Thirdly, results of the analysis from both qualitative and quantitative tools will be outlined. Finally, the results will be discussed systematically and then this study will build a model about religious commercialization.

4.2 Locations of commercial sites

From the 1990s, China has spared no effort to develop its national economy. On the one hand, the rapid growth of the economy has significantly improved the quality of public life. Nevertheless, the continuing pursuit of material needs has arguably resulted in the over commercialization of a variety of cultural places (Huang, 2011; Ming & Zhang, 2008). Religious sites are also influenced by the development of the tourism economy. Now there are many kinds of commercial places, like restaurants, hotels, stores, roadside stalls and so on, surrounding Buddhist temples.

Mount Wutai has five terraces and its scenic area is around 3 thousand square kilometres. The majority of commercial places are located in Taihuai Town, the middle of the scenic area (Figure 4.1). Dongtaigo Village, closest to the tourist transport centre, is another commercial centre. In addition to the above business areas, there are some food and tourism product stalls along the roadside, and temples also provide basic food and accommodation for both pilgrims and secular tourists (Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3).

At Mount Wutai, the business atmosphere is very strong (Xiang, 2007). Xiang (2007) claims that doing business in the core area of this mountain is the main negative factor that slowed down its progress in the application for world cultural heritage. Further, the success of the application appears to have increased the number of commercial activities. The price of the entrance ticket is now much higher than before, and many more tourism products and services are provided for tourists.



Figure 4.1 Locations of commercial centres at Mount Wutai

Source: Adapted from Baidu picture.



Figure 4.2 Restaurants at Mount Wutai

Source: Photos taken by the author and from Mafengwo.



Figure 4.3 Shops at Mount Wutai

Source: Photos taken by the author and from Mafengwo.

Mount Emei is a site of both natural and cultural world heritage. It went public as a united corporation in 1997. There are also many kinds of hotels, springs, shopping centres, stores and recreational facilities at this site. But unlike Mount Wutai, commercial places are scattered across the whole mountain (Figure 4.4 and Figure 4.5). From the bottom to the summit of this mountain, there are several main business areas, such as the tourist transport centre, Qinyin Pavilion, Wannian temple station, Leidongping station and the Golden Summit. In addition, along the roadside up to the top of this mountain, there are many food and tourism product stalls and strolling vendors.

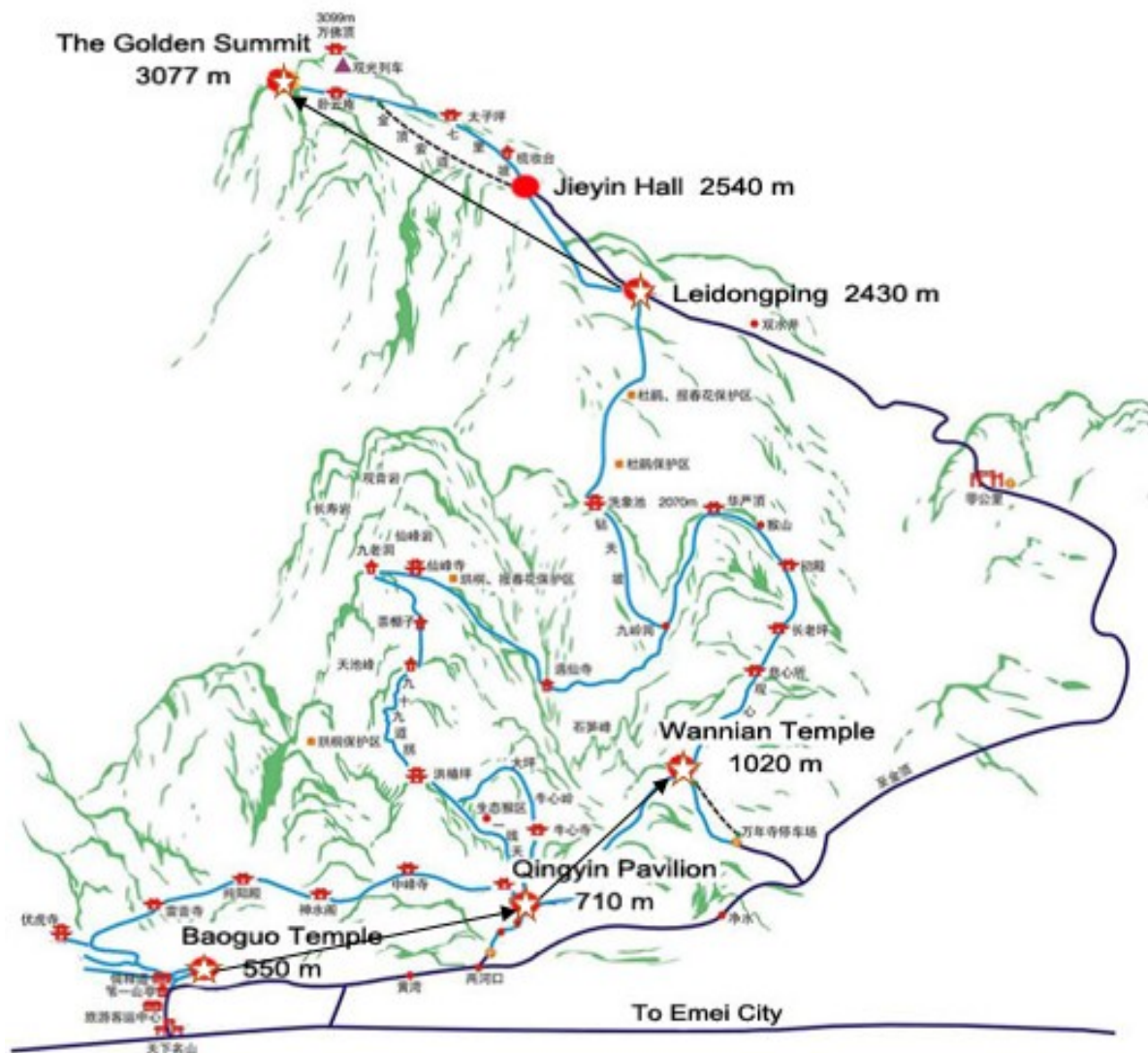


Figure 4.4 Locations of commercial centres at Mount Emei

Source: Adapted from Baidu picture.



Figure 4.5 Hotels, bars and restaurants at Mount Emei

Source: Photos taken by the author and from Mafengwo.

Mount Jiuhua is a state 5A tourist attraction. The commercial activities are concentrated only in one area, Jiuhuajie (Figure 4.6 and Figure 4.7). This area, located at the bottom of the mountain, is close to both the scenic entrance and the tourist transport centre. There are two main business streets in this area and they intersect. Hotels, restaurants, tourism product shops and other commercial services are supplied by local people and external investors. Although temples provide accommodation and food for tourists, there are very few family hotels or stalls along the road up to the top of this mountain.

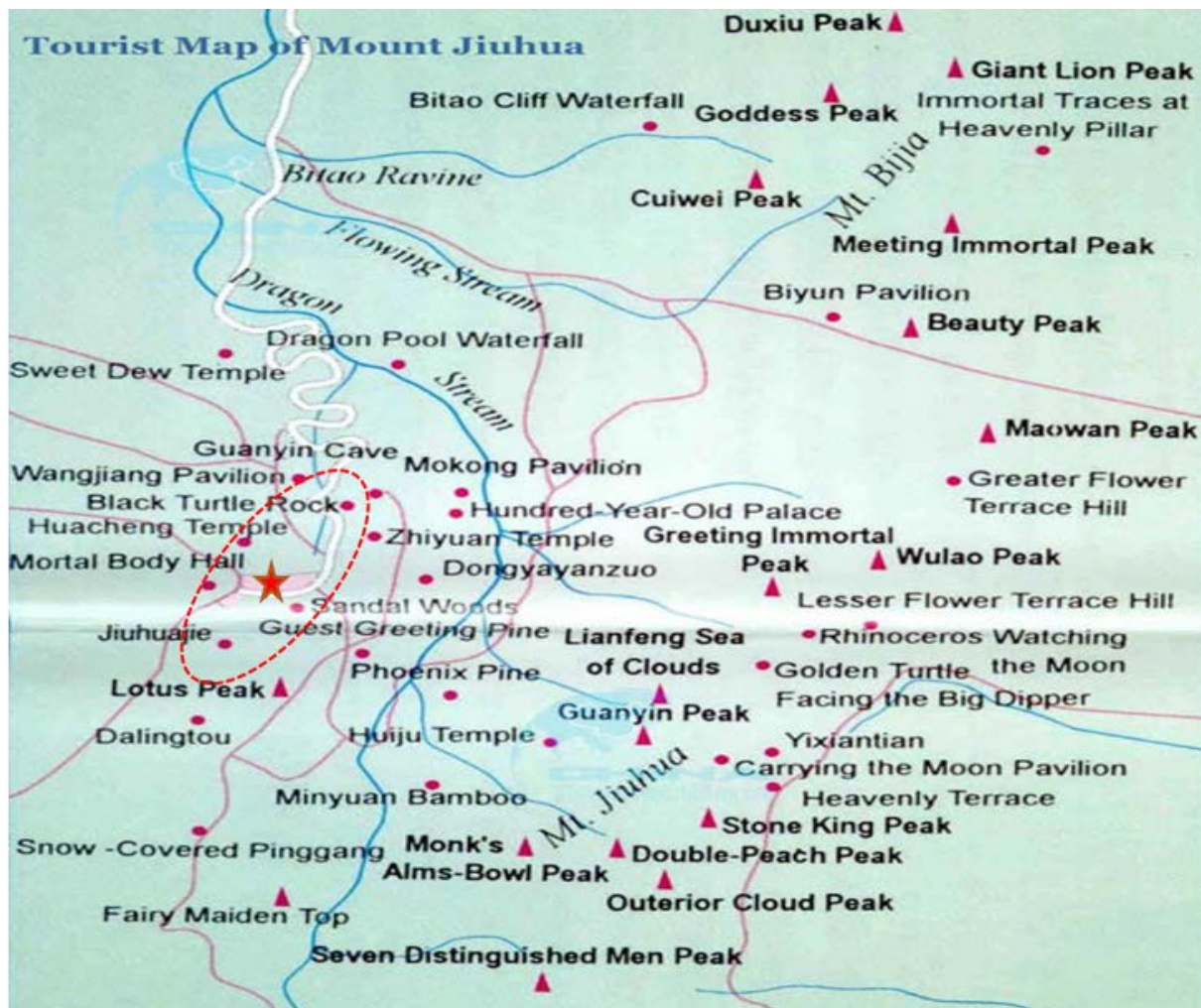


Figure 4.6 Locations of commercial centres at Mount Jiuhua

Source: Adapted from Baidu picture.



Figure 4.7 Hotels and restaurants at Mount Emei

Source: Photos taken by the author and from Mafengwo.

Compared with other three mountains, Mount Putuo is quite different. It is on a small island and the altitude of this mountain is very low. Mount Putuo is a town with one community and four villages, and they are well connected by public bus (Figure 4.8). Among them, Longwan and Qianshan village are in the south of the island, while Zhongshan and Hexing villages are in the middle and north respectively.



Figure 4.8 Locations of commercial centres at Mount Putuo

Source: Adapted from Baidu picture.

For each village or community, accommodation, food and tourism products are supplied by local people and external investors (Figure 4.9 and Figure 4.10). Commercial places are mainly operated in the northern part of this island, because the scenic entrance and the tourist

transport facilities are in this area. Along the sightseeing bus route from the north to middle of this island, there are multiple shops and restaurants.



Figure 4.9 Recreational places at Mount Putuo

Source: Photos taken by the author and from Mafengwo.



Figure 4.10 Hotels and shops at Mount Putuo

Source: Photos taken by the author and from Mafengwo.

4.3 Research methods

Blogs are one important information source and have been widely used in social science research. For this research, travel blog analysis can provide an overview of tourists' impressions of the commercial activities at the Four Great Buddhist Mountains. However, when tourists start to write down the blogs, it is possible that errors creep into their recollections. Therefore, further on-site interviews and surveys were collected to obtain more data focusing on tourists' immediate attitudes towards religious commercialization.

In this study, the researcher has designed a survey to measure the tourists' perceived number and price of commercial goods. Commercial activities were divided into six categories: entrance tickets, accommodation, food and drinks, shopping, entertainment activities, and transportation. In addition to the number and price of tourism products, some behaviours were also thought to be commercial. For example, cheating of tourists, "forced" shopping or compulsory donations at Buddhist sites fall into this categories. Interviews were needed to obtain information about such practices and the diverse commercial phenomena for this research.

In summary, this chapter adopts blog, survey and interview approaches to understand commercial activities at Buddhist sites. The combined methods will provide objective data and subjective views of the religious commercialization.

4.4 Results

4.4.1 Results from the interviews

The interview data were coded through three procedures: (1) by analysing the contents of these interviews, the researcher developed key items for categories. The key items were price and number of different commercial activities, and service quality and attitude. (2) Building on the key items of commercial activities, 22 sub-categories were extracted. (3) According to the internal linkage of the sub-categories, seven core categories of commercial activities were finally identified. The categories of importance were entrance tickets, food and accommodation, transportation, shopping, and staff services (Table 4.1). These categories could be further divided into three domains: Entry expenses, living expenses, and Extra expenses (Figure 4.11)



Figure 4.11 Three domains of tourists' expenses in religious places

Table 4.1 Fundamental categories found by interview data coding

Category	Sub-category	Key items
Entrance ticket	Religious scenic attractions	Price
	Religious temples	Number Price
Food & drinks	Hotels	Number Price
	Restaurants	Number Price
	Food stalls	Number Price
	(Tea, Coffee, etc.) bars	Number Price
Accommodation	Hotels	Number Price
	Family stay	Number Price
	Hostels	Number Price
Shopping	Supermarkets	Number Price
	Shops	Number Price
	Road stalls	Number Price
	Strolling sellers	Number Price

Table 4.1 Fundamental categories found by interview data coding (Continued)

Category	Sub-category	Key items
Transport	Tour buses	Number
		Price
	Taxis	Number
		Price
	Cable cars	Number
		Price
	Private vehicles	Number
		Price
Entertainment	Entertainment programs	Price
		Number
Staff services	Scenic staff	Service quality
		Service attitude
	Businessmen	Service quality
		Service attitude
	Religious staff	Service quality
		Service attitude
	Local residents	Attitude

Overall, the tourists interviewed in the first research phase held negative attitudes towards high levels of consumption and low quality of services. Examples from the interviewees were as follows:

In my view, the price of tourism goods is much higher than their real values. Besides, to be honest I really hate the bad services and “forced” consumption behaviours at this site (MPI^{2nd}-5).

Although I like the unique Buddhism culture, there are too many impurities at this site. Now I cannot find that kind of wonderful feeling because of strong atmosphere of commercialization (MWF^{2nd}-8).

I have found many problems existing in this scenic area. Tourists don't wait in line and rubbish is threw everywhere. In addition, there are no standards for price of tourism goods and service (MEI^{2nd}-10).

On arriving at the Buddhist site, tourists paid considerable attention to the price and number of entrance tickets. Because FGBMs are recognised as state 5A tourist attractions, their price of entrance tickets had been raised for several times, especially at peak tourism time.

Although the price of mountain entrance ticket was high, it's still not a package ticket. That is, tourists had to pay extra money for worshipping in a few well-known temples after entering the scenic area. So tourists felt confused and even uncomfortable about the way buying entrance tickets. Examples from the interviewees established these points:

The problem is that we have to pay extra money for entering in temples inside the mountain. Although price of temple entrance ticket is not too expensive, we have spent amounts of money, because several tickets are needed for the whole scenic site (MPI^{2nd}-11).

We have bought entrance ticket for the whole scenic site, but we should also buy extra tickets for inside temples. The price of entrance ticket is RMB 160 Yuan, and it's very expensive. Since we have entered the scenic site, we prefer to visit every famous temple with extra tickets. In this case, we have a sense of being forced to buy these extra tickets which makes me feel very bad. As we all know, most people are more willing to donate some money casually (MPI^{2nd}-12).

Inside the scenic area, tourists usually stayed for two or three nights. In their opinions, food and drinks of poor quality were quite expensive, the price of which was several times higher than normal. But if the cost of transportation and labour force were taken into consideration, some tourists did think that it was acceptable to increase the price of daily goods in these rural areas. Examples from the interviewees outlined these issues:

Different from natural scenic sites, I thought Buddhist mountain should be sacred. But now I feel disappointed, because the atmosphere of commercialization is too strong. I cannot imagine the high price of food and drinks at this site (MWI^{2nd}-11).

The expense at this site is quite high. For example, one piece of maize cob bought for our children is RMB 10 Yuan, but its normal price is only RMB 2 or 3 Yuan. In addition, mineral water and instant noodles are quite expensive as well. This is not reasonable... If government or local community can explain what has led to the high price of food and beverage in detail, we can accept the reality. Otherwise, we cannot accept the high price of them (MPI^{2nd}-13).

In terms of shopping, there were many bogus tourism products without a clear price. While tourists with a local accent could purchase genuine products at a reasonable price, others from distant areas could not purchase the same products of high quality at a similar low price. Sometimes tour guides cooperated with businessmen to encourage or even force tourists to purchase local products. Examples from the interviewees reinforced the points:

Purchasing joss sticks and candles at a high price is totally a commercial behaviour. These religious products should be sold to pilgrims and secular tourists according to cost... Besides,

there are many local products sold along the road up to top of the mountain. However, we never buy them, because we have bought some bogus products from other tourist attractions. I think most products here are not real and we will not buy them again (MEI^{2nd}-6).

I have been to some temples, in which free joss sticks are available for everyone. But at this site, to some degree we're forced to buy joss sticks, because scenic staff tell us that only worshipping with burning joss sticks can show our loyalty and devotion to Buddha. This kind of behaviour makes me disgusted (MPI^{2nd}-3). Sometimes, we're not allowed to bring our own joss sticks and candles in temples, and we have to buy them inside at higher prices (MWI^{2nd}-4).

On the way up to the Golden Summit, there are many ice cubes on the stone steps. I doubt these ice cubes are thrown on the steps by nearby businessmen on purpose. They want tourists to buy their safety equipment, like crampons and skates (MEI^{2nd}-4).

As for the commercialization of transportation, tourists' attitudes varied considerably at each mountain. At Mount Putuo and Mount Emei, tourist buses or ferries were provided with clear and fixed prices. But for Mount Jiuhua and Mount Wutai, there were more private cars with flexible prices and routine operated by local people. Tourists felt the commercial forces when private drivers asked for higher transport fees and recommended them to purchase joss sticks, candles or souvenirs in particular shops. For example,

It's unreasonable to pay so much money on the way to scenic area. The driver has taken us to buy joss sticks, candles and prayer beads in shops. Actually, I'm not satisfied with these activities, and I know the driver can get commission from our shopping (MJI^{2nd}-2).

In addition to drivers of private cars, many scenic service staff, including tour guides, business owners and even monks, were likely to recommend tourists to consume in various ways. In the process of consumption, cheating behaviours, like a packed menu, price gouging and short weights, had negative impacts on tourists' feelings. For example,

There are many family hotels and restaurants in local communities. The family members will stand on the main road and persuade tourists to live there or have meals in their hotels. Sometimes, they disguise themselves as tour guides and try to talk with tourists, and then introduce their hotels or restaurants to tourists (MPI^{2nd}-11).

I also met some people dressed in scenic working clothes or frocks, and they "acted" as tour guides and later asked for donations. On the way up to the mountain, I have been troubled several times. I was very annoyed. What's worse, in some temples, monks were standing on both sides of the gate and forced tourists to donate (MJF^{2nd}-13).

Therefore, based on description of the interviewees, this study coded commercial behaviours as seven categories. Tourists thought that reasonable and standard price of tourism goods should be set, and that it is important to improve staff services and regulate their behaviours.

This section of the study has mainly introduced tourists' general feelings towards commercial activities at Buddhist sites in a subjective way. The following two sections help to measure tourists' perceived level of commercialization at FGBMs more objectively.

4.4.2 Results from the questionnaires

Tourists were asked to score their perceived number and their views for price of different commercial categories in the survey (Figure 4.12). Due to the difficulty of evaluating tourists' perception on the number and price of staff service, only six categories were measured in this section.

Generally, the results showed that except for entertainment activities, tourists' perceived number and price of other commercial categories were all higher than the average level of three. The results suggested that tourists felt a certain degree of religious commercialization. But these Buddhist sites appeared to be not over-commercialized, because all mean scores were much lower than the highest level of five. Among all commercial categories, the majority of tourists responded that there were too many shopping options, such as many stores, street stalls, and mobile pedlars. For most respondents, both entrance tickets and tourism products were quite expensive. As for the entertainment, there were not too many facilities and services provided for tourists, because Buddhist sites were mainly for worshipping and sightseeing. So for these sites, most tourists' perceived the number and price of entertainment services as at or under the average level. But tourists' feelings on the other categories of commercialization differed at each site.

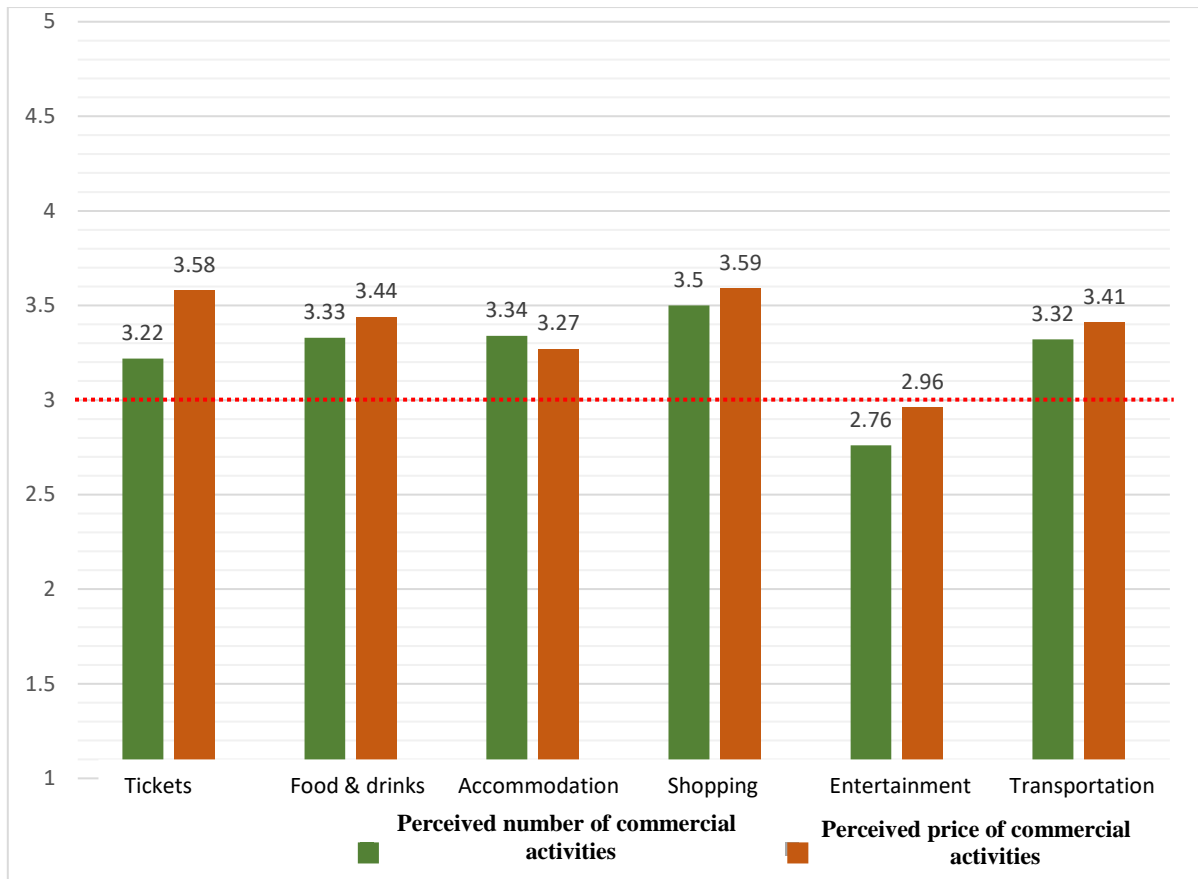


Figure 4.12 Tourists' perceived number and price of different commercial categories (N=784)

At Mount Wutai (Figure 4.13), the most commercial categories were thought to be entrance tickets and tourism products. By way of contrast, tourists perceived a lower level of commercialization for entertainment and transport. In terms of food, drinks and accommodation, the majority of tourists could accept their numbers and prices.

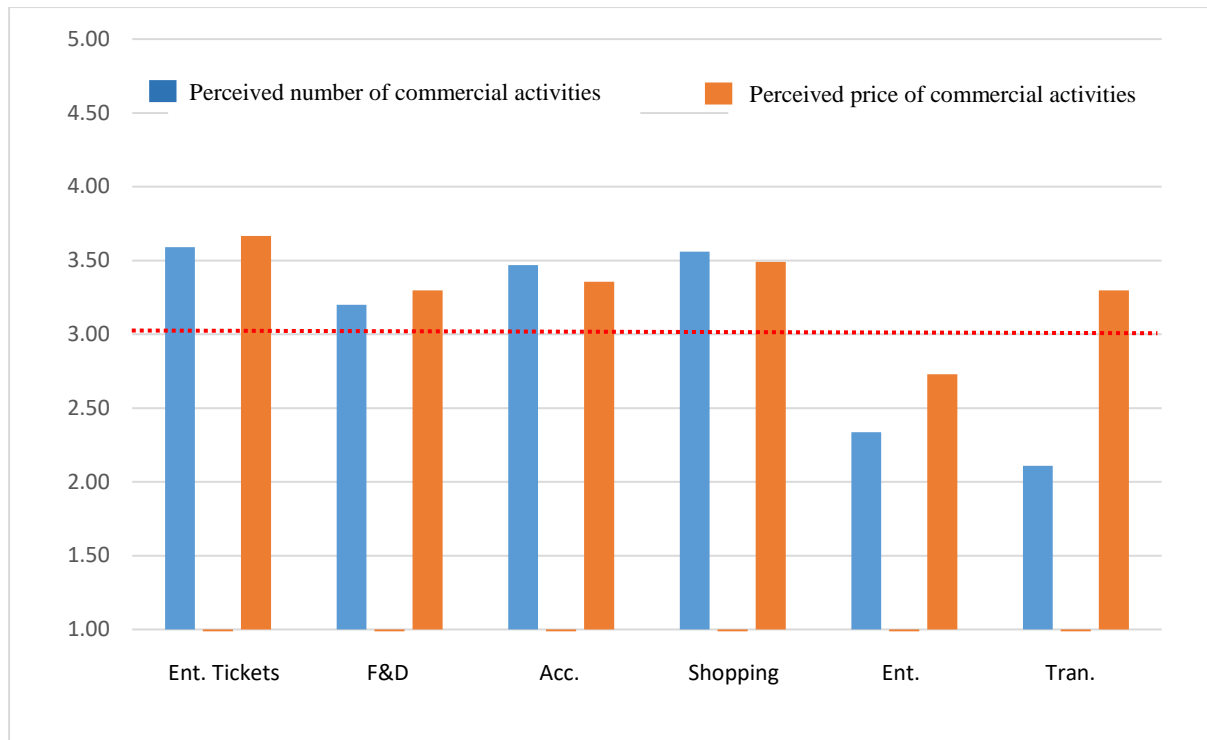


Figure 4.13 Tourists' perceived number and price of different commercial categories at Mount Wutai

(N=784)

The perceived level of commercialization was the highest for Mount Emei (Figure 4.14).

Tourists had to pay more for extra tickets with unreasonable prices in the scenic area.

Furthermore, they tended not to accept the high expenses for food, drinks, tourism products, and transportation. Unlike the other three Buddhist mountains, some entertainment programs, like spas, skiing, and taking mini-train, were also provided for tourists. So Mount Emei had some characteristics of a leisure and recreational destination rather than a religious place.

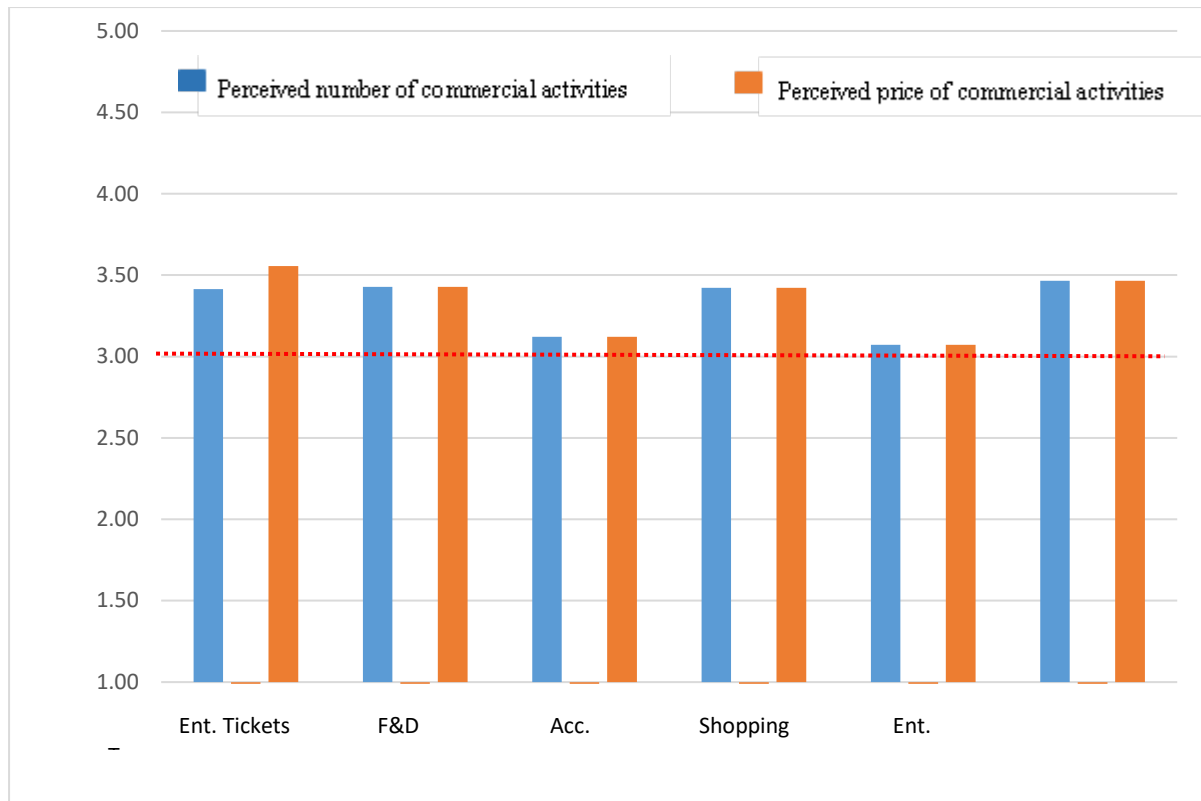


Figure 4.14 Tourists' perceived number and price of different commercial categories at Mount Emei

(N=784)

At Mount Jiuhua (Figure 4.15), there were very few temples which required paying extra tickets after entering the scenic area. But tourists thought entrance tickets for the whole scenic site were too expensive. While tourists thought too many tourism products with high prices were supplied, they appeared to accept the number and price of food, drinks, accommodation and transport.

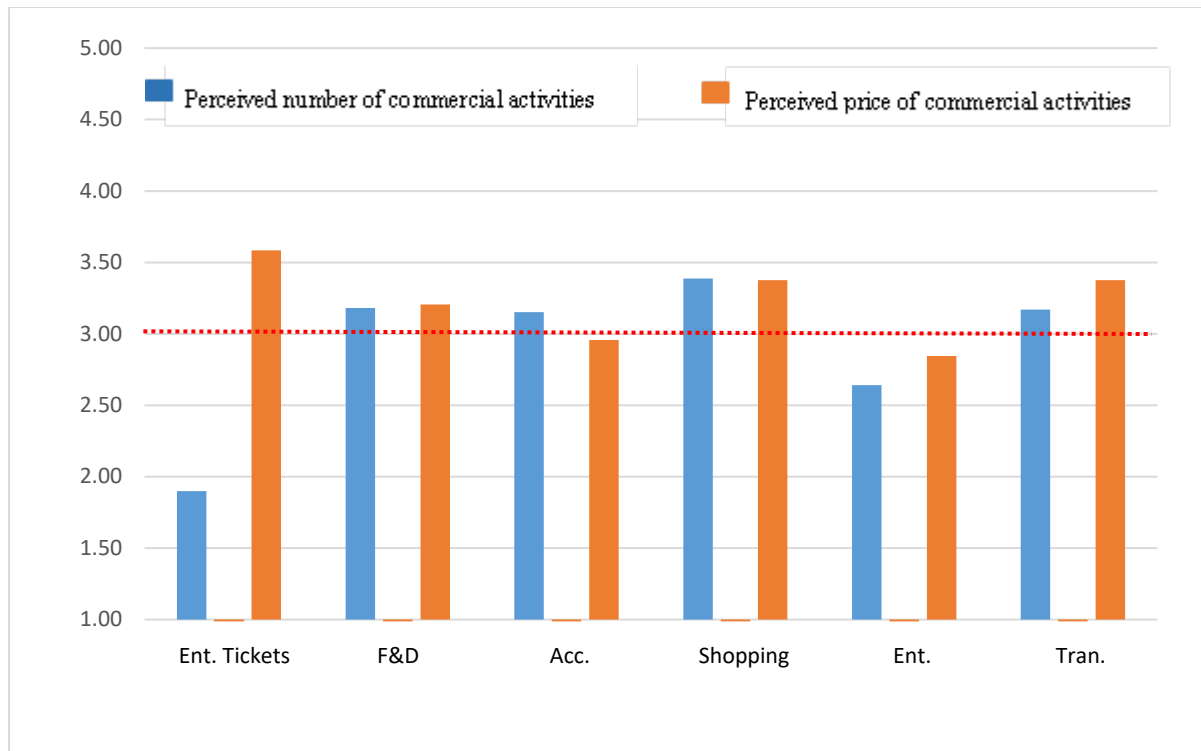


Figure 4.15 Tourists' perceived number and price of different commercial categories at Mount Jiuhua

(N=784)

At Mount Putuo (Figure 4.16), entrance tickets, entertainment, and transport were not a significant problem for tourists. In their perceptions, they needed to spend much more money on food, drinks, accommodation and shopping. Relatively, the level of commercialization on Mount Putuo and Mount Jiuhua were lower than Mount Emei and Wutai.

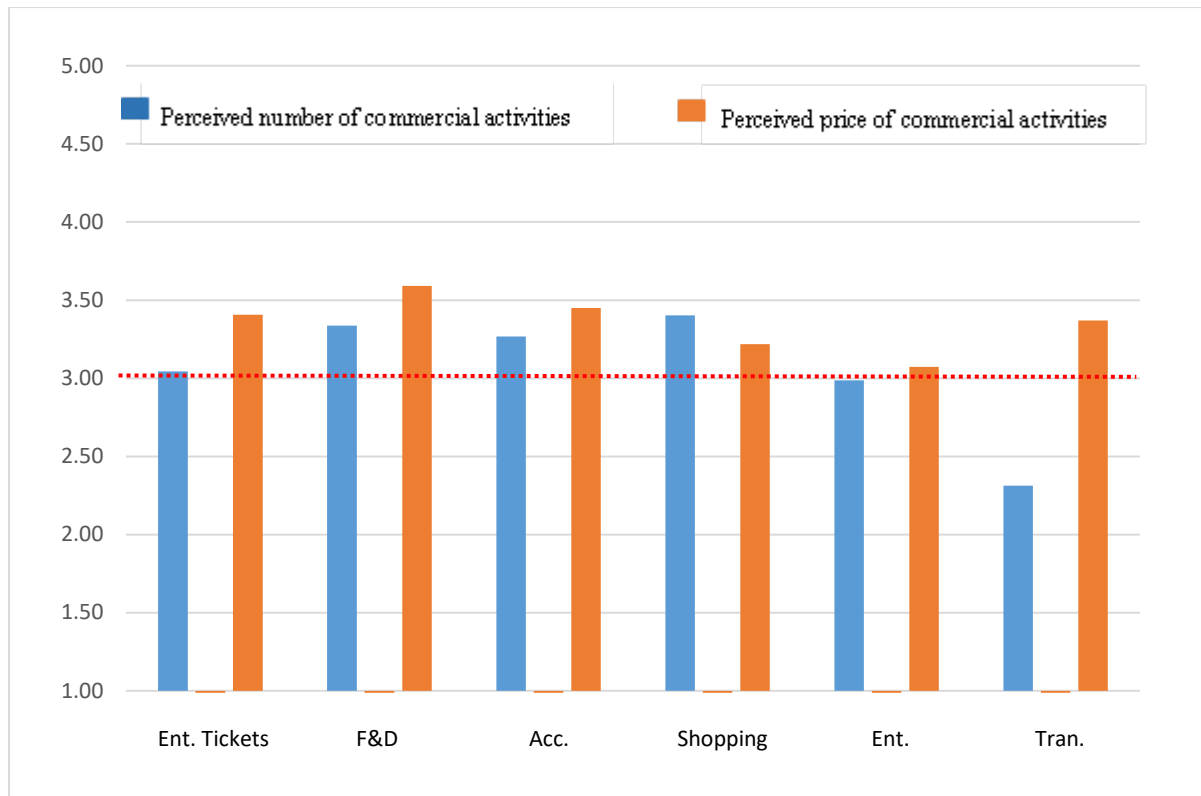


Figure 4.16 Tourists' perceived number and price of different commercial categories at Mount Putuo

(N=784)

4.4.3 Results from the blogs

Based on the categories coded from the interview analysis, the researcher analysed tourists' comments towards commercialization of FGBMs from 438 blogs. To ensure the validity of this study, one research assistant helped to check the data coding for 44 blogs (about 10% of the total sample). The consistency was 91%, which suggested that validity of the blog data coding was satisfactory.

Similar to the results of the survey, the findings of blog analysis also showed that a certain degree of commercialization existed at the FGBMs (Table 4.2). While more than 1,500 negative comments were associated with different kinds of commercial behaviours, only 358 comments were positive. Meanwhile, Mount Emei was thought to be the most commercial

mountain followed by Mount Wutai and Mount Putuo. At Mount Emei, there were 820 negative comments on commercial activities. The number of negative comments were three times more than that of positive comments. But at Mount Jiuhua, the number of negative comments was almost the same as the number of positive ones.

In terms of commercial categories, the results showed that tourists had the most negative comments on food and drinks (98%), followed by accommodation (68%) and shopping (56%). Everyone travelling to these places had to spend on daily consumption. Thus there were a number of restaurants, food stalls and family hotels built along the way up to the mountain top. Temples have also started to supply paid food and beds for tourists instead of causal donations as in the past. Although there were the most negative comments on food, drinks and accommodation, a few tourists were still satisfied with their price and quality. At Mount Putuo, the highest percentage of tourists held negative attitudes towards food and drinks followed by Mount Emei. But there were many more negative comments on accommodation and shopping about Mount Emei than for other three mountains.

The majority of the comments were neutral for the transport and entrance tickets. For the entrance tickets, the percentages of tourists who thought they were too commercial at Mount Wutai and Mount Putuo were nearly two times higher than Mount Emei and Mount Jiuhua. Except for Mount Wutai, transport and staff services did not appear to be a serious problem. As noted earlier, Wutai got its name from the five highest mountains standing in the centre of this area, because the meaning of “Wu” was five, and that of “Tai” was platform. So tourists had to spend much time on buses or private cars travelling to these separate platforms. The perceived unreasonable prices of private cars and lack of competition badly affected tourists’ perception at Mount Wutai. Comments on entertainment activities were the fewest, because

most tourists were motivated by religious reasons. Actually, except for Mount Emei, there were very few entertainment places on the mountains.

Table 4.2 Tourist attitude toward various commercial activities

		Mount Emei (216)	Mount Wutai (80)	Mount Putuo (94)	Mount Jiuhua (48)	Total (438)
E.T.	Negative	39 (18%)	30 (38%)	31 (33%)	8 (17%)	108 (25%)
	Positive	5 (2%)	2 (3%)	2 (2%)	0	9 (2%)
	Neutral	116 (54%)	46 (58%)	111 (118%)	27 (56%)	300 (68%)
F&D	Negative	228 (106%)	54 (68%)	114 (121%)	32 (67%)	428 (98%)
	Positive	81 (38%)	16 (20%)	37 (39%)	13 (27%)	147 (34%)
	Neutral	113 (52%)	26 (33%)	59 (63%)	19 (40%)	217 (50%)
Acc.	Negative	211 (98%)	21 (26%)	55 (59%)	11 (23%)	298 (68%)
	Positive	80 (37%)	22 (28%)	13 (14%)	11 (23%)	126 (29%)
	Neutral	112 (52%)	34 (43%)	22 (23%)	22 (46%)	190 (43%)
Shop.	Negative	169 (78%)	29 (36%)	32 (34%)	16 (33%)	246 (56%)
	Positive	21 (10%)	1 (1%)	5 (5%)	2 (4%)	29 (7%)
	Neutral	63 (29%)	2 (3%)	16 (17%)	6 (13%)	87 (20%)
Tran.	Negative	109 (50%)	65 (81%)	27 (29%)	23 (48%)	224 (51%)
	Positive	12 (6%)	13 (16%)	2 (2%)	56 (117%)	29 (7%)
	Neutral	218 (101%)	56 (70%)	134 (143%)	2 (4%)	464 (106%)
S.S.	Negative	51 (24%)	68 (85%)	45 (48%)	29 (60%)	193 (44%)
	Positive	2 (1%)	3 (4%)	1 (1%)	19 (40%)	13 (3%)
	Neutral	4 (2%)	5 (6%)	4 (4%)	2 (4%)	15 (3%)

Note: E.T. = entrance ticket; F&B = food & drinks; Acc. = accommodation; Shop. = shopping; Tran. = Transportation; S.S. = staff service; Ent. = entertainment.

Table 4.2 Tourist attitude toward various commercial activities (Continued)

		Mount	Mount	Mount	Mount	Total
		Emei (216)	Wutai (80)	Putuo (94)	Jiuhua (48)	(438)
Ent.	Negative	13 (6%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	0	15 (3%)
	Positive	3 (1%)	2 (3%)	0	0	5 (1%)
	Neutral	7 (3%)	1 (1%)	2 (2%)	0	10 (2%)
Total	Negative	820(380%)	268(335%)	305(325%)	119(248%)	1512(345%)
	Positive	204(95%)	59(75%)	60(63%)	101(211%)	358(83%)
	Neutral	633(293%)	170(214%)	348(370%)	78(163%)	1283(292%)

Note: E.T. = entrance ticket; F&B = food & drinks; Acc. = accommodation; Shop. = shopping; Tran. = Transportation; S.S. = staff service; Ent. = entertainment.

Although the kinds of commercial activities existing on these mountains were broadly similar, the level of commercialization for each category was different. Therefore, according to the number of comments on each category and relevant sample size (Table 4-4), the percentage of negative comments of each sample was calculated and then they were ranked as follows (Figure 4.17).

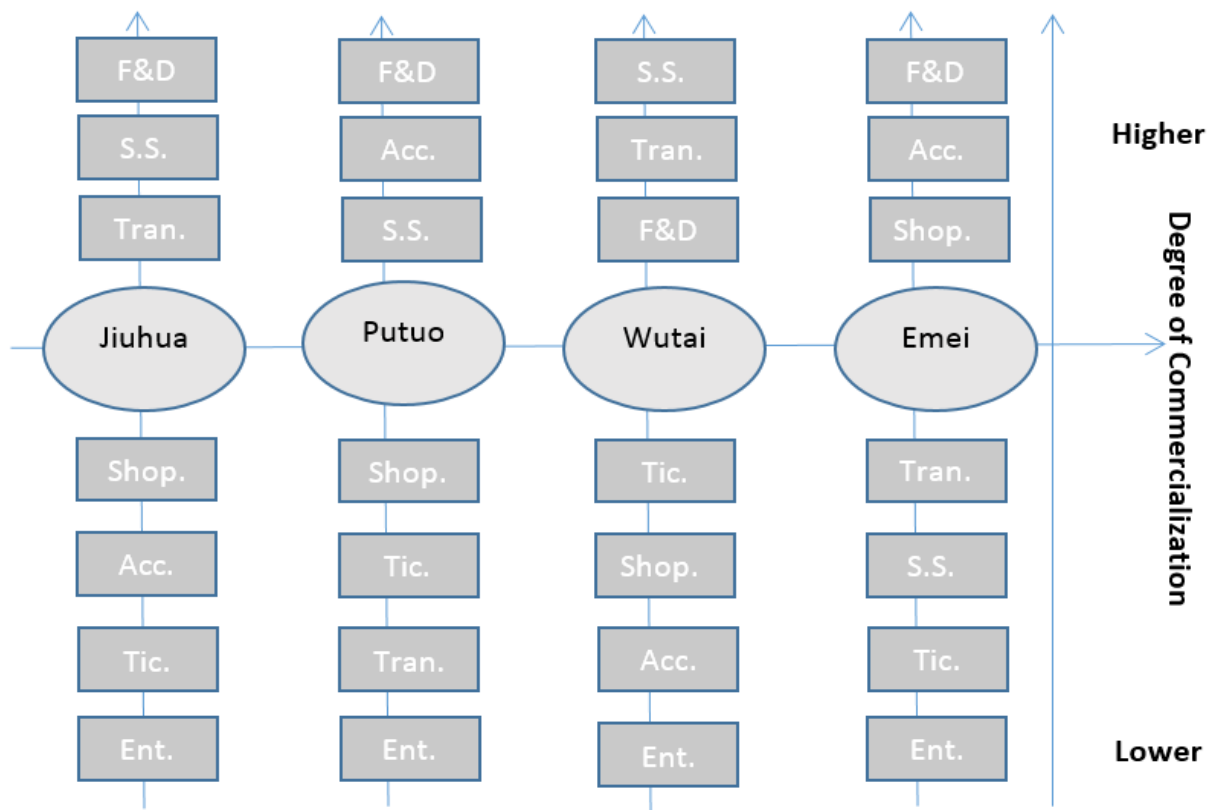


Figure 4.17 Key categories of commercialization at Four Great Buddhist Mountains

Note: E.T. = entrance ticket; F&D = food & drinks; Acc. = accommodation; Shop. = shopping; Tran. = Transportation; S.S. = staff service; Ent. = entertainment.

4.5 Discussion

Through comprehensive data analysis, a conceptual model focusing on categories of commercialization was built (Figure 4.18). Seven key commercial categories were ranked based on the interview, survey and blog study. These rankings reflected different levels of commercialization for each category at FGBMs respectively.

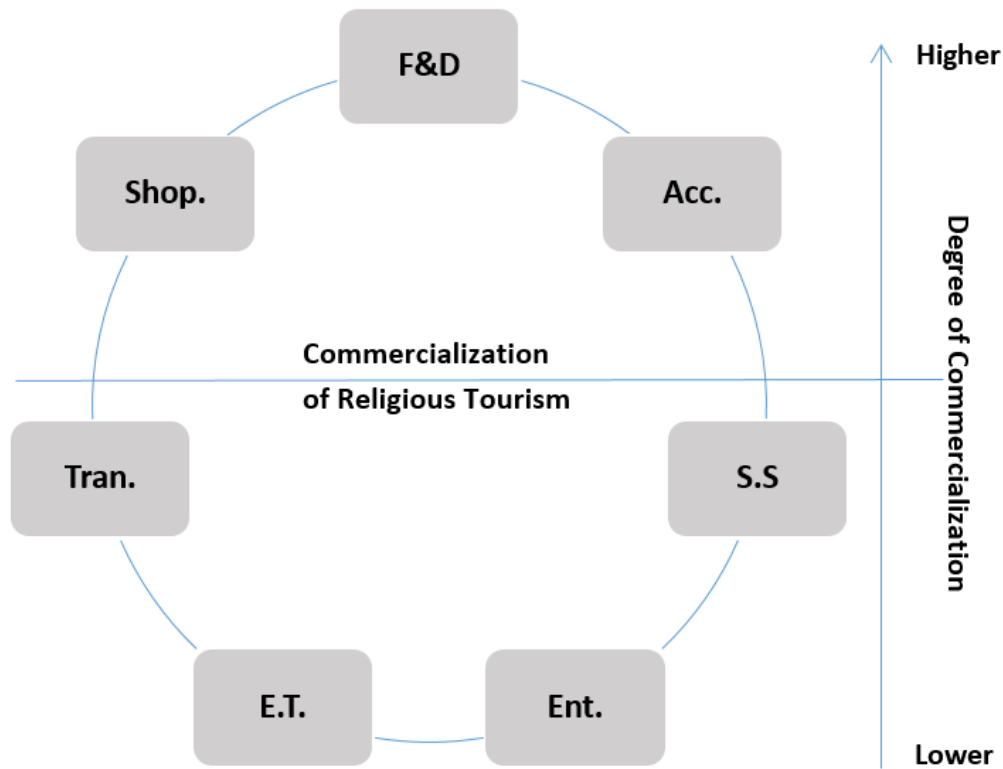


Figure 4.18 Key categories of commercialization in religious tourism

Note: E.T. = entrance ticket; F&D = food & drinks; Acc. = accommodation; Shop. = shopping; Tran. = Transportation; S.S. = staff service; Ent. = entertainment.

The model suggested that food and drinks, shopping, and accommodation were thought to be the most commercial categories for religious tourism in this Chinese context. Owing to a variety of flexible prices and the qualities of tourism products, commercial activities were seen somewhat negatively by religious tourists. Firstly, the more choices of goods for tourists, the more they responded that the location had a prevailing commercial feel. In their perceptions, the sacred mountains were filled with a range of family hotels, restaurants and stalls (Huang, 2011; Huang & Chen, 2009; Zhang & Sun, 2008). Meanwhile, the many religious souvenirs ranging from joss sticks and candles, prayer beads and figure of Buddha to local products, such as cloths, art works, and medicine, were also a focus of comments. Tourists were more willing to buy these religious souvenirs without being forced. Further,

since there were many options provided by businesses, tourists were more likely to compare different prices and qualities of goods. A sense of being cheated was generated, for example, if they had booked a hotel with an unreasonable price and bad quality and there were able to compare their choice with other options. Actually, it was common for them to select a poor option because of limited travel time and a lack of available information. Finally, some bogus tourism products were sold in stores and supermarkets, such as local mushrooms and fake medicine. If tourists found that they had bought some false products by chance, their feelings were influenced immediately. At the same time, they did complain about cheating behaviours to their friends and even other tourists. As a result, there were more negative feelings on food and drinks, accommodation and shopping than transport and entrance tickets because fixed price and quality were more apparent and acceptable for these purchases.

Not only Buddhist temples in Asia (Xiulin Huang, 2011; Singh, 2004), but also places such as Mecca in Middle East (Ruback, et al., 2008) and Compostela in Europe (Raj & Morpeth, 2007) develop diverse tourism products to satisfy the basic needs of different visitors.

Although religious tourists could feel the commercial atmosphere at the sacred sites studied, they appeared to endure these behaviours. But if they purchased products with variable prices and unstandardized qualities, they tend to be strongly resistant to commercial activities.

In addition to tourism products, the staff service at the religious sites also affected tourists' attitudes to some extent. Many negative comments were related to forced shopping and donation behaviours promoted by tour guides and monks. These commercial behaviours appeared to have impacts on the sacred atmosphere and overshadowed the glory of the religious spirit (e.g. Kasim, 2011). The problem of transport only existed at a few religious sites. The majority of religious tourists, especially loyal pilgrims, preferred to reach the

destinations on foot so that they could experience the sacredness and tranquillity of the process. Meanwhile, some religious sites were located in rural areas with a high altitude, so traditional vehicles were not able to reach the key areas. As for entrance tickets, a few tourists were against this kind of commercial behaviour. In their views, there should not be entrance tickets for religious places, because this activity would stop many potential believers without financial support from entering a sacred site. In their view, spiritual journeys are for everyone and religious sites should be accessible for free.

4.6 Synthesis of the chapter

In general, the findings from the FGBMs suggests that religious places do not appear to be over-commercialized. But commercial behaviours do exist in these religious places. The majority of tourists observed the commercial atmosphere of their trips. The results here fit with global trends. That is, more generally, commercialization of religious tourism is an emerging issue in both eastern and western world (Singh, 2004; Jones-Evans, 1998; Vijayanand, 2012). In order to satisfy the needs of religious tourists, a variety of tourism products have been provided for tourists by local residents, business investors, and religious staff.

The major categories of commercialization in religious tourism were shown to be food, drinks, and accommodation. Of course, everyone travelling to religious sites needs basic food and accommodation. By providing basic needs for religious tourists, local communities have increased their annual income and created more job opportunities (Jones-Evans, 1998; Kasim, 2011; Stausberg, 2011). But there is substantial competition leading to fraudulent practices at the FGBMs. Business owners try all means to attract customers, and some even stand on the main roads to persuade tourists to stay or have meals in their places.

In addition to the basic consumption concerns, many tourists were also influenced by the shopping stores, street stalls, and mobile vendors. The majority of tourists hold a negative attitude towards the number and quality of tourism products. Some behaviours, such as indeterminate price, bad service and forced consumption, make tourists feel quite angry. In order to best cater for the multiple needs of tourists, many more luxury entertainment facilities, like five star hotels, large shopping centres, and cinemas, have recently been built in religious places. These modern facilities do not match with traditional religious temples and statues. The development of these style of buildings may be harmful for preserving and managing traditional architecture and customs (Jones-Evans, 1998; Vijayanand, 2012).

Therefore, although FGBMs are not thought to be over-commercialized now, the existing and growing commercial activities and unstandardized services still affect tourists' experience to some extent. Arguably, when most tourists cannot perceive the authenticity and sacredness of religious places, their revisit intention will be weakened (Fotsch, 2004; Singh, 2004).

Especially in the new web era, most young travellers are more likely to search for relevant information before their trip, and therefore their behaviours are greatly influenced by online blogs (Wu & Pearce, 2014). If more and more negative comments on religious sites appear, it could decrease the travel motivation of potential religious tourists. Social impacts threaten the sustainable development of the religious sites in the long term (McKercher, & Du Cros, 2002).

Chapter 5. SPIRITUAL VALUES OF TOURISTS

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5.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter aims to explore tourists' spiritual values in religious places. Interviews and a survey were selected as the research methods. While the interviews offered many subjective and general concerns about the tourists' spiritual values, the survey was employed to examine attitudes in an objective way. This study was built on the second round of data collection, including 80 interviews and 784 questionnaires. Firstly, the analysis of the interviews is considered. The material will be used to develop a systematic framework to describe the tourists' spiritual values. In addition, this chapter will use SPSS 22.0 to undertake key quantitative analyses. They are exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, mean factor analysis and ANOVA. Exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis are employed to classify different groups of spiritual values and confirm the validity and reliability of the extracted measurement scales. Mean factor analysis and ANOVA are used to rank the importance of all the factors and test whether demographic characteristics have a significant influence on these values. Finally, the results will be discussed by comparing the research outcomes with previous research findings.

5.2 Research methods

To have a better understanding of tourists' spiritual values at the FGBMs, in-depth interviews and a survey were selected as the two key methods for this study. The semi-structured interview consisted of two parts: demographic information and open-ended questions. It produced a general impression of tourists' spiritual values, views of other people, and perceptions of the local environment. The survey was designed based on the first round of fieldwork and relevant measurement scales exploring spirituality (Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982; Reed, 1987; Howden, 1992). The fieldwork included the author's observations and 14 open-ended interviews at Mount Emei and Mount Putuo in 2014. For the survey work, the original scale had 36 items in Howden's research, but only 34 items with partial adjustment and

change of contents were finally kept for this study (Table 5.1 and Table 5.2). The two deleted items were “number 30: I feel a oneness with the universe and/or a Supreme Being” and “number 32: Reconciling relationships is important to me”. It was found in the interviews that the tourists had difficulty in relating to these items. Meanwhile, they thought that “Relationships are important to me, even though they may be hard” was similar to “Reconciling relationships is important to me”. So only the item, “Relationships are important to me, even though they may be hard”, was kept for this study.

5.3 Results from the interviews

Interview analysis showed that several themes of tourists’ spiritual values at the FGBMs could be extracted. The researcher examined closely the key points in tourists’ expressions about spiritual values. All these points were then analyzed and classified according to their internal linkages. Finally, these points were categorized as seven themes: (1) a new window for life; (2) the need for religious belief; (3) importance of closer relationships; (4) inspiration from others; (5) enlightenment from nature; (6) the symbolism of wild animals and insects; and (7) sacredness of symbolic properties (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 Main themes of tourists' spiritual values at FGBMs

Themes	Key points	Examples
Theme 1: A new window for life	Looking at the world in a new way Meaning of life True selves	MWI ^{2nd} : 3, 20.
Theme 2: The need for religious belief	Importance of religious belief Goodness and wisdom Source of positive power and energy Sense of security and happiness	MPI ^{2nd} : 3; MJI ^{2nd} : 13; MWI ^{2nd} : 2, 18.
Theme 3: Importance of closer relationships.	Wonderful time with family or friends Unique experience in the journey Importance of friendship, affection, and love	MPI ^{2nd} : 4; MEI ^{2nd} : 20; MWI ^{2nd} : 4, 13.
Theme 4: Inspiration from others	Moved by other tourists' loyal behaviours The mercy and kindness of religious staff The power and strength of Buddha	MWI ^{2nd} : 1, 6, 13, 16.
Theme 5: Enlightenment from natural features	Inner peace and tranquility Picturesque flowers Clouds, rainbows, sunrise, and sunset	MJI ^{2nd} : 15; MPI ^{2nd} : 1, 2, 6; MWI ^{2nd} : 10, 15.
Theme 6: The symbolism of wild animals and insects	Wild animals and insects All forms of life are equal Mutual respect Everything lives in harmony	MWI ^{2nd} : 7, 17, 20

Table 5.1 Main themes of tourists' spiritual values at FGBMs (Continued)

Themes	Key points	Examples
Theme 7: Sacredness of symbolic properties	Strong atmosphere Temples Buddha statues Traditional rituals Worshipping process Relaxed and happy	MPI ^{2nd} : 7; MJJ ^{2nd} : 2, 11; MWI ^{2nd} : 2, 12, 13, 20.

Theme 1: A new window for life

Tourists desired to know more about the meaning of life and sought happiness from their pilgrimage. It was at this time that the sacred journey opened an alternative window for them. From this window, they could look at themselves and the world in a totally new way (MWI^{2nd}: 20). For some respondents, they could find something different from their materialistic oriented society. Other tourists realized that experience and memories in the worship process were more important than the final destination (MWI^{2nd}: 3). Similarly, it was emphasised that it is better to enjoy each day in life. Overall, tourists became more open-minded and their ways of thinking were cultivated through the journey. Examples from the interviewees were as follows:

The noise and complexity of urban city make my soul upset. Sometimes I wonder why I should live in the world, and what's the real happiness? If one day, I felt really tired, lonely and helpless, I would take off mask, get rid of work, duty, annoyance and upset, and take a holiday for my soul. Calm down and stay alone. Look at my inner heart, look at the world, and look at everything surrounding me... (MWI^{2nd}: 20)

It's quite difficult to climb up to the South Platform of Mount Wutai. But it's nothing. I don't care about the final destination. I only focus on the process, in which I can have the most wonderful experience and memories. The tired body and upset soul should have a long journey. Forgive kindness and hatred, and forget gain and loss. Clear my head and cherish everything I have. (MWI^{2nd}: 3)

Theme 2: The need for religious belief

In China, Buddhism, representing goodness and wisdom, has existed for a long time. It significantly affects people's spiritual values and behaviours. Although some tourists did not believe in Buddhism, the majority of them thought that it is necessary to have some religious beliefs (MJI^{2nd}: 13). Such belief was regarded as the source of positive power and energy. It would help people feel more secure and happier in the face of frustrations and pains (MWI^{2nd}: 18). Examples from the interviewees established this theme:

A person should have a religious belief, and it makes one much quieter. Walking out of secular life, I feel more relaxed and happier. This experience will make me treat life in a better way. I will not pursue fast-paced and nervous lifestyle with a lot of money (MJI^{2nd}:13).

I don't believe in Buddhism, but I respect teachings and spirits of Buddha to some extent. In our life, there are always full of difficulties, frustrations and pains. But I should be brave, and keep on pursuing my dream. No matter what difficulties I meet, I will keep on going and I believe that everything will be gone. With deep respect to Buddha, I keep cultivating myself on the way. Although there is full of heavy fog on the way ahead, I can find the right direction. (MWI^{2nd}:18)

Theme 3: Importance of closer relationships

Tourists' spiritual values could also be influenced by their companions. Travelling with family or friends could be a wonderful experience. It is not only a good chance to communicate with each other, but also an unforgettable experience to enjoy sceneries, overcome difficulties, and worship Buddha together (MEI^{2nd}: 20). Therefore, in the journey, relationship among family members and friends would possibly become close and be enhanced as well. Meanwhile, they would realize the meaning and importance of friendship, affection and love. Examples from interviewees supported this theme:

Normally it's very difficult to see snow in Sichuan province, but this time I have a good view of heavy snow at Mount Emei. I have met some monks, but I didn't communicate with them. For service staff, they are very friendly and kind hearted. The purpose of this trip is to see snow. Meanwhile, it's a great time for father and son to gather together which makes me very happy (MEI^{2nd}:20).

When I kept chanting Amitabha, time had passed for an hour. I dared not to move my body obviously, because it showed no respect to Buddha. I sneaked a peek at my friend, she was still chanting, but she also moved her body lightly sometimes. I only dared to move my body after her. Finally, I stood up and joined in a line. Everyone was focused on chanting, and they walked around the chapel slowly and quietly. I was deeply moved by them, and I found true peace in mind for a moment. By chanting, I could experience a strange strength, which makes me calm and strong. (MWI^{2nd}: 13)

Theme 4: Inspiration from others

Tourists tended to be deeply moved by loyal pilgrims and religious staff. They could feel the power and strength of Buddha by observing Buddhists' devotional acts (MWI^{2nd}: 16).

Meanwhile, tourists were more likely to imitate others' behaviours. Especially when tourists met monks or nuns, who were very friendly and merciful, they would try to treat other people in a similar way (MWI^{2nd}: 1). Views expressed that the one world is shared and all forms of life are equal. So it is essential to respect both human beings and other forms of life.

Examples from the interviewees reinforced these points:

This place is full of beauty smart with green mountains and clean rivers. More importantly, I was moved by behaviours of a loyal pilgrim. He/she climbed all the way to top of the mountain on knees one stage after another (MWI^{2nd}:16).

The master is a very decent, friendly and loyal monk. He told me that he even did not kill a mosquito which was biting him. The master has his own world, in which he is the most kind-hearted and abundant. For earthly people, we cannot experience his spiritual realm. (MWI^{2nd}:1)

Theme 5: Enlightenment from natural features

In terms of natural environment, most tourists had a good impression on the FGBMs. These mountains are all located in remote and unpolluted area with beautiful and attractive scenery. Many tourists worked and lived in urbanized places, so they felt remote from nature. When they went close to nature, they were attracted by picturesque flowers, white clouds, colourful rainbows and sunrise or sunset views (MWI^{2nd}: 10). Staying in such a wonderful environment, tourists had a sense of belonging and a harmony with pure nature. Further, they were able to

know more about themselves and obtain inner tranquillity (MWI^{2nd}: 20). The views fit with the concept of pilgrimage, that is, to seek places of pristine existence, without chaos and suffering. Typical examples from the interviewees supported this theme:

A bunch of reclusive and beautiful nasturtiums are flourishing in the chilly wind. They, being baptised by Buddha, breathe aura from both earth and heaven. Lying down in the dewy grass, I take photos for this attractive scenery, and then relaxed look up at sky. At this very moment, I can experience the oneness with the universe... Along the rolling hills, clouds are moving close to me and the refreshing wind makes me quite comfortable. (MWI^{2nd}: 10)

Standing on the top of mountain, I can see snow in the distance and clouds in sky, and I can also listen to voice of wind and Brahma. Everything touches my heart. In this material-oriented society, we often lose ourselves. So we should have such a wonderful journey in life, which will let us know more about our true selves. Silently I pick up a rock and put it on a high hill, leaving all my pain and worries in this empty highland. Now I can be back on the road relaxed and happy again. (MWI^{2nd}: 20)

Theme 6: The symbolism of wild animals and insects

In addition to a variety of sky phenomena and plants in nature, tourists paid much attention to animals and insects. The teachings of Buddha and behaviours of pilgrims and monks changed their views towards different forms of life. All kinds of life, as varied as worms, flies, foxes and cows, could be viewed as spiritual beings with their own sentience and feelings (MWI^{2nd}: 7, 17). The view was put forward that human beings should respect other forms of life and would also be respected by them in return. As a result, everything could live in harmony on earth with each other. Examples from the interviewees were as follows:

Owing to the light rain, all my clothes are wet. I take off the raincoat, and this keep me awake. There are so many worms on the road. I feel scared of them, because I grow up in urban city and never go close to them before. I don't want to hurt them, so I kowtow to Buddha from the other side of road. For a long time, I find my face totally wet. They're not raindrops, but my tears... (MWI^{2nd}:7)

On the way of worshipping, I have met fog, rain, mountain, flowers, cows, monks, and Buddhism. The journey of this year is not for pilgrimage, but for meeting you. When I go downhill, I have an unforgettable adventure. It's so unimaginable that fog and mirror are changing into each other in turns, with waving sea of clouds in sky, colourful flowers dancing and cattle eating quietly on the grass... This is a Wonderland, and I'm not sure which Buddha has passed by and drawn such a wonderful picture for us. (MWI^{2nd}: 17)

Theme 7: Sacredness of symbolic properties

Many temples, Buddha statues and traditional rituals were built at the Buddhist mountains (MWI^{2nd}: 12). The symbolic and affective properties represent Buddha's greatness, wisdom and mercy. In the worshipping process, tourists' spiritual values were more likely to be cultivated unconsciously by the strong Buddhist atmosphere (MPI^{2nd}: 7). All temples were well organized, and the monks could be seen chanting or studying inside these structures. Tourists were allowed to live and eat together with monks. By escaping from secular affairs temporarily, tourists reported feeling relaxed and happy, and were sometimes able to find spiritual support and peace in these sacred places (MJI^{2nd}: 11). Examples from the interviewees were as follows:

The inherent Buddhism culture is very strong at this mountain, so it's beneficial to cultivate mind in this place. Without being disturbed by secular affairs, I feel completely relaxed and tranquil. If there were more commercial behaviours occurred in this place, it would lose its unique artistic image (MPI^{2nd}:7).

In the setting sun, the 1000-year-old trees look golden on Dailuo summit, while chanting sounds of monks come out from old temples. All of these create a context for tranquillity and peacefulness. (MWI^{2nd}:12)

Since secular society is very complex and chaotic, land of Buddha can be simple and sacred. By chanting sutras in temples, I can seek for spiritual support which makes me relaxed and quiet. Furthermore, I obtain some inspirations and become more open-minded. I prefer a peaceful life without haggling over every ounce. Also I will not feel tired or depressed about life and I know the meaning of happiness in daily life (MJI^{2nd}: 11).

In summary, the results of interview analysis showed that tourists' spiritual values could be captured by seven themes. These themes reflected tourists' attitudes towards themselves, others, and environment (Figure 5.1). Themes 1 and 2 expressed tourists' inner feelings and new way of thinking. Themes 3 and 4 reflected tourists' attitudes towards their family, friends, and other people. Themes 5, 6 and 7 implied that tourists related closely to the whole environment. From inner self to the outside environment, tourists' spiritual values were significantly influenced by the object-based environment (cultural and natural elements) and activity-based activities (human behaviours and worship process).

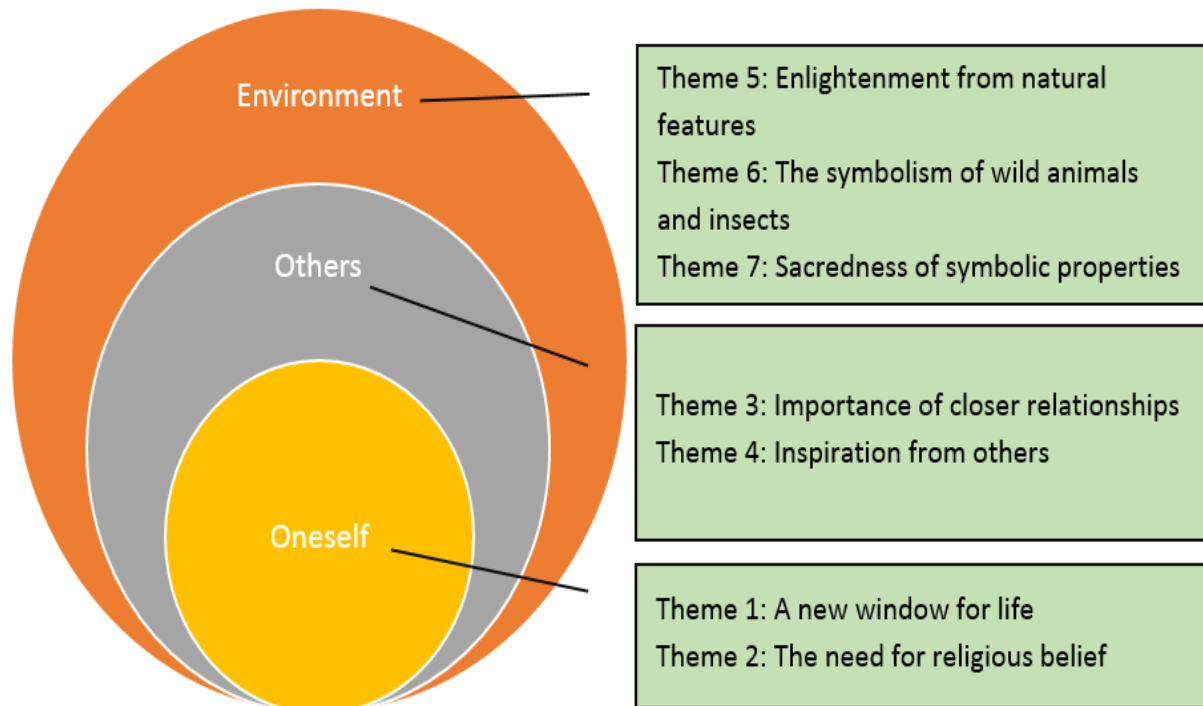


Figure 5.1 Themes of tourists' spiritual values at Four Great Buddhist Mountains

This chapter will integrate these themes with the results from the survey aiming to understand tourists' spiritual values systematically and comprehensively. The following section will report the results of the survey analysis.

5.4 Results from the questionnaires

5.4.1 Exploratory factor analysis

Before undertaking factor analysis, reliability analysis was employed to ensure the consistency of all items. The Cronbach's Alpha was 0.96, which suggested a satisfactory level of consistency. All items were retained because of the high level of reliability for each measure.

Then result of factor analysis showed that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic was 0.96 and significance of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was 0.00. These figures suggested the adequacy of the data for factor analysis. In addition, factors extracted from this analysis explained 58.89% of the cumulative variance. Some items were deleted following these principles: items with loading coefficients on one factor lower than 0.40; and items with loading coefficients which were higher than 0.40 on two or more factors at the same time (Smith, 1989). The deleted items were "6: the trip makes me feel that having a good relationship with others is important", "14: the trip makes me go beyond a body change or body loss", "16: the trip makes me have the ability for self-healing", "17: the trip makes me have an inner strength", "22: the trip makes me feel a responsibility to preserve the planet", "23: the trip helps me find the meaning for life which provides a sense of peace", and "31: the trip makes me feel a part of the community in which I live". Therefore, five factors with 27 items were finally chosen to interpret the tourists' spiritual values at FGBM (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2 Results of EFA for tourists' spiritual values

Table 5.2 Results of EFA for tourists' spiritual values

Factors	Order	Items	L.C.
F1 Transcendence	1	The trip makes me look at things from new and different points of view	.71
	2	The trip makes me have a general sense of belonging	.66
	3	The trip makes me forgive people who have done me wrong	.72
	4	The trip makes me go beyond a physical or psychological condition	.59
	5	The trip makes me concerned about destruction of the environment	.52
F2 General Connectedness	7	The trip makes me feel close to nature	.50
	8	The trip makes me experience moments of peace in a devastating event	.67
	9	The trip makes me feel a kinship to other people	.69
	10	The trip makes me feel a connection to all of life	.62
	11	The trip makes me rely on an inner strength in hard times	.63
	12	The trip makes me enjoy being of service to others	.62
	13	The trip makes me go to a spiritual dimension within myself for guidance	.57
F3 Inner Balance	15	The trip makes me have a sense of harmony or inner peace	.48
	18	The trip makes me have unusual ideas of what space and time are thought to be	.58
	19	The trip makes me feel good about myself	.70
	20	The trip makes me have a sense of balance in my life	.74
	21	The trip makes me have fulfilment in life	.66

Table 5.2 Results of EFA for tourists' spiritual values (Continued)

Factors	Order	Items	L.C.
F4	24	The trip makes me trust life is good, even when I feel discouraged	.58
Positive Life Direction	25	The trip makes my life have meaning and purpose	.62
	26	The trip makes me receive emotional support from my relationships	.65
	27	The trip makes me find inner resource that helps me deal with uncertainty in life	.65
	28	The trip makes me value my life	.63
	29	The trip makes me feel a love connection that exist between all open people	.62
	30	The trip helps me discover my own strength in times of struggle	.56
F5	32	The trip makes me have a relationship with Buddha and a higher power	.66
Specific Religious Feelings	33	The trip makes me feel that inner strength is related to a belief in Buddha	.74
	34	The trip makes me have goals and aims in life	.58

The first factor was labelled as transcendence, because it was most similar to that in Holden's spirituality assessment scale (Howden, 1992). The religious trip provided tourists with a general sense of belonging and also made them think in a different way. In addition, they were willing to pay attention to the environment and forgive people who have hurt them in past. The second factor reflected general connectedness of tourists with other people, natural wildlife and themselves as well. Actually, the closer they went to nature, the stronger were

the feelings of being connected to all life. Then they tried to live in harmony with other people and the natural environment. Similarly, the third factor, labelled as inner balance, implied that tourists built their inner resources. They started to know themselves better and were being true to themselves as well. The fourth factor was labelled as positive life direction. When tourists have transcended themselves and obtained both external and inner balance in life, they tended to have positive attitudes towards the future. They became much more optimistic and confident, not only achieving the meaning and purpose of life, but also feeling a love from harmonious relationship with others. Finally, by visiting Buddhist sites, tourists had specific religious feelings. The power of the Buddha helped them find inner resources and specific goals in life.

5.4.2 Confirmatory factor analysis

A hypothetical model with five constructs of tourists' spiritual values were derived from the EFA. Confirmatory factor analysis was then employed to validate and assess the model fit. Several indices were employed to assess model fit (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 Acceptable level of model fit indices

Categories	Fit indices	Function	Acceptable level
Residuals-based indices	Root mean square residual (RMR)	Avoids issues of sample size by analysing the discrepancy with the hypothesized model.	A value of .06 or less is indicative of acceptable model fit.
	Root mean square error (RMSEA)	Error of approximation.	A value of .08 or less being indicative of an acceptable model.

Source: Gatignon. (2010). Confirmatory Factor Analysis in Statistical analysis of management data. DOI: 10.1007/978-1-4419-1270-1_4. Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen. (2008). Structural equation modelling: Guidelines for determining model fit. *Journal of Business Research Methods*, 6, 53–60. Hu, & Bentler. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modelling*, 6(1), 1-55.

Table 5.3 Acceptable level of model fit indices (Continued)

Categories	Fit indices	Function	Acceptable level
Absolute and incremental indices	Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	A measure of fit between the hypothesized model and the observed covariance matrix.	Values above .90 usually considered adequate.
	Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)	This is used to correct GFI.	
	Comparative fit index (CFI)	Examining the discrepancy between the data and the hypothesized model.	
	Aka Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	Resolves some of the issues of negative bias.	
	Normed fit index (NFI)	Analyses the discrepancy between the chi-squared value of the hypothesized model and the chi-squared value of the null model.	
	Relative fit-index (RFI)	Compares the chi-square for the hypothesized model to one from a “null”, or “baseline” model.	
	Incremental fit index (IFI)	Compares the chi-square for the hypothesized model to one from a “null”, or “baseline” model.	

Source: Gatignon. (2010). Confirmatory Factor Analysis in Statistical analysis of management data. DOI: 10.1007/978-1-4419-1270-1_4. Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen. (2008). Structural equation modelling: Guidelines for determining model fit. *Journal of Business Research Methods*, 6, 53–60. Hu, & Bentler. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modelling*, 6(1), 1-55.

The results showed a satisfactory model fit with all acceptable indices. The chi-square ratio nearly equalled 3 and the p value was lower than 0.05; root mean square residual (RMR) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were lower than 0.05 and 0.08 respectively; and all other important indices, including GFI, AGFI, CFI, TLI, NFI, RFI and IFI, were almost 0.90 or higher (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4 The model fit indices for tourists' spiritual values scale

Fit Index	χ^2	$\chi^2/\text{d.f.}$	P value	RMR	RMSEA	GFI
Model	952.723	3.034	.000	.036	.051	.916
Fit Index	AGFI	CFI	TLI	NFI	RFI	IFI
Model	.899	.943	.936	.917	.943	.943

In addition, two types of reliability – composite reliability and the estimated variance extracted by each construct – were used to assess the reliability and validity of tourists' spiritual values scale. The composite reliability was acceptable, with no values lower than .70 (Hatcher, 1994). The average variance extracted by each construct was also higher than the acceptable level of 50% (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Therefore, the overall reliability of the instrument can be considered satisfactory (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5 Reliability of spiritual values scale

Construct and Indicator	Composite Reliability	Variance Extracted Estimate
Transcendence	0.983	0.920
General Connectedness	0.991	0.935
Inner Balance	0.985	0.944
Positive Life Direction	0.991	0.943
Specific Religious Feelings	0.977	0.934

Finally, a model with a high level of overall reliability was established. And all attributes with a significant p value were kept for the model (Figure 5.2).

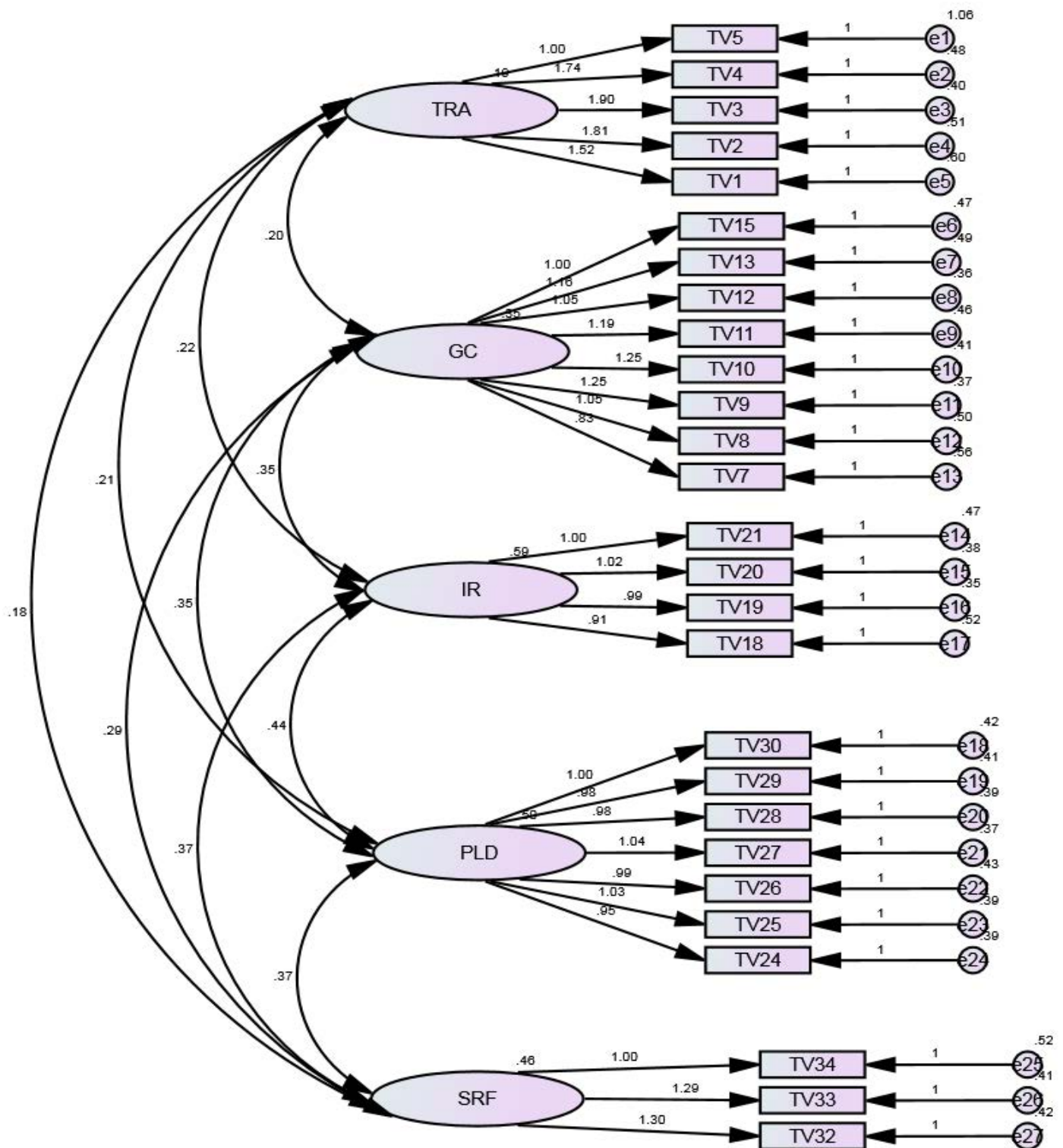


Figure 5.2 Model of confirmatory factor analysis for tourists' spiritual values

Note: TV represents the numbered items from Table 5-2.

5.4.3 Mean factor scores

The relative importance of extracted factors in tourists' spiritual values scale was assessed according to their mean factor scores. To calculate a factor score, loading coefficient of first item on first factor was multiplied by its original value for an individual respondent (Smith, 1989). Similarly, all other items on the first factor should follow this way on that individual. And the results were then summed and divided the number of items on that factor to give a preliminary factor score (PFS). The PFS explained the relative importance of the factor of spiritual values for an individual.

$$\text{Equation 1: PFS} = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^m (L_j V_j)}{m}$$

Note: L represents the loading coefficient of an item on a factor; V represents the original value of an item on a factor; m means the number of items on a factor; and j means the nth item on a factor.

For example, the first preliminary factor score for the first individual could be calculated:

$$\text{PFS}_1 = \frac{1 \cdot 0.70 + 4 \cdot 0.66 + 5 \cdot 0.72 + 4 \cdot 0.59 + 2 \cdot 0.52}{5} = 2.07$$

Similarly, the process was repeated for other four factors for that same individual. Next, in the same way preliminary scores of five factors were calculated for all other 783 individuals. Finally, all preliminary scores for each factor were summed and divided by 784 to get a mean factor score (MFS). Figure 5.3 showed the mean factor scores for all five factors of tourists' spiritual values. The MFS explained the relative importance of the factor of spiritual values for all participants.

$$MFS = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^m (L_j V_{ji})}{mn}$$

Note: L represents the loading coefficient of an item on a factor; V represents the original value of an item on a factor; m means the number of items on a factor; n means the sample size; j means the nth item on a factor; and I means the nth individual of the sample.

Because loading coefficients of all retained items were lower than 1 and higher than 0, and original values are from 1 to 5, MFSs can range between 0 and 5. The normal distribution suggested that the scores would be close to the median in a large sample size. In particular, due to the loading not reaching too high values, mean factor scores reaching 2.40 or 2.50 are relatively high and those towards 2.00 are low.

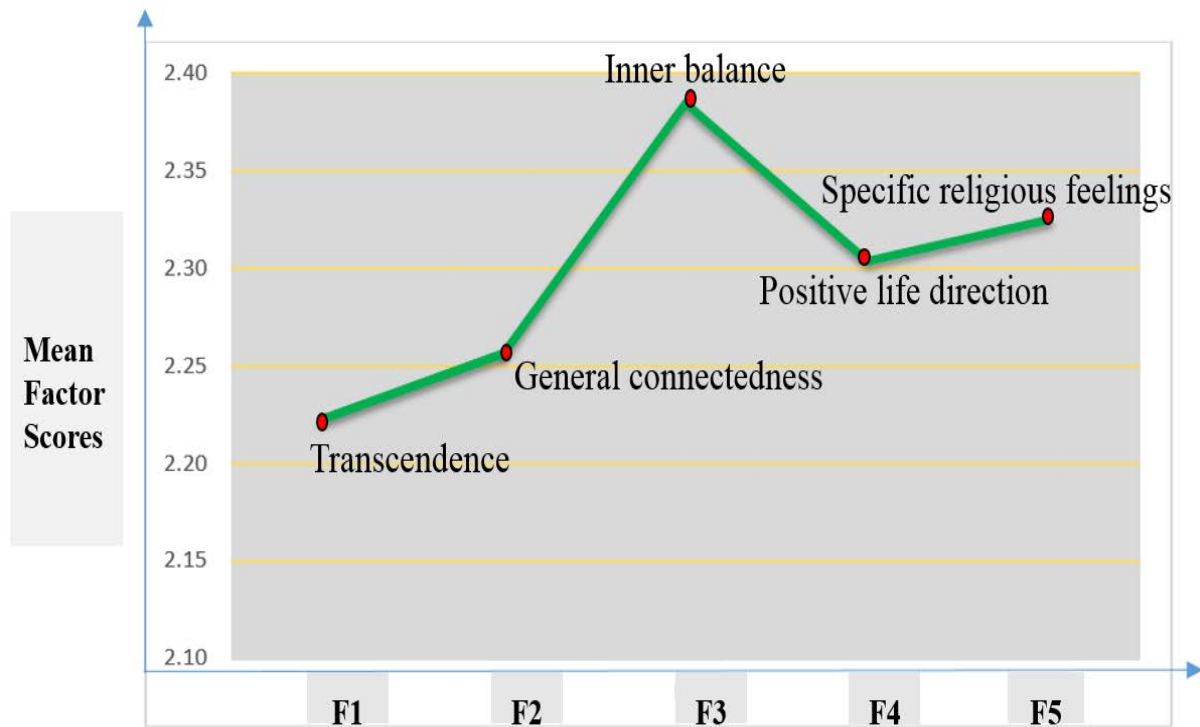


Figure 5.3 Mean factor scores of tourists' spiritual values

Results of MFS analysis showed that inner balance had the highest mean factor score followed by specific religious feelings and positive life direction. First of all, coming to a new environment surrounded by picturesque scenery and unique Buddhist temples, tourists changed their usual way of thinking towards space and time. They started to know their true themselves in the universe and obtained inner balance (e.g. Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). Furthermore, the stronger sense of being close to Buddha made the meanings of their life much clearer. Specifically, their subsequent behaviours in daily life could follow the teachings of Buddha (Homayouni, 2011). Finally, because one of the core values of Buddhism is love, tourists were more likely to feel a love connection with open people. As a result, they reported feeling that their life was meaningful and something to cherish. When in faced with challenges or frustrations, they could discover their own strengths and receive emotional support from others as well. So they held the view that life is good and reported that they could deal with uncertainty in life confidently and optimistically.

The mean score of general connectedness and transcendence were ranked below the other three factors. In the natural environment, tourists felt a connection to all of life. As Buddha taught people to be kind to all things on earth (Parsons, 1976), they were willing to be of service to others under the guidance of a spiritual dimension within themselves. In addition, their on-site experience made tourists have a general sense of belonging.

5.5 Discussion

The results of both interview and survey analysis implied that tourists generated spiritual values in religious places. While the interview analysis identified seven themes of tourists' spiritual values, the survey study extracted five relevant factors. Among these factors and themes, religious belief was of great importance to tourists. But differences did exist between the results of the interview and survey analysis. In the interview study, tourists realized a new way to look at life and the world. Further, they obtained inspiration from other people, natural features, and cultural symbols. In this case, tourists treated themselves as outsiders, and they appeared to keep a certain distance from other people and the environment. Unlike the results of the interview study, the survey analysis suggested that tourists were regarded as one part of the environment. They placed emphasis on their inner balance and sense of general connectedness and transcendence. It implied that when tourists rethought about the world, they put themselves in the middle of it, and many facets of life were interconnected.

In spite of the subtle differences between the themes and extracted factors, they are multiple close connections. Both the themes and factors reflected tourists' values towards themselves, others, and the environment. Further, mean factor scores implied that tourists' spiritual values could be divided into three levels. By integrating the themes and factors in interview and survey studies, a model was established (Figure 5.4). From the inside out, tourists were most concerned about their inner truth and religious beliefs followed by their internal relations with other people and then the environment. That is, tourists were inclined to care more about things which were closer to them.

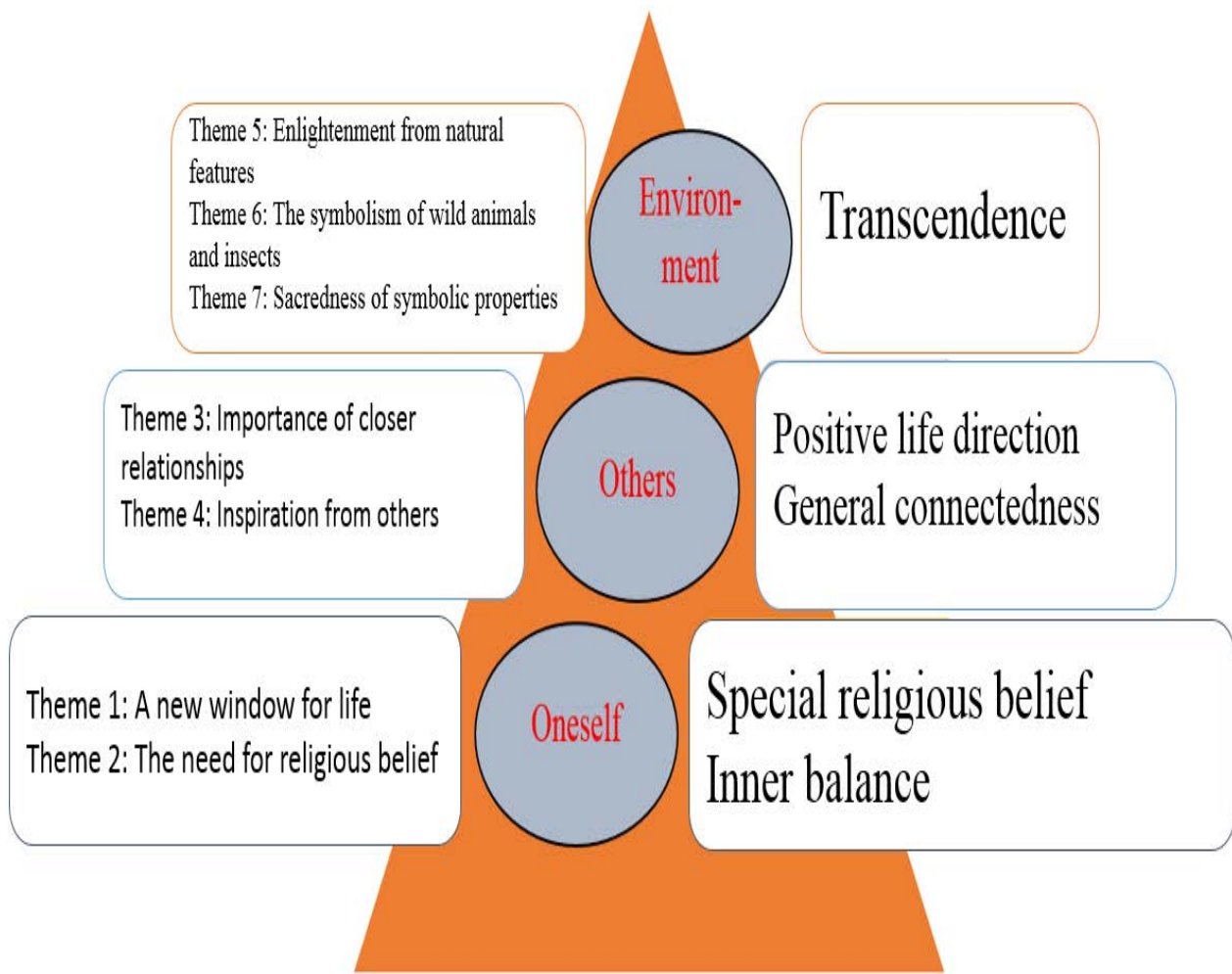


Figure 5.4 Integrated level of tourists' spiritual values at the Four Great Buddhist Mountains

At the basic level, tourists cared most about themselves. It was possible for tourists to find their inner resources and life meaning in the worshipping process (Fletcher, 2004; Stark, 1999). The results showed that tourists knew more about the essence of life, and what they really needed in life that could make them happier and securer. Past studies also suggested that religious orientation would be beneficial for cultivating individual personality and attitudes, and improving personal well-being (Homayouni, 2011). Moreover, the power of a religious faith can make a person hopeful and optimistic in the face of difficulties and frustrations. In this study, positive life direction was one important factor in defining tourists'

spiritual values. It suggested that tourists built their inner strength for times of struggle. Although unexpected adversity and distress could eventuate, they still believed that life was good and valued their existence.

In addition, the majority of tourists had special religious feelings. They could build a strong relationship with Buddha by regular pilgrimages. For these tourists, while some tried to approach the presence of Buddha, others maybe prayed for utilitarian benefits, like wealth, social status, health and good luck (Allport & Ross, 1967). No matter who they were, they would obtain inner strength and life goals for the uncertain future as a reward for their trip. But as Bergin (1983) had found, only internally orientated tourists were more likely to benefit in terms of their mental health. Meanwhile, with stronger beliefs, the greater satisfaction and less anxiety, depression and loneliness in life resulted (Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992). Further, with age and experiences, religious beliefs tended to be strengthened for many tourists.

At the second level, tourists thought that they were closely linked with all forms of life. Tourists' experience were not only affected by the pilgrimage itself, but also by other tourists and the staff behaviours, as well as the local environment (Collins-Kreiner, 2010; Hughes et al., 2013; Pearce, 2005; Yagi & Pearce, 2007; Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). Tourists enjoyed sharing experience with their companions and other tourists. Meanwhile, in a sacred place, tourists were willing to communicate with monks or nuns who were always thought to be kind and knowledgeable. In the trip, they were likely to have strong sense of belonging, and gained respect, affection and love from their companions, other tourists as well as from the religious staff. More importantly, by escaping from daily concerns and the secular world, tourists could be fully open to pure nature and Buddhist culture. They could feel the great

power of nature and Buddha's wisdom and mercy. As a result, a sense of general connectedness was generated in their spiritual minds.

At the highest level, tourists were more likely to look at themselves and the world in a new way. The sense of transcendence made tourists go beyond their self-centeredness. Or they began, mentally, to stand in a higher place and think from a more macro perspective. So as a part of general belonging, they would tend to forgive others and care more about the living environment. Unlike Howden's research findings, tourists did not express an ability to heal themselves.

5.6 Synthesis of the chapter

The primary purpose of the research was to summarize specific spiritual values of tourists, extract factors defining these values, and measure their relative importance. The results of this study provide a significant contribution to both literature and practice, not only clarifying the spiritual values of tourists, but generating insights for religious sites to improve tourists' on-site experience and subsequently affect their post-trip behaviours.

Specifically, this study contributes to the existing literature by identifying general spiritual values of tourists including both loyal pilgrims and secular visitors. The results of the interview analysis revealed that there were seven themes underpinning tourists' spiritual values. These themes were influenced by both their objective and existential experience (Wang, 1999). The object-based experience is generated by the natural environment, religious rituals, and people's behaviours at sacred mountains. And the existential experience can be generated from the process of the tourists' pilgrimage. The experience can help tourists cultivate their values and subsequently influence their personality, attitude and daily behaviours in life (Homayouni, 2011; Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004). Therefore, by

preserving the original environment and religious traditions, these sacred sites can improve tourists' experience and further shape their spiritual values.

In a linked research effort, this study extracted five factors characterising tourists' spiritual values and measured their relative importance. These factors, including transcendence, general connectedness, inner balance, positive life direction and specific religious feelings, are similar to those examined for visiting churches in western culture (Howden, 1992).

Paloutzian and Ellison (1983) point out that people want to know who they are, where they come from, or where going. And many desire to be loved and cared for by a god(s).

Likewise, the results suggest that within the context of eastern culture, people are also concerned with meaning or the purpose of life, their true selves and relationships with others, the natural environment, and specifically Buddha. In addition, tourists visiting Buddhist sites paid attention to their inner resources, religious beliefs and positive life direction. Meanwhile, tourists also had a sense of being connected with all of life in universe and transcend personal physical or psychological conditions.

Finally, the degree of Buddhism belief may have a significant influence on tourists' spiritual values. There are various types of visitors with multiple motivations in religious tourism (Pearce, 1993; Smith, 1992). To a certain extent, travel motivations of religious visitors can reflect their degree of religious belief. Religious beliefs further affect their feelings towards Buddha and their relationship with others and the natural environment (Homayouni, 2011; Kirkpatrick & Shaver, 1992). The more tourists believe in the teachings of Buddha, the closer they get to Buddha and the more inner resources, such as kindness, self-esteem, love and strength, they report receiving in life.

In summary, this study has explored the spiritual values of tourists. On the one hand, interview analysis was used to investigate tourists' subjective judgements about spiritual values. On the other hand, objective survey analysis was employed to extract factors of spiritual values and measure their relative importance. There are some quite specific limitations in this research. First of all, when conducting the interviews, it is hard to communicate with tourists who have strong local accents. In addition, older tourists are reluctant to answer so many questions in the survey and some of them are illiterate. These limitations and the broader constraints on the work in this thesis will be discussed in further detail in the final chapter of this study.

Chapter 6. IMPACTS OF RELIGIOUS COMMERCIALIZATION ON TOURISTS' SPIRITUAL VALUES

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6.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter aims to explore how commercial activities in religious places affect tourists' spiritual values. Semi-structured interviews will be adopted as the research method. The second and third rounds of interviews mentioned in chapter 3 will be analyzed. The second round of interviews focus on tourists' perceived level of religious commercialization and spiritual values, and how commercial activities affect their feelings. The third round of interviews will try to understand the general impression of religious tourists towards destination images and ascertain the factor influencing their views. Further, the last interview also assists in contextualising the relative importance of commercialization in the overall views of a destination. The results will be analysed from three aspects. The three aspects are general linkage between religious commercialization and spiritual values, perceived impacts of commercialization on spiritual values based on religious tourist types and the forces shaping destination image.

6.2 Research methods

Interviews were designed to explore the linkage between religious commercialization and tourists' spiritual values. The second round of interviews were mainly centring on tourists' perceived level of religious commercialization and links to their spiritual values. And based on these two dimensions, a matrix were drawn to analyse the relationship between individual's spiritual values and the commercialization of Buddhist sites. Additionally, tourists' perceived level of spiritual values could also be affected by other factors. Therefore, the third round of interviews tried to obtain more specific information about tourists' perception of destination image and relevant forces of influence.

6.3 Results and discussion

6.3.1 Linkage between commercialization with spiritual values

For the first round of interviews, tourists reported both their level of perceived commercialization and spiritual values. In terms of commercialization, tourists were asked to express whether or not they thought these religious places were too commercial. The results found that the majority of participants (40/60, 55%) described religious sites as over-commercialized, but the rest did not care so much about the commercial issues. In terms of spiritual values, tourists were asked to express whether or not they could obtain high level of values in religious places. The results showed that around two thirds of participants rated spiritual values as being highly accessible at these sites. Therefore, based on the above two dimensions, all participants could be categorised into four types. They were labelled as focused pilgrims, worried pilgrims, worried tourists and indifferent tourists (Figure 6.1).

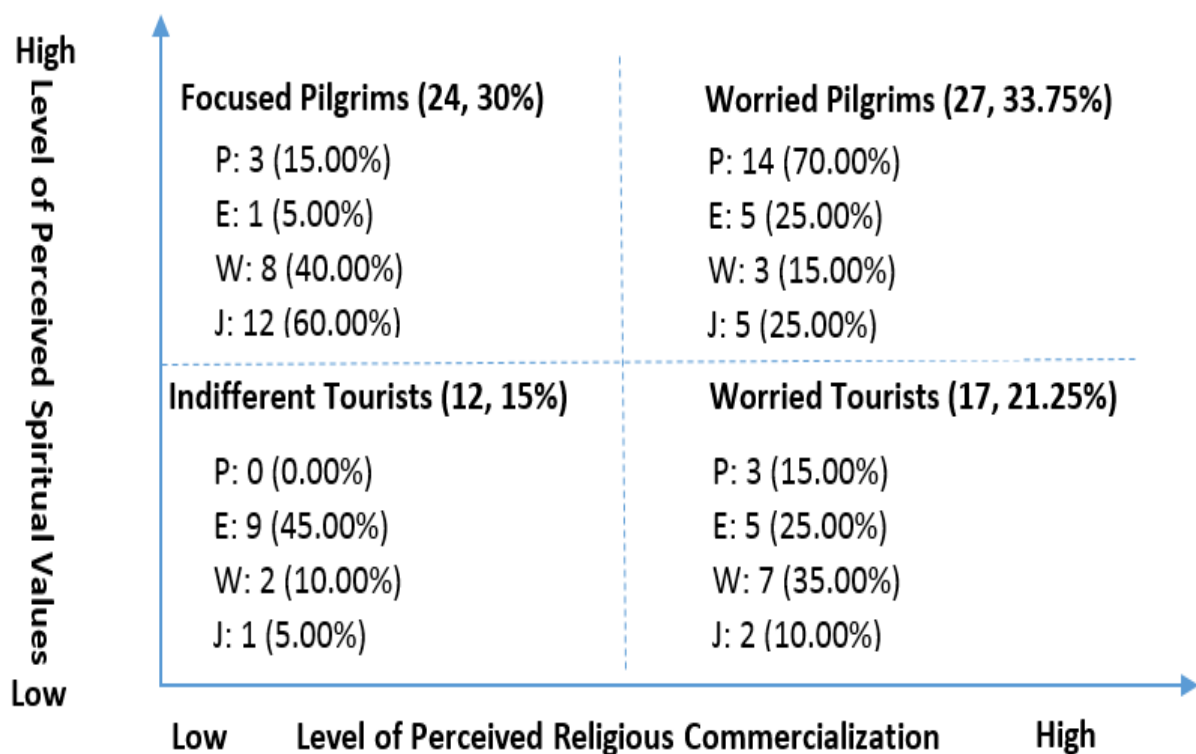


Figure 6.1 Model of perceived spiritual values and commercialization of religious tourists

In general, participants with a higher level of spiritual values appeared to have a strong sense of inner balance, general connectedness, and positive life direction. No matter they were loyal believers or secular tourists, the commercialization of Buddhist temples tended to influence them. More than half of them were worried about the over-commercialization of sacred sites. In contrast, only very few participants were indifferent tourists. They did not have a strong set of spiritual values and paid little attention to commercial activities. In their opinions, all scenic sites, including different Buddhist temples, were similar to each other. Thus, to them commercialization was common and acceptable at religious sites.

Participants at Mount Putuo had the highest level of spiritual values and they were most concerned with the emerging commercial behaviours. Similarly, Mount Jiuhua also had many participants with a set of spiritual values, but by the way of contrast they did not think that this mountain was too commercial. Unlike Mount Putuo and Mount Jiuhua, many participants at Mount Emei had a lower level of spiritual values and only about half of them paid attention to commercial behaviours. The level of perceived spiritual values and commercialization at Mount Wutai was between that of Mount Putuo and Mount Emei. The differences may be caused by the level of commercialization, religious atmosphere, and degree of Buddhist beliefs at each mountain.

In summary, the results implied that commercialization of Buddhist sites did have an interactive linkage with the spiritual values of tourists. The worried pilgrims were the highest in number and the most concerned with the commercialization, though some tourists with high levels of spiritual values thought that these religious sites were less commercial. The following section analyzes each category of religious tourists in more detail.

6.3.2 Impacts of commercialization on spiritual values based on tourist types

Focused pilgrims

Focused pilgrims were rarely distracted by commercial activities in sacred places. They concentrated on the process of pilgrimage and the worship of Buddha. When they arrived at a Buddhist mountain, they would be firstly attracted by the sacred and peaceful environment.

Interviewees expressed the view:

The Buddhism at this mountain has lasted for thousands of years. It's a very long history and I believe in it very much. The picturesque environment without noise from cities makes me much closer to nature. I feel very quiet and relaxed here. (MWI^{2nd}: 1)

In such a wonderful environment, focused pilgrims had a strong sense of sacredness and mystery. They believed that everything in this sacred world has been enlightened by the power of Buddha. The examples supported this view:

Putting down my package, I climbed to the golden peak temple of Mount Emei directly. The sky was cloudy and it's going to rain. Although the scenery was not as beautiful as that immersed in sunshine, it had a unique sense of mystery. In the dim light, time seemed to have stopped and human beings were expecting the sacred moment that Buddhist light shines throughout the universe. After the fog cleared, everyone looked up at the face of Buddha, feeling the power of Buddhist belief. (MEI^{2nd}: 16)

Additionally, tourists were easily influenced by others' behaviours on site (Mazumdar & Mazumdar, 2004; Pearce, 2005; Yagi & Pearce, 2007). Loyalty and determination of companions or other Buddhists would move them as well. For example,

When I climbed the mountain, I talked with a monk, who appears to be not too rich. ... He is a gentle, kind hearted and loyal Buddhist. He told me that he did not kill a mosquito which was drinking his blood. He belongs to his own world, where he is the most kind and rich one. Of course, we are secular people, we cannot experience this higher context. ... Overall, Mount Wutai lets me feel his hospitality, kindness, beauty, humility and sacredness. Everything will be left in my mind forever and I will be back again. (MWB^{2nd}: 1)

Finally, focused pilgrims referred to their diverse spiritual values, which were seen as having a subsequent positive influence on their post trip life (Collins-Kreiner, 2010; Homayouni, 2011). Armed with knowledge of Buddhism, they felt more hopeful and optimistic for the uncertain future. For example,

The reason why people believe in Buddhism is that it can bring happiness to them and teach them how to obtain happiness. The true joy comes from individual's deep heart and makes a person relaxed and comfortable throughout the body... This trip has brought me something unexpected that I cannot tell whether it's good or not. However, I hope I will not hurt anybody else in future and I'm frightened and tired. I hope everything will be well and pure... (MWB^{2nd}: 17)

Worried pilgrims

About half of pilgrims were concerned with commercial behaviours at the Buddhist sites. They worried that commercial behaviours would pose a threat to Buddhist traditions and weaken the atmosphere of Buddhism as well (Joseph & Kavoori, 2001; Kasim, 2011). For example,

Numerous tourists came to Mount Jiuhua with a rush, burning a few pieces of paper money and several bunches of joss sticks in one temple after another... No traditional rituals and no extra meditation and thinking. I wonder whether Buddha can hear their wishes or not? In lounge of the Longevity Palace, a gunny-bag of money was poured out with a loud noise. Then while the coins were put into one bag, the paper ones were put into another. I cannot express the feeling of myself at that moment. But I wonder whether the sacred Buddhist site should be like this or not? (MJB^{2nd}: 13)

Additionally, in order to make money, some monks were seen as disobeying the teachings of Buddha. It was hard for pilgrims to accept these kinds of behaviours. For example,

On arriving at Mount Jiuhua, I had a strong sense of religious commercialization. I don't oppose the commercialization of scenic sites, but it should be controlled in size and standardized in quality and quantity. To be only in pursuit of economic benefits disobeys the teachings of Buddhism, such as infinite mercy and kindness... The expense on food, beverage, accommodation and transportation at Mount Jiuhua is so high that it's not affordable for the majority of people. I think everyone who believe in Kshitigarbha should has the equal right to worship at Mount Jiuhua, because Kshitigarbha is willing to serve all people rather than the rich and powerful ones (MJB^{2nd}: 5).

Worried tourists

In addition to the worried pilgrims, the majority of tourists who had a lower level of spiritual values paid attention to the commercialization of Buddhist sites. In their opinions, there were many types of entrance tickets at Buddhist sites and the price for food and accommodation was high and unstandardized. For example,

I have thought Buddhist sites are better than other scenic spots. But too much expectation finally makes me disappointed. I know the price at scenic spots is higher than that in normal living places. But the price of food and beverage here is far away from what is normal. It's too commercialized and I cannot accept the reality. (MWI^{2nd}: 11)

Meanwhile, many fake tourism products were sold at Buddhist sites. This kind of behaviour had seriously negative impacts on tourists' revisit intention. One participant reported:

Look at this traditional Chinese medicine, I bought it at Mount Emei together with my friends ten years ago. When we climbed half way up the mountain, we met a man who was self-proclaimed as a researcher on Chinese medicine... I bought two bags of medicine with a high price for my mum, because he said this medicine was able to cure diabetes mellitus. But it turned out to be fake medicine, which caused my mum to stay in hospital for more than a month. This time I still saw this kind of medicine was sold everywhere. I hate this behaviour and will not come here ever again. I suggest you don't buy any tourism products at Mount Emei, because most business owners are cheaters... (MEB^{2nd}: 16)

Moreover, many business owners stood on the roadside and attracted more tourists to consume in their restaurants or hotels. As a result, tourists tended to be afraid of talking to

strangers, because they did not want to be cheated or disturbed by business owners. For example,

There are so many fake monks at Mount Wutai. I was “forced” to accept an amulet and donate money to them. Besides, many staff from hotels and restaurants standing on both sides of road persuade tourists to have meals or stay in their places... There are too many people begging for money along the way to temples. They have become professional beggars.
(MWI^{2nd}: 5)

Indifferent tourists

Some tourists did not report strong spiritual values and showed little interest in the commercial behaviours. They visited Buddhist sites to accompany their family members, colleagues or friends. Their travel motivation was sightseeing and they were attracted by the picturesque natural environment at the mountains (Andriotis (2008). For them, Buddhist places were similar to those natural scenic sites, so they could accept different commercial behaviours. For example,

I don't have too much feelings about this mountain. But it's quite beautiful and it's a good place to exercise after busy work in cities. I know very little about Buddhism. (MJI^{2nd}: 1)
Don't take too many things when you climb the mountain. Actually, one sweet coin is 3-5 yuan, one cucumber is 3-5 yuan, and one bottle of Mizone is 10 yuan (5 yuan in supermarket).
It will not spend too much money. It's difficult to climb up to the top of the mountain with too many things on your shoulders. (MEB^{2nd}: 36)

6.3.3 Impacts of commercialization on spiritual values based on destination images

The previous findings analysed different types of tourists based on their degree of Buddhist belief and their perceived level of religious commercialization. The second and subsequent set of interviews were conducted to further understand tourists' perceptions of the FGBMs and the factors influencing their perceptions. Tourists' perceptions on FGBMs could be divided into four categories (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 The frequency of different groups of tourists based on religious destination image

		Four Great Buddhist Mountains				Sample (N=60)	
		Mount Putuo	Mount Jiuhua	Mount Wutai	Mount Emei	Frequency	Percent (%)
Feelings about FGBMs							
Group 1	Sacred with high spiritual values	6	3	3	1	13	21.7
Group 2	Cultural with long histories	3	6	7	1	17	28.3
Group 3	Attractive with natural features	5	6	3	13	27	45.0
Group 4	Commercial with shops and restaurants	1	0	2	0	3	5.0

The four categories of feelings about the mountains were sacred with high spiritual values, cultural with long histories, attractive with natural features, and commercial with shops and restaurants. The first and second group together accounted for around half of the participants. In these two groups, FGBMs were thought to be very holy and pure places full of cultural

elements, in which tourists could obtain high level of spiritual values. Except for Mount Emei, the majority of tourists visiting Buddhist sites were significantly affected by the strong religious atmosphere and unique culture. In contrast, most tourists at Mount Emei in group 3 were attracted by its wonderful scenery and natural features. For group 4, very few tourists regarded FGBMs as commercial places. Even so, the commercialization could be an important factor that influenced tourists' perceptions in all groups. The following section analyses what kinds of factors would strengthen and weaken tourists' perceptions for each group.

Group1: Sacred with high spiritual values

For group 1, tourists could obtain diverse spiritual values in sacred places. On one hand, their spiritual values were strengthened by both internal and external factors. For the internal factors, tourists were very loyal to Buddha, and the strong belief provided them with continuous inner resources, like strength, courage and hope. So these people had a strong sense of safety and control. Then they appeared to hold positive attitudes towards everything, and tried to find the good side of bad things all the time.

In terms of external factors, the strong Buddhist atmosphere had an essential impact on tourists' feelings. They were deeply moved by the loyalty, kindness and friendliness of Buddhists, other tourists and local residents. Affected by the words and deeds of others, they felt devoted and respectful to Buddha. In addition, these tourists were influenced by their family members. When parents believed in Buddhism and behaved very well in daily life, their children were inclined to imitate their behaviours as well.

According to the tourists' views, their spiritual values could be weakened by the commercialization of Buddhist sites. Firstly, many commercial activities emerged at FGBMs. Tourists had to pay high prices for entrance tickets, parking, accommodation, food and drinks, candles and incense. Obviously, the strong commercial atmosphere affected their on-site experience negatively. Further, they were often annoyed by mobile vendors. These vendors took various means to persuade tourists to stay in hotels, go shopping in stores or have meals at restaurants. The religious tourists often had a sense of being cheated or forced to consume. Likewise, a few tour guides were more willing to act as shopping guides rather than explain cultural attractions to tourists at Buddhist sites. Finally, interviewees expressed their view that some monks drove luxury cars, played with mobile phones, and even talked about fashionable topics. These observations suggested that a few monks have become somewhat secular, and this had not been anticipated by the tourists.

Group 2: Cultural with long histories

The influential destination factors for group 2 were the objective environment and subjective behaviours. For the objective environment, a variety of traditional temples with a long history, some of which were royal temples, made the Buddhist site a cultural place. These temples left a deep impression on the tourists. Many interviewees were able to list the names of famous temples. Inside the temples, there were many images of Buddha, statues, scriptures and ritual items. Meanwhile, tourists were interested in different stories about Buddhism. For the subjective behaviours, tourists could feel the power of Buddhism by observing other tourists' and monks' actions. According to local traditions and religious rituals, the ways to worship Buddha could be different at each Buddhist site. Especially for businessmen, they paid special attention to each action of worshipping, because they were afraid of being disrespectful to Buddha.

For the weakening factors, again commercial behaviours greatly influenced these tourists' attitudes towards Buddhism culture. It was viewed as not reasonable for sacred places to make money in the name of Buddha. In some interviewees' views, culture and commercialization should not be closely linked with each other, otherwise culture became a simple tool of earning money. As a result of cultural capitalization, tourists could not experience the sacredness and uniqueness of Buddhism. In addition, the pursuit of economic growth also led to a series of cheating behaviours of local residents, tour guides and religious staff. Besides religious commercialization, the jumbled complex of traditional temples and modern buildings and improper behaviours of tourists had negative impacts on the cultural image of FGBMs.

Group 3: Attractive with natural features

Different from group 1 and 2, most tourists in group 3 were deeply attracted by the natural environment at FGBMs. Owing to the noise and pressure living in cities, tourists really enjoyed the peaceful and quiet life at mountains. Tourists could breathe fresh air, look at green plants, play in creeks, and feel the power of pure nature. Meanwhile, it was also a wonderful experience to walk step by step on the rock stairs, have a rest in the pavilions, and talk with friends or families all the way to the top of the mountain. In addition, there were many wild animals at the FGBMs. For instance, tourists liked to feed monkeys at Mount Emei. All these plants and wild life made the mountains colourful and animated. Finally, the natural environment was thought to be the basis of cultural development. If nature and culture could be integrated organically and systematically, it was seen as positive to attract tourists.

In terms of weakening factors, the results of interview suggested that sightseers' feelings could be affected by commercial activities as well. Many tourists complained about the high expense and forced consumption in the scenic area. In addition, because tourists in this group paid more attention to natural scenery, it was clear to them that there was some environmental pollution at the mountains. At times construction trash was casually thrown to the corner of a mountain or into a creek. And parts of the mountains had been destroyed in order to build more roads, hotels and restaurants. Meanwhile, a mix of construction dust, vehicle exhaust, and the smoke of burning incense and coal barbecues could also result in air pollution to a certain degree. Finally, the number of tourists and their improper behaviours could negatively influenced others' experience at FGBMs. For instance, some interviewees expressed that tourists fed too much unhealthy food to monkeys at Mount Emei, which should be controlled by local staff.

Group 4: Commercial with different business activities

Comparing with the above three groups, very few interviewees in group 4 (N=2) existed. In their opinions, Buddhist sites were surrounded by a variety of business activities. All stakeholders, including businessmen, scenic staff, monks and local residents, desired to make money by taking the advantage of tourism development. Since these interviewees kept visiting Buddhist sites for many years, they found that religious atmosphere had almost disappeared in recent years. So they felt disappointed about the commercialization of Buddhist sites, and they could not experience the sacredness and pureness of Buddhist culture any longer.

Overall, the following Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 summarise the major impact factors for all groups participating in the interview. Nearly all interviewees could obtain different spiritual

values to some extent. For participants in group 1 and 2, they were more likely to achieve higher level of spiritual values, and their values were strengthened by their strong belief, others' loyal behaviours, and traditional Buddhism architectures at the FGBMs. In contrast, minds of interviewees in group 3 were mainly affected by the natural environment, spiritual animals and peaceful life. However, all interviewees' spiritual values were easily weakened by commercial activities at the same time. Actually, commercialization of Buddhist sites appeared to be a common problem for all interviewees, especially those who were driven by religious and cultural reasons. Besides commercial activities, tourists' feelings could also be affected by cheating behaviours of businessmen, non-standard services of tour guides, unfriendly attitudes of local residents, and environmental pollutions.

Table 6.2 Influencing factors of religious tourists' impression on the FGBMs

Tourists' impression on FGBMs	Impact Factors	
	Strengthening factors	Weakening factors
G1: Sacred with high spiritual values	13 (100%) 1. Strong religious atmosphere; 2. Traditional temples; 3. Strong belief; 4. Loyal tourists, monks, and local residents; 5. Moved by family members.	6 (46%) 1. Many commercial activities; 2. Cheating behaviours; 3. Non-standard tour guides; 4. Monks' secular behaviours; 5. Unmatched modern buildings.
G2: Cultural with long histories	17 (100%) 1. Typical temples, statues and images; 2. Stories about Buddhism; 3. Loyal tourists, monks, and local residents; 4. Moved by family members.	12 (71%) 1. Many commercial activities; 2. Cheating behaviours; 3. Non-standard tour guides; 4. Bad attitude of local residents; 5. Uncivilized behaviours of tourists; 6. Traffic chaos; 7. Confusing layout of modern buildings.

Table 6.2 Influencing factors of religious tourists' impression on the FGBMs (Continued)

Tourists' impression on FGBMs	Impact Factors	
	Strengthening factors	Weakening factors
G3: Attractive with natural features	27 (100%) 1. Peaceful and quiet life; 2. Green plants, high mountains, and creeks. 3. Different wild life; 4. Temples and pavilions.	17 (63%) 1. Many commercial activities; 2. Construction trash; 3. Water and air pollution; 4. Too many tourists; 5. Uncivilized behaviours of tourists.
G4: Commercial with business activities	3 (100%) Many commercial activities.	3 (100%) None

Table 6.3 Factors that influence spiritual values of religious tourists at the FGBMs

Group	Destination Images	Factors that influence spiritual values	Level of spiritual values
Group 1	Sacred	Inner self, other people, & rituals	Highest
Group 2	Cultural	Other people, rituals, & temples	Higher
Group 3	Natural	Mountains, green plants, water, wildlife, & temples	Higher
Group 4	Commercial	Hotels, restaurants, shops, & cheating behaviours	Lower

6.4 Synthesis of the chapter

This study provides a better understanding of religious tourism in the Chinese context. At Buddhist sites, four types of tourists were identified according to their perceived level of commercialization and spiritual values (Figure 6.2). By focusing on each group of religious tourists, their general impressions of the FGBMs were considered.

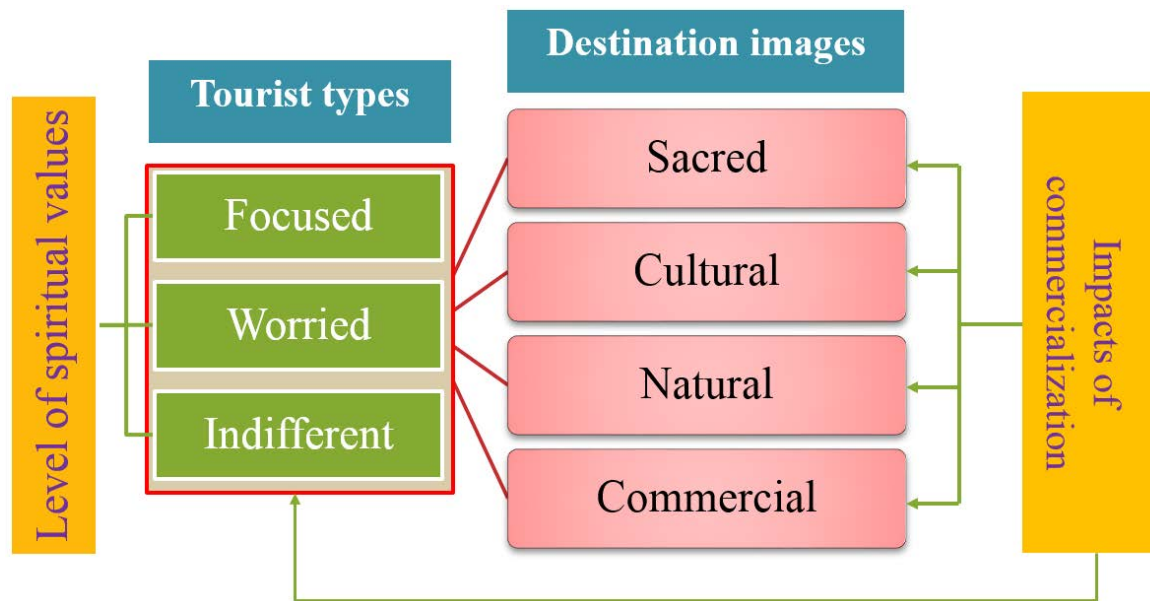


Figure 6.2 The impacts of commercialization on different types of tourists and destination images

First of all, this study finds that the majority of tourists were concerned about the commercialization. Although levels of commercialization on each mountain are different, more than half of tourists express their strong concerns about this issue. The preservation and management of these sites in the future can be built on these findings. Some suggestions will also be provided for improving the site management and development in the final chapter of this thesis.

Furthermore, according to the two dimension model of perceived commercialization and spiritual values, religious tourists can be divided into four types. For both focused and worried pilgrims, they obtain diverse spiritual values, like being close to nature, feeling the

power of Buddha, finding the meaning of life, and becoming more hopeful and optimistic for the uncertain future. These spiritual values will affect their attitudes and cultivate their personalities, and then have subsequent positive impact on their daily life (Collins-Kreiner, 2010; Homayouni, 2011). But worried pilgrims and tourists both have a strong sense of over-commercialization at sacred sites. There are so many kinds of commercial behaviours surrounding the Buddhist temples. These behaviours weaken the atmosphere of religious culture and disturb traditional Buddhist rituals (Joseph & Kavoori, 2001). So in this case, the religious heritage may be overwhelmed by modern construction and services (Henderson, 2011). There are a few tourists visiting sacred sites only for sightseeing or accompanying with their family members, colleagues or friends. For them, issues about spiritual values are not prominent and they pay little attention to commercial activities.

Additionally, demographic characteristics play an important role for the four types of religious tourists. This study finds that tourists to these FGBMs who are in their 20s tend to report higher levels of spiritual values. In contrast, when achieving more knowledge and social experience in different work areas after becoming 30 years old, they will be more likely to worry about the commercialization of sacred places.

Finally, tourists' impressions of the FGBMs can be categorized as four groups. In these groups, tourists have different levels of spiritual values. These values are enhanced by tourists' Buddhist beliefs, devoted acts, traditional rituals, cultural architectures, and natural features. But many commercial activities, non-standard staff services, low quality of tourism products, and environmental pollution tend to negatively affect tourists' impressions on these religious sites. Further, the above issues at FGBMs can weaken tourists' perceptions of spiritual values.

Overall, this study has attempted to explain the link between commercialization and spiritual values. In addition, this study has analysed key factors that influence tourists' impressions on the FGBMs and their spiritual values. Again there are some limitations in this research, which will be reviewed in the final chapter. It is important to note that male tourists were more active than females in participating in the research program, perhaps because females tend to be afraid of being cheated or harassed by strangers in these tourism destinations. Nevertheless, the work offers a solid beginning for thinking about the links between tourists' spiritual values and commercialization and steps to manage the apparent difficulties will be provided in the final chapter.

Chapter 7. FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, AND THE FUTURE OF CHINESE RELIGIOUS TOURISM

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7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings, implications and limitations of these studies about the FGBMs. Firstly, key points from the research findings will be discussed from three aspects: religious commercialization, religious tourists' spiritual values, and their internal linkages. Secondly, the ways these findings contribute to the academic literature, and practical management for religious tourism will be considered. In addition, this chapter will review the limitations of the current studies, and propose directions for further research. Finally, the trajectory of religious tourism development in China will be predicted. Some possible opportunities and challenges for developing religious tourism sustainably will be highlighted.

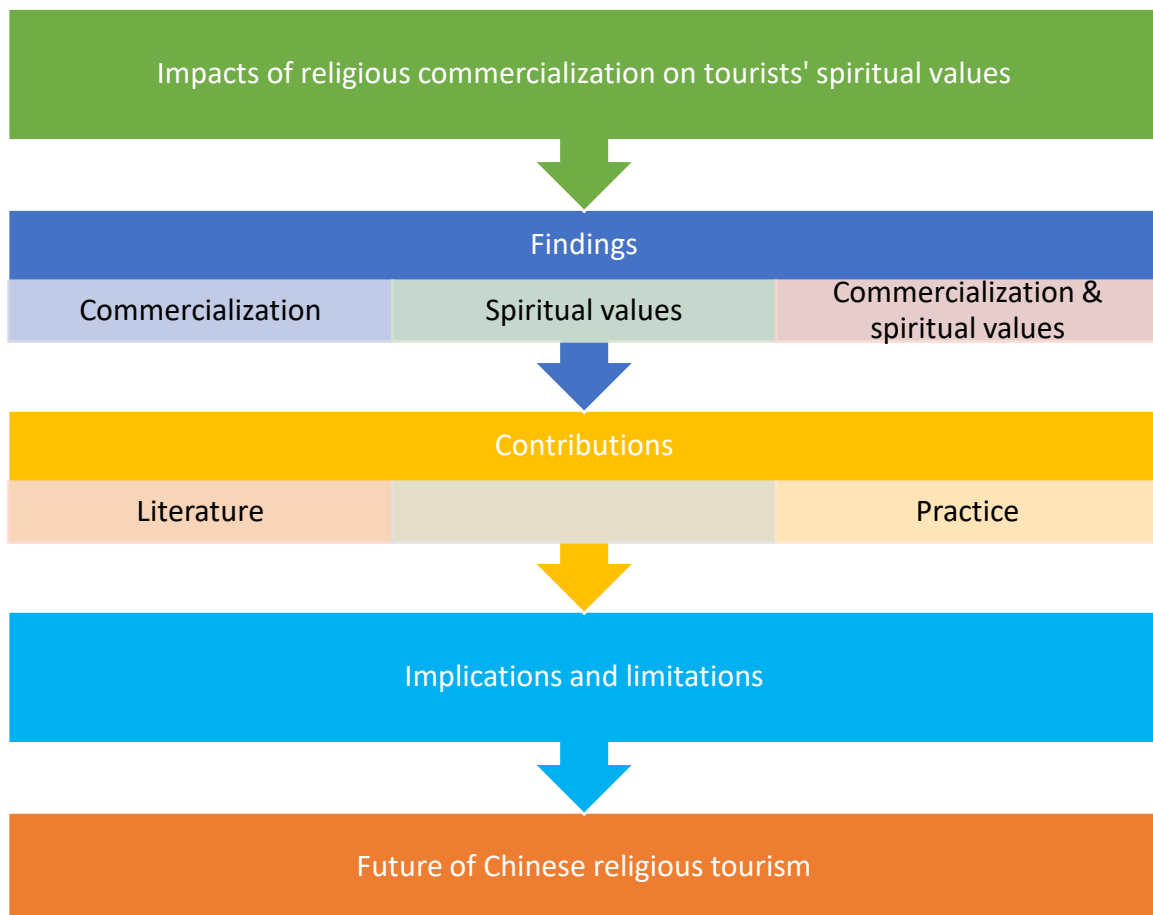


Figure 7.1 Framework for Chapter 7

7.2 Research findings

7.2.1 Commercialization of Buddhist sites

Findings from the interviews. The interviews revealed that tourists' spending at the FGBMs could be divided into three parts: entry expenses, living expenses, and extra expenses. The majority of tourists' expenses were spent on entry and transport tickets, and basic needs (accommodations, and food and drinks). Meanwhile, some tourists were willing to buy souvenirs and local products, and join in entertainment activities during the trip.

Although it is necessary for religious places to provide diverse products to meet tourists' needs, the emerging commercial activities appear to have negative impacts on the tourists' feelings. Most tourists are sensitive to product prices and any staff behaviours promoting commercialization. In particular, the price of tourism products, especially food and drinks in the scenic area were several times higher than tourists' expected. Only a few tourists readily accepted the high product prices by taking transport and remote labour force issues into consideration. In addition, tourists' felt confused about unclear or unmarked product prices, so they had to bargain about the goods with local sellers. Additionally, tourists were quite annoyed at being cheated if they realised they had purchased fake products.

Besides the price and quality of tourism products, the approaches by staff to service seriously affected tourists' experiences. Some staff may have been very kind and friendly to tourists who were willing to buy many tourism products or donate lots of money to temples, but many others showed little respect or care for the tourists. Further, a lot of the religious tourists had a sense of "forced" consumption, because they had been influenced by sellers or even religious staff in different ways. All these phenomena tend to influence tourists' overall impression of the Buddhist sites.

Findings from the survey. The survey work, with a large sample of religious tourists, provided a more objective way to evaluate tourists' feelings about the commercialization of the Buddhist sites. The results revealed that most tourists did perceive a certain level of commercialization at FGBMs.

More specifically, in the tourists' views, shopping was the most commercial category at the religious sites. Too many religious tourism products were seen as sold in stores and street stalls. At the same time, many mobile pedlars were present on the way up to the mountain. In terms of accommodation and food and drinks, the findings differed from the interview results. Tourists in the survey only perceived a lower level of less desirable commercialization for two categories. They did not think there were too many accommodation places or restaurants at the FGBMs. The results suggested tourists were more willing to spend money on their basic needs rather than extra shopping or entertainment in religious places. In addition, the findings also suggested that the price of entrance tickets was higher than the tourists' expectations. Such prices may keep many potential secular tourists and loyal Buddhism believers away from religious places.

Findings from the blogs. The blogs evaluated tourists' attitudes towards different categories of commercial activities. Overall, there were many more negative comments than positive remarks. Among the Four Great Buddhist Mountains, Mount Emei was seen as be the most commercial site followed by Mount Wutai, Mount Putuo, and Mount Jiuhua.

In terms of specific categories, food and drinks, and accommodation received the most negative comments. In common with the interview study, tourists felt dissatisfied with the high prices and the low quality of basic needs provided by hotels and restaurants. Although

the survey study suggested that the price and number of basic needs were acceptable, tourists' experiences were seriously influenced by these living expenses in the religious places. It is noted that tourists were reluctant to purchase products following the suggestions of tour guides, strolling sellers, and even religious staff. Especially in the shopping areas, some tourists highlighted that they had been cheated or forced into purchasing items on the trip.

Overall, commercialization is a common issue at the FGBMs, with negative consequences for the tourists' experiences (Figure 7.2). The arrow in the Figure 7.2 indicates a direction for seriousness of commercial activities at the Buddhist sites. Shopping, food and drinks, and accommodation were the most commercial categories. The influence of transport, entrance ticket, and entertainment on the tourists was not so serious. The main problems in shopping were forced consumption, cheating behaviours, unclear prices, and bogus products. For the basic expenses, tourists were more concerned with price and the quality of products. Besides the tourism products, tourists also paid attention to the attitudes and behaviours of scenic staff, monks/nuns, and local residents.

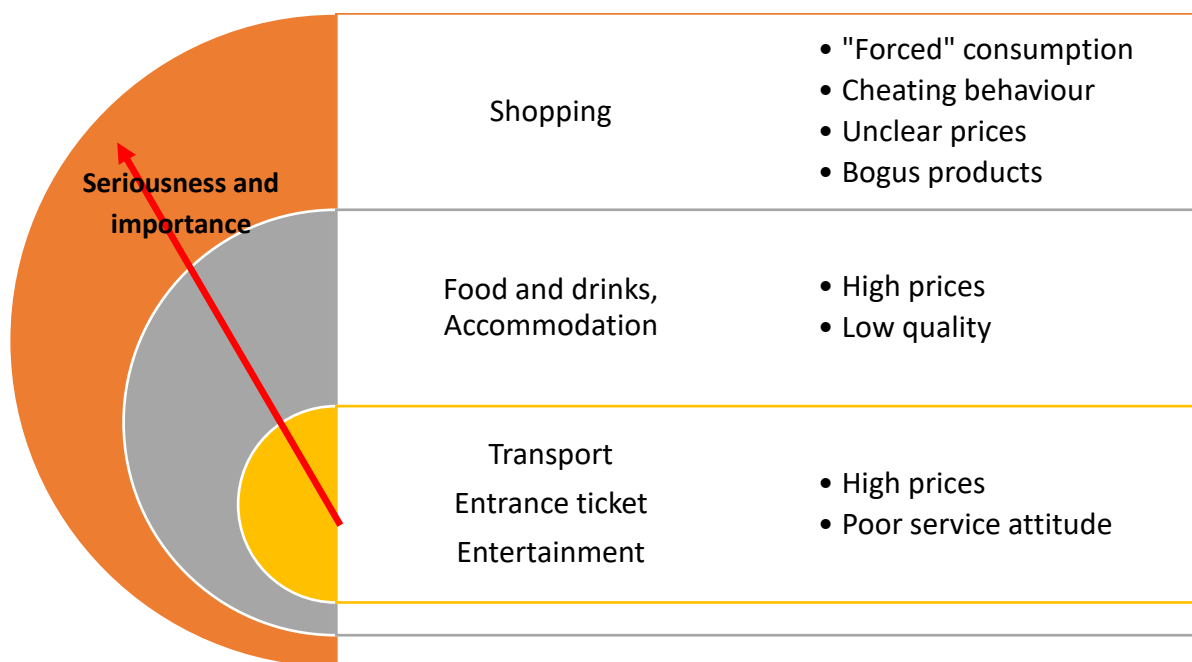


Figure 7.2 Issue of commercial concerns

7.2.2 Spiritual values of religious tourists

Findings from the interviews. The interviews revealed that tourists' spiritual values were shaped by a series of factors. These factors could be divided into three levels: tourists themselves, other people, and the local environment. For tourists themselves, they paid attention to their inner feelings and try to find their true selves. Tourists' spiritual values were also greatly influenced by others' attitudes and behaviours. Other people include their families, friends, colleagues, other tourists, scenic staff, local residents, monks and nuns. In terms of the local environment, tourists' spiritual values can be cultivated by both natural and cultural elements in religious places. The natural elements are mountains, plants, wild animals, and the weather. The cultural elements were temples, traditional rituals, statues, and decorations.

More specifically, the different factors could affect diverse spiritual values. Firstly, tourists themselves want to know more about the essence and meaning of life. Owing to the complexity of social life, many people seem to get lost in the material world. The trip to the sacred Buddhist sites can open a new window for them to look at the world in a fresh way. Thus many tourists can realize the importance of enjoying a peaceful life. Secondly, during the trip tourists can meet many kinds of people, some of whom will make them feel the kindness and friendliness of loyal Buddhists and local residents. Meanwhile, their relationship with families, friends or colleagues can be enhanced. As a result, they tend to value friendship, affection and love more. Finally, it is important for tourists to live in harmony with the environment. On the one hand, they do get close to nature and have a strong sense of belonging. They also enjoy attractive scenery and feel the supreme power of nature. In the meantime, they try to appreciate wild animals and even insects. They reported that all forms of life are spiritual beings and noted that everything is created equally. They

were also moved by the strong cultural atmosphere at the Buddhist sites. The temples, statues and traditional rituals are typical symbols of Buddha's greatness, wisdom and mercy.

Therefore, visiting such a sacred place, tourists felt very relaxed and happy.

Findings from the survey. The survey explored the factors defining the tourists' spiritual values. Five factors were extracted from the exploratory factor analysis. They were transcendence, general connectedness, inner balance, positive life direction, and special religious feelings. Transcendence means that tourists had a general sense of belonging, and viewed themselves as a tiny part of the universe. Meanwhile, they forgave other people who had previously hurt them. General connectedness implied that tourists were willing to keep a good relationship with all forms of life on earth. Inner balance and positive life direction implied that tourists had understood their inner resources, and they tried to accept their true selves and hold positive attitudes towards the uncertain future. As for specific religious feelings, this factor defined the view that tourists had a strong sense of being close to Buddha by visiting Buddhist sites. And they can also feel an inner strength generated by the religious beliefs.

In addition, the measurement scale to test the religious tourists' spiritual values was evaluated by confirmatory factor analysis. The findings suggested that both the validity and reliability of this model were good. It had a satisfactory model fit with a significant probability and other indices. In the meantime, the composite reliability and average variance extracted were at an acceptable level, which ensured the overall reliability of the instrument.

Finally, this study assessed the relative importance of the extracted factors based on mean factor scores. The findings suggested that inner balance and specific religious feelings were

the factors that tourists cared about most. Armed with strong beliefs and inner strength, they can be more optimistic and confident about the future, and then tried to build a good relationship with other people and nature. Further, tourists were able to transcend themselves and paid attention to the whole environment. The detailed findings in this study established multiple links between the interview and survey data.

7.2.3 Impacts of religious commercialization on tourists' spiritual values

Findings from the second round of interviews. The findings suggested that more than half of religious tourists had a high level of spiritual values, and the majority of them were influenced by the high level of commercialization. Tourists did enjoy the strong cultural and religious atmosphere, but were concerned about the negative impacts of commercial activities at the same time.

For the different groups of tourists, their feelings about commercialization were varied because of their religious beliefs and engagement during the trip (Figure 7.3). Firstly, focused and worried pilgrims had strong religious beliefs and a high level of spiritual values. Focused pilgrims were highly involved in the worshipping process and seeking spiritual goals through the sacred trip. Worried pilgrims were more concerned with the future of religious places. Worried pilgrims paid more attention to the sustainable development of religion, and they think over-commercialization can threaten traditional rituals and weaken the atmosphere. Worried tourists were seriously influenced by a variety of commercial activities as well. They were afraid of being cheated by local people and staff, which may negatively affect their deep experience and pursuit of spiritual support. Further, these tourists did express the view that the commercial environment would weaken their intention to return. Finally, there were only a few tourists who were indifferent to commercial activities. These tourists were attracted by

the natural beauty or had visited the settings due to recommendations from their families or friends. In their view, all tourist attractions were the same, and it was common for tourism destinations to develop local commercial businesses.

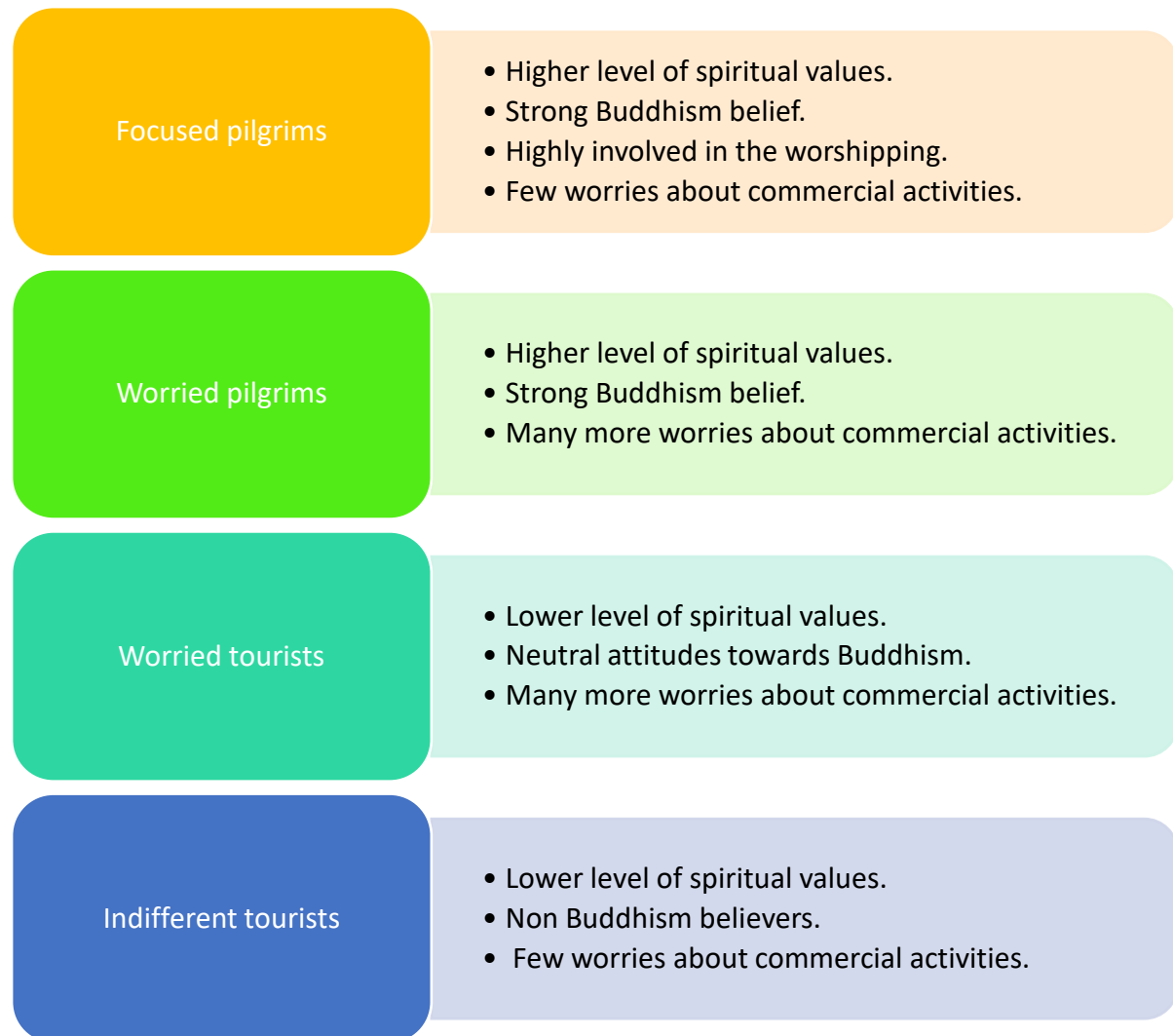


Figure 7.3 Impacts of commercialization on different types of religious tourists

Findings from the third round of interviews. The second set of findings suggested that the tourism destination images of the FGBMs can also be divided into four patterns: sacred with high spiritual values, cultural with long histories, attractive with natural features, and commercial with shops and restaurants (Figure 7.4). This study was conceived at a broader

level than the previous work in order to contextualize the forces shaping the image of the FGBMs. Around half of tourists thought that these mountains were sacred or cultural and full of religious and traditional elements. But the other half expressed the view that these mountains were famous principally for their natural features. Only a few tourists regarded these mountains as over commercialized. However, commercialisation was a persistent negative factor for all four groups.



Figure 7.4 Impacts of commercialization on different types of tourism destination images

For group 1, the Buddhist sites were thought to be sacred, because most tourists were loyal Buddhists with a high level of spiritual values. Tourists' spiritual values were strengthened by many kinds of factors. These factors can be categorized as internal and external factors. The internal factors were their inner strength, courage, hope, and attachment to Buddha. And the external factors were other people's attitudes and behaviours. But tourists' spiritual values can also be badly influenced by commercial activities. Many were annoyed with different kinds of commercial behaviours at FGBMs.

For groups 2 and 3, the Buddhist sites were thought to be pre-eminently cultural or natural. Tourists in these two groups did obtain some spiritual values from their visit. Their values were positively cultivated by both the objective environment and subjective behaviours. For the objective environment, tourists were interested in the many and varied traditional temples and natural features. For the subjective behaviours, tourists had a sense of empathic involvement while observing other tourists' or Buddhists' loyal behaviours. Similar to group 1, the tourists in these groups did hold negative attitudes towards commercial activities. Besides commercialization, they were concerned with secularization, environmental pollution, and the modernity of the religious places.

For the last group, Buddhist sites were thought to be over commercialized. It was hard for such tourists to generate any spiritual values from these Buddhist sites. Owing to the commercial activities, tourists were very disappointed, and they were unable to experience the sacredness and pureness of Buddhism.

7.3 Research contributions

7.3.1 Contribution to literature

This study makes a contribution to the academic literature on religious tourism by identifying different categories of commercial activities and their impacts on tourists' experiences. Past research mainly emphasises the importance of religious tourism to improve the local economy (Rinschede, 1992; Uriely, et al., 2003; Liu, et al, 2009), but the side effects of emerging commercial activities are easily neglected. Although a few scholars have discussed the potential threats of religious commercialization (Singh, 2004; Raj & Morpeth, 2007; Wong, et al., 2013), no research has systematically explored details about commercial behaviours at religious sites. This study finds that commercial activities do exist and it is a common issue at Buddhist sites (Huang, 2011; Huang & Chen, 2009; Zhang & Sun, 2008). These commercial activities can be identified in three domains and divided into seven categories. Each category of religious commercialization has been well analysed. This work thus provides a panorama an overview, for understanding the commercial activities at religious sites.

Additionally, this study makes a contribution by exploring tourists' attitudes towards diverse commercial activities. As Singh (2004) and Hughes et al. (2013) have mentioned, many tourism products and services are supplied to attract different types of "clients" at religious sites. But past studies have not further discussed whether or not religious tourists like various products and services. This study indicates that tourists' experiences are seriously influenced by different kinds of commercial activities. They are dissatisfied with high prices, low quality of products, cheating behaviours, and "forced" consumption. Similar to Kasim's view (2011), a few tourists emphasise that the FGBMs are over-commercialized and have

become a money-spinner. Further, the loss of authenticity and sacredness of religious sites may weaken some tourists' intention to return (Pearce, et al., 2011).

Finally, this study makes a contribution in terms of values. Many scholars have tried to define and explain values. Past research suggests that values are core determinants of tourists' motivations, attitudes, and behaviours (Rokeach, 1973; Gountas et al., 2000). In religious tourism study, Ming (2008) claims that culture has great influence on tourists' thoughts, values and daily behaviours. But past studies mainly focus on religious tourists' motivations, satisfaction, and behaviours (Smith, 1992; Digance, 2003; Lankford, et al., 2005; Shuo, et al., 2009; Hyde & Harman, 2011; Wong et al., 2013). No study identified by the researcher has tried to explore what kinds of spiritual values tourists can obtain at religious sites. This study has filled in the gap by extracting themes and factors about spiritual values of religious tourists in the Chinese context.

For the Chinese, their values are quite different from western people's values. Chinese values are affected by the combination of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Confucianism defines good qualities of an individual, such as loyalty, kindness, politeness, wisdom, and integrity (Bond, 1986; Moise, 1995), and also emphasises the importance of harmonious relationship with others (Mok & DeFranco, 2000). Taoism pays attention to the unity of heaven and man, and suggests that people should behave following two forces: Yang (the positive or the male elements of being) and Yin (the negative or female elements) (Shin, 2001). Unlike Confucianism and Taoism, Buddhism aims to end the rounds of rebirth, so people can obtain greater happiness (Xu, 2004). Influenced by the combined cultural thoughts, Chinese tourists tend to be traditional, collectivistic, authority-oriented, inter-dependant, and harmonious.

This study suggests that Chinese spiritual values are highly related to tourists' inner resources, other people's behaviours, and the natural and cultural environment. People can obtain mental health and know better about essence and meaning of life (Xu, 2004; Homayouni, 2011). Tourists are willing to preserve a good relationship with others and the environment. Further, they intend to be kinder and friendlier in post trip life. Overall, spiritual values help tourists develop their social skills, attitude, and life, by making them more hopeful and optimistic in the face of difficulties (Homayouni, 2011).

This study further contributes to religious tourism studies by exploring the content of spiritual values in a Chinese tourism context. The interview study analyses seven themes of tourists' spiritual values: (1) a new window for life; (2) the need for religious beliefs; (3) importance of closer relationships; (4) inspiration from others; (5) enlightenment from nature; (6) the symbolism of wild animals and insects; and (7) sacredness of symbolic properties. And the extracted five factors from the survey study are transcendence, general connectedness, inner balance, positive life direction and specific religious feelings.

Like values studies in western countries, tourists do need religious beliefs (Stark, 1999; Fletcher, 2004; Homayouni, 2011; Watkins & Gnoth, 2011). As Collins-Kreiner (2010) has found, the most meaningful experience of religious tourists is the pilgrimage itself. So many tourists enjoy the worshipping process where they can get much closer to Buddha. The power of religious beliefs can help them understand their inner resources and further keep inner balance in life. Additionally, tourists' spiritual values can be affected by other people's words and deeds (Collins-Kreiner, 2010; Pearce, 2005; Yagi & Pearce, 2007; Watkins & Gnoth, 2011). This study finds that closer relationships with others is of great importance to tourists.

During the sacred trip, tourists can share their interests and experiences with their companions and other people. The interpersonal communication helps tourists generate a sense of belonging and connectedness. Meanwhile, tourists can obtain support, respect, and love from others (Fletcher, 2004; Madrigal & Kahle, 1994). Further, tourists' spiritual values are cultivated by different cultural symbols (Hadaway, 1978; Hadden, 1995). The social adaptation theory also suggests that people tend to seek balance in life by adapting to their environment which will shape their values (Kahle, 1983). Thus, the temples, statues, rituals, and other traditions will generate special meaning for tourists.

However, this study suggests tourists obtain different spiritual values from western research in terms of general connectedness. In Howden's study (1992), unifying interconnectedness mainly emphasises the human relations. This study reveals that tourists are concerned with the natural environment in the Chinese context. Tourists can feel the supreme power of Buddha by observing phenomena of the sky phenomena and natural features. This power can be influenced by both the thoughts of Buddhism and Taoism (Shin, 2001). Further, all forms of life are regarded as spiritual beings. Thus, tourists think that it is important for them to respect other forms of life and keep a good relationship with the whole environment. The sacred journey can open a new window for many tourists.

Moreover, this study contributes to the theory by measuring the relative importance of religious tourists' spiritual values. Past research mainly identify different kinds of values (Rokeach, 1973; Howden, 1992; Watkins & Gnoth, 2011; Homayouni, 2011). But whether or not these values are equally important to people, especially for religious tourists, have not been discussed before. Through the analysis of mean factor scores, this study finds that inner balance and specific religious feelings are followed by other three factors. This implies that

tourists tend to care more about things which are closer to them, such as their inner feelings, true selves, and the meaning of life.

7.3.2 Contribution to practice

This study contributes to practice by analysing impacts of commercialization on tourists' spiritual values. The findings suggest that commercialization does indeed have negative influences on tourists' spiritual values and their perceived images of Buddhist sites. General suggestions are provided for the improvement of the FGBMs.

Due to the differences of commercial activities at the FGBMs, the specific suggestions are supplied for local management. For Mount Wutai, the price of entrance tickets and tourism products are the most concerning commercial categories. So it is necessary to set a reasonable price for the entrance ticket. Meanwhile, controlling the number of entrance tickets for different temples is important to improve tourists' impression of this mountain. In addition, many beggars exist in the scenic area. Properly managing these beggars' behaviours is essential to improve tourists' experience as well.

Mount Emei is seen as the most commercial Buddhist site. Besides the high price of entrance ticket, accommodation, and food and drinks, many tourists complain about the cheating and soliciting behaviours in the scenic area. Thus, it is urgent for the scenic managers to standardize the business behaviors and improve service quality. Further, unlike other three mountains, some entertainment programs do weaken tourists' spiritual values. These programs, such as skiing, springs, and mini-trains, make Mount Emei a leisure and recreational destination. This will weaken tourists' spiritual values by overshadowing the

religious atmosphere. So reducing these sorts of entertainment programs or moving them outside the religious places can enhance tourists' spiritual values.

For Mount Jiuhua and Mount Putuo, tourists pay attention to the high price of tourism products. By contrast with Mount Wutai and Mount Emei, tourists perceive a lower level of commercialization at these two mountains. But it is also necessary to set reasonable and clear prices for different kinds of products. Further, "forced" spending and soliciting behaviours do exist at Mount Jiuhua and Mount Putuo. So the standardization and service improvement are important to develop religious tourism sustainably.

Several suggestions can also be provided for different stakeholders to develop religious tourism sustainably. For administrations, it is better to control the size and number of commercial places, like hotels, restaurants, and stores. Too many commercial places tend to cast a shadow on the glory of temples. Meanwhile, the modern buildings seem to be unmatched with traditional Buddhism temples and statues. For businessmen, to consider the quality of products and set reasonable price is a pathway to attract more returning customers. For scenic and religious staff, to improve service quality is necessary, because tourists are very sensitive to staff attitudes and behaviours.

Further, this study also proposes some key points to improve religious tourists' spiritual values. On one hand, it is important to avoid the over commercialization of religious places. Consequently, the weakening factors that have negative effects on tourists' spiritual values can be reduced to some extent. On the other hand, it is necessary to decrease secularization of monks or nuns and revive traditional rituals. These directions can be useful to enhance

overall religious atmosphere. More importantly, encouraging tourists to participate in the rituals is a positive way to cultivate their spiritual values.

7.4 Limitations and implications

As discussed above, this study has made several contributions to both academic research and practical application in religious tourism. There were predictably, some limitations in this research. In the interview study, it was hard to communicate with tourists who had strong local accents. Many tourists were reluctant to be recorded in the interview process. So the researcher had to note down key points in shorthand. Unavoidably, some information was overlooked. For the survey study, older tourists were not willing to answer so many questions in the survey and indeed some of them were illiterate. Further, male tourists were more active than females in participating the research program, presumably because Chinese females tended to be afraid of strangers in these tourism destinations. For the blog study, there was limited information about Buddhist beliefs recorded by the bloggers. It was difficult therefore to study in detail the effect of religious belief on bloggers' attitudes towards commercial activities.

This study provides some implications for further research about religious tourism. These implications can be seen as references for other Buddhist sites or religious places. The first study supports the view that commercial activities do exist at the Chinese Buddhist sites. It is important to explore whether or not the phenomenon occurs at Buddhist sites in other countries or in different religious places. Thus cross-national studies of Buddhist sites and cross-cultural studies of different religions are potential additions to the work conducted in this thesis.

The second study found that tourists obtain different kinds of spiritual values on their sacred trip. But whether these spiritual values have subsequent influence on their post trip life attitudes and behaviours has not been discussed. A longitudinal approach following up the views of religious tourists could be a valuable addition to our understanding of the impacts of the trips. Additionally, it is necessary to compare the differences in spiritual values between domestic tourists and international tourists.

The third study found that religious commercialization affects tourists' spiritual values. But this study employed a qualitative approach. To better understand the relationship between commercialization and spiritual values, more observation of tourists' behaviours need to be done. Further, quantitative analysis can also be adopted to test the effects of commercialization on tourists' spiritual values. Therefore, more data could be collected in the future to do follow-up studies.

7.5 The future of Chinese religious tourism

The future of religious tourism in China looks bright. Religious tourism has a large tourist market and it is supported by government policies. More importantly, many tourists have strong desire to visit religious places regularly.

In terms of tourist market, there are more than 100 million religious believers in mainland China (Religious Tourism in Asia and the Pacific, UNWTO, 2011). The majority of believers visit religious sites frequently. This is a large market for the development of religious tourism. Further, religious sites have attracted many international tourists from the Asia Pacific areas.

The majority of international tourists are from South Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asian countries.

In addition to the large market, many Chinese are seeking to experience religious trips. Due to the combined influence of traditional cultures on Chinese, most people are attached to some type of beliefs. Not only religious believers, but also non-believers show great interest in different religious cultures. Especially in contemporary times, many more people are willing to escape from their noisy and complex routine life. As a result, many mainstream religions have revived, and different religious sites have become popular tourist attractions. As already noted, millions of tourists travel to the Four Great Buddhist Mountains every year (Xiao, 2011). But other minor sites are now witnessing the growth of numbers and public attention.

Importantly, the Chinese government supports the further development of religious tourism. After the implementation of reform and the opening-up policy of 1978, a series of favourable policies have been implemented to promote economic growth and preserve traditional cultures. In January of 2017, the Chinese government has made a new policy, in which the inheritance and development of traditional cultures are highly emphasised (General Office of the Communist Party of China & State Council, 2017). Thus many religious sites, such as monasteries, temples, and historic relics, have been selected as tourist attractions and indicators of cultural heritage.

However, Chinese religious tourist attractions have many competitors from both the domestic and international tourism market. In mainland China, more than 85,000 cultural sites exist across the country (Religious Tourism in Asia and the Pacific, UNWTO, 2011). Nearly all

local government managing these cultural sites want to promote economic growth by developing a strong tourism industry. Further, many new cultural resources are emerging, such as theme parks (Shanghai Disney Park) and creative arts. This has led to the highly competitive market of cultural tourism. As one component of cultural tourism, religious tourism products may need to be managed carefully to “compete” with these successful secular attractions.

Besides domestic competition, Chinese religious sites are also confronted with external pressure from surrounding regions and European countries. In the Asia Pacific Region, there are many well-known Buddhist sites in Thailand and Sri Lanka; Zen is wide spread in Japan; Hinduism is very popular in India; and Indonesia and Pakistan are very famous for Islam. With the development of outbound tourism, many Chinese may travel abroad to achieve their religious experiences. Additionally, the number of Christians has rapidly increased in recent years. People with Abrahamic faiths are more likely to visit The Holy Land (sites in Israel, Jordan, Egypt and Turkey), Fatima (Portugal), Lourdes (France), and Guadalupe in Mexico (Saltzman, 2010).

In addition to the external competition, the majority of religious sites are faced with the challenge of modernity. Past research suggests that the main characteristics of modernity are commercialization, secularization, and ecological deterioration (Wang, 1999; Dong & Li, 2013). The modernity of religious sites appears to significantly affect the sustainable development of religious tourism (Figure 7.5).

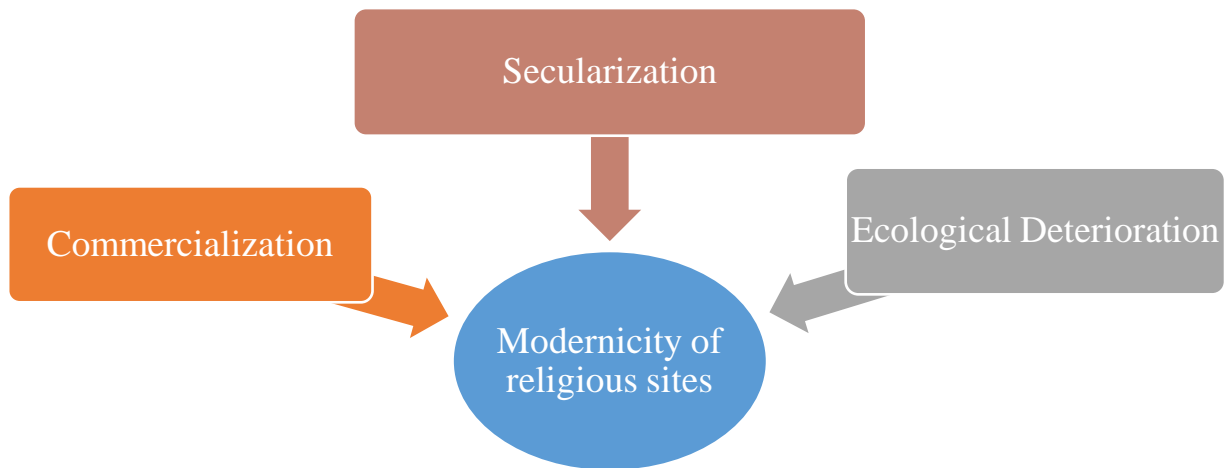


Figure 7.5 The tendency of modernity at religious tourist attractions

This study has found that commercialization does affect religious tourists' experiences and their spiritual values. Once being developed as tourist attractions, religious sites are very likely to assume a commercial ambience (Huang, 2011). Commercialization is an inevitable way to develop religious tourism. But this study suggests that several steps can be taken to limit the commercial behaviours, control the number and size of commercial activities, and improve staff services. All of these steps are useful to reduce the negative effects of commercialization on tourists' experiences.

Secularization of religious staff seems to be another issue. In the interview study, many tourists expressed the view that some monks have become secular and rather worldly. It is surprising to see some monks driving, eating meat, or playing mobile phones. Some monks get married and have an earthly life when they work in the temples. These behaviours violate the teachings of Buddha, and the observed behaviours perhaps weaken tourists' sense of sacredness at Buddhist sites. Further, some monks may force tourists to donate money in temples. This will seriously make tourists uncomfortable or annoyed.

Ecological deterioration is a common issue for tourism destinations. At religious sites, the increasing number of tourists tends to pose threats to the local environment. Over development of religious tourism results in heavy traffic, the waste of resources, and environmental pollution. For example, many plants have been destroyed because of the construction of roads at the Buddhist mountains. Further, the waste may not be removed after the construction.

It is worthy to note that the pluralism of religious differentiation can be an inevitable tendency in modern society (Collins-Kreiner, 2010; Berger, 2014; Woodhead, 2016). It implies that the further development of religious places should be highly connected with other social domains. The boundary between traditional religions and leisure society will become more and more blurry. For example, Buddhist sites can be used for maintaining health or improving well-being. The forms of religious tourism thus will be more diversified in the near future.

Overall, the further development of religious tourism in China is full of opportunities and challenges. The strategic objectives of religious places are not only to promote economic growth, but also inherit traditional culture. For a harmonious future, many stakeholders must take responsibility to protect the resources which are the very basis of religious tourism sites and experiences.

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Appendix 1. Howden's spirituality assessment scale

Order	Items description
1	I can look at things from new and different points of view.
2	I have a general sense of belonging.
3	I am able to forgive people who have done me wrong.
4	I have the ability to rise above or go beyond a physical or psychological condition.
5	I am concerned about destruction of the environment.
6	Relationships are important to me, even though they may be hard.
7	I feel close to nature.
8	I have experienced moments of peace in a devastating event.
9	I feel a kinship to other people.
10	I feel a connection to all of life.
11	I rely on an inner strength in hard times.
12	I enjoy being of service to others.
13	I can go to a spiritual dimension within myself for guidance.
14	I have the ability to rise above or go beyond a body change or body loss.
15	I have a sense of harmony or inner peace.
16	I have the ability for self-healing.
17	I have an inner strength.
18	The boundaries of my universe extend beyond usual ideas of what space and time are thought to be.
19	I feel good about myself.
20	I have a sense of balance in my life.
21	There is fulfillment in my life.
22	I feel a responsibility to preserve the planet.

Source: Howden (1992). Development and psychometric characteristics of the Spirituality Assessment Scale.

Howden's spirituality assessment scale (Continued)

Order	Items description
23	The meaning I have found for my life provides a sense of peace.
24	Even when I feel discouraged, I trust that life is good.
25	My life has meaning and purpose.
26	I provide and/or receive emotional support from my relationships.
27	My innemess or an inner resource helps me deal with uncertainty in life.
28	I value my life.
29	I believe there is a love connection that can exist between all open people.
30	I feel a oneness with the universe and/or a Supreme Being.
31	I have discovered my own strength in times of struggle.
32	Reconciling relationships is important to me.
33	I feel a part of the community in which I live.
34	I have a relationship with a Supreme Being or Higher Power.
35	My inner strength is related to a belief in a Higher Power or Supreme Being.
36	I have goals and aims for my life.

Source: Howden (1992). Development and psychometric characteristics of the Spirituality Assessment Scale.

Appendix 2. Adapted survey for this study

Order	Items description	Scores				
1	The trip makes me look at things from new and different points of view	1	2	3	4	5
2	The trip makes me have a general sense of belonging	1	2	3	4	5
3	The trip makes me forgive people who have done me wrong	1	2	3	4	5
4	The trip makes me go beyond a physical or psychological condition	1	2	3	4	5
5	The trip makes me concerned about destruction of the environment	1	2	3	4	5
6	The trip makes me feel that having a good relationship with others is important	1	2	3	4	5
7	The trip makes me feel close to nature	1	2	3	4	5
8	The trip makes me experience moments of peace in a devastating event	1	2	3	4	5
9	The trip makes me feel a kinship to other people	1	2	3	4	5
10	The trip makes me feel a connection to all of life	1	2	3	4	5
11	The trip makes me rely on an inner strength in hard times	1	2	3	4	5
12	The trip makes me enjoy being of service to others	1	2	3	4	5
13	The trip makes me go to a spiritual dimension within myself for guidance	1	2	3	4	5
14	The trip makes me go beyond a body change or body loss	1	2	3	4	5
15	The trip makes me have a sense of harmony or inner peace	1	2	3	4	5
16	The trip makes me have the ability for self-healing	1	2	3	4	5
17	The trip makes me have an inner strength	1	2	3	4	5
18	The trip makes me have unusual ideas of what space and time are thought to be	1	2	3	4	5
19	The trip makes me feel good about myself	1	2	3	4	5
20	The trip makes me have a sense of balance in my life	1	2	3	4	5
21	The trip makes me have fulfilment in life	1	2	3	4	5
22	The trip makes me feel a responsibility to preserve the planet	1	2	3	4	5

Source: Howden (1992). Development and psychometric characteristics of the Spirituality Assessment Scale.

Adapted survey for this study (Continued)

Order	Items description	Scores				
23	The trip helps me find the meaning for life which provides a sense of peace	1	2	3	4	5
24	The trip makes me trust life is good, even when I feel discouraged	1	2	3	4	5
25	The trip makes my life have meaning and purpose	1	2	3	4	5
26	The trip makes me receive emotional support from my relationships	1	2	3	4	5
27	The trip makes me find inner resource that helps me deal with uncertainty in life	1	2	3	4	5
28	The trip makes me value my life	1	2	3	4	5
29	The trip makes me feel a love connection that exist between all open people	1	2	3	4	5
30	The trip helps me discover my own strength in times of struggle	1	2	3	4	5
31	The trip makes me feel a part of the community in which I live	1	2	3	4	5
32	The trip makes me have a relationship with Buddha and a higher power	1	2	3	4	5
33	The trip makes me feel that inner strength is related to a belief in Buddha	1	2	3	4	5
34	The trip makes me have goals and aims in life	1	2	3	4	5

Source: Howden (1992). Development and psychometric characteristics of the Spirituality Assessment Scale.

Appendix 3. Item-total statistics from exploratory factor analysis

Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
TV1	120.70	483.58	.48	.96
TV2	120.77	478.00	.58	.95
TV3	120.76	478.00	.59	.95
TV4	120.72	476.44	.62	.95
TV5	120.76	486.03	.38	.96
TV6	120.41	483.69	.53	.96
TV7	120.21	485.51	.51	.96
TV8	120.45	480.33	.57	.96
TV9	120.44	477.45	.65	.96
TV10	120.56	477.17	.65	.96
TV11	120.55	476.45	.63	.95
TV12	120.37	481.18	.62	.95
TV13	120.57	476.23	.65	.95
TV14	120.80	475.46	.64	.95
TV15	120.45	480.57	.61	.95
TV16	120.65	476.95	.62	.95
TV17	120.60	476.85	.66	.95
TV18	120.68	476.95	.63	.95
TV19	120.68	477.29	.66	.95
TV20	120.60	477.31	.65	.95
TV21	120.72	477.21	.63	.95
TV22	120.51	478.90	.60	.95

Note: TV represents the numbered items from Table 5-2.

Item-total statistics from exploratory factor analysis (Continued)

Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
TV23	120.53	476.18	.68	.95
TV24	120.38	479.35	.66	.95
TV25	120.54	476.23	.66	.95
TV26	120.47	478.19	.65	.95
TV27	120.51	477.08	.70	.95
TV28	120.43	478.10	.63	.95
TV29	120.47	478.08	.63	.95
TV30	120.52	477.23	.68	.95
TV31	120.62	477.77	.62	.95
TV32	120.67	476.01	.62	.95
TV33	120.64	475.96	.62	.95
TV34	120.84	479.16	.50	.96

Note: TV represents the numbered items from Table 5-2.

Appendix 4. ANOVA Results for demographics and tourist spiritual values

	Factors	P Value	Explanation of result
Gender	F1: Transcendence	.27	Men and women are same
	F2: General connectedness	.02	Men and women are significant different
	F3: Inner balance	.04	Men and women are significant different
	F4: Positive life direction	.58	Men and women are same
	F5: Specific religious feelings	.40	Men and women are same
Marriage	F1: Transcendence	.00	Married and non-married are significant different
	F2: General connectedness	.03	Married and non-married are significant different
	F3: Inner balance	.89	Married and non-married are same
	F4: Positive life direction	.00	Married and non-married are different
	F5: Specific religious feelings	.76	Married and non-married are same
Age	F1: Transcendence	.03	There are significant differences in different ages
	F2: General connectedness	.22	There are no differences in different ages
	F3: Inner balance	.53	There are no differences in different ages
	F4: Positive life direction	.01	There are significant differences in different ages
	F5: Specific religious feelings	.30	There are no differences in different ages

Note: The difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

ANOVA Results for demographics and tourist spiritual values (Continued)

	Factors	P Value	Explanation of result
Occupation	F1: Transcendence	.18	There are no differences in different occupations
	F2: General connectedness	.10	There are no differences in different occupations
	F3: Inner balance	.36	There are no differences in different occupations
	F4: Positive life direction	.00	There are significant differences in different occupations
	F5: Specific religious feelings	.04	There are significant differences in different occupations
Buddhism Belief	F1: Transcendence	.03	There are significant differences in different degree of Buddhism belief
	F2: General connectedness	.00	There are significant differences in different degree of Buddhism belief
	F3: Inner balance	.00	There are significant differences in different degree of Buddhism belief
	F4: Positive life direction	.00	There are significant differences in different degree of Buddhism belief
	F5: Specific religious feelings	.00	There are significant differences in different degree of Buddhism belief

Note: The difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

ANOVA Results for demographics and tourist spiritual values (Continued)

	Factors	P Value	Explanation of result
Religious Travel Frequency	F1: Transcendence	.02	There are significant differences in different travel frequencies
	F2: General connectedness	.33	There are no differences in different travel frequencies
	F3: Inner balance	.05	There are significant differences in different travel frequencies
	F4: Positive life direction	.00	There are significant differences in different travel frequencies
	F5: Specific religious feelings	.01	There are significant differences in different travel frequencies

Note: The difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Appendix 5. The First Round of Interview Questions (English)

Demographic Information

1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female 2. Marriage Status ☐ Married ☐ Single
3. Age: ☐ Under 18 years old ☐ 18-35 ☐ 36-55 ☐ Above 55 years old
4. Education: ☐ Under senior high school ☐ Technical and Vocational school
☐ College/ University ☐ Postgraduate or above
5. Occupation: ☐ Companies ☐ Government Departments ☐ Personal Business
☐ Educational/Academic Institutions ☐ Students ☐ Others
6. Buddhism Belief: ☐ Not at all ☐ Moderately ☐ Very high
7. Frequency of Visiting Religious Sites Annually: ()
8. Place of Residence: ()

1. Please use as many words as you can to describe the commercial activities of this site.

2. Are there any commercial activities at this site which annoyed or bothered you?

3. Please use as many words as you can to describe the spiritual aspects of this site.

4. Overall what do you think of the way this site is working?

Appendix 6. The First Round of Interview Questions (Mandarin)

基本信息:

-
- | | | | | | |
|------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. 性别: | <input type="checkbox"/> 男 | <input type="checkbox"/> 女 | 2. 婚姻状况: | <input type="checkbox"/> 已婚 | <input type="checkbox"/> 单身 |
| 3. 年龄: | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 岁以下 | <input type="checkbox"/> 18-35 岁 | <input type="checkbox"/> 36-55 岁 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 岁以上 | |
| 4. 教育: | <input type="checkbox"/> 高中以下 | <input type="checkbox"/> 专科学校 | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 本科 | <input type="checkbox"/> 硕士及以上 | | | |
| 5. 职业: | <input type="checkbox"/> 公司 | <input type="checkbox"/> 政府部门 | <input type="checkbox"/> 做生意 | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 教育/科研 | <input type="checkbox"/> 学生 | <input type="checkbox"/> 其他 | | |
| 6. 佛教: | <input type="checkbox"/> 不信仰 | <input type="checkbox"/> 一般 | <input type="checkbox"/> 非常信仰 | | |
| 7. 宗教旅行次数: | () | | | | |
| 8. 工作生活省份: | () | | | | |

第一部分:

-
1. 请您使用尽量多的文字或语句来描述该佛教圣地的商业活动。

2. 请问该佛教圣地哪些商业活动会让您觉得厌烦或不舒服?

第二部分:

-
3. 请您使用尽量多的文字或语句来描述该佛教圣地具有哪些方面的精神价值。

第三部分:

-
4. 在整体上, 您觉得该佛教圣地的运营方式如何?

Appendix 7. The Second Round of Interview Questions (English)

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Age: ☐ Under 18 years old ☐ 18-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-60 ☐ Above 60 years old

1. What's your main feeling about this site?

- ☐ Sacred with high spiritual values
- ☐ Cultural with long histories
- ☐ Attractive with natural features
- ☐ Commercial with shops and restaurants

2. What contribute positively to your feeling at this site?

3. What contribute negatively or spoil your feeling at this site?

4. How strong is your belief in Buddhism?

- ☐ Very strong ☐ Strong ☐ Neutral ☐ A little ☐ Not at all

Appendix 8. The Second Round of Interview Questions (Mandarin)

性别: ☐ 男性 ☐ 女性

年龄: ☐ 18 岁以上 ☐ 18-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-60 ☐ 60 岁以上

1. 请问您对该佛教旅游圣地的主要感受是?

☐ 神圣的, 有强烈的精神感受

☐ 文化浓厚的, 历史非常悠久

☐ 自然环境非常好, 很有吸引力

☐ 商业化的, 很多餐馆和购物商店

2. 哪些因素能够积极的增强您的这种感受?

3. 哪些因素会消极的减弱您的这种感受?

4. 请问您对佛教的信仰程度?

☐ 非常强烈

☐ 比较强烈

☐ 一般

☐ 比较少

☐ 基本没有

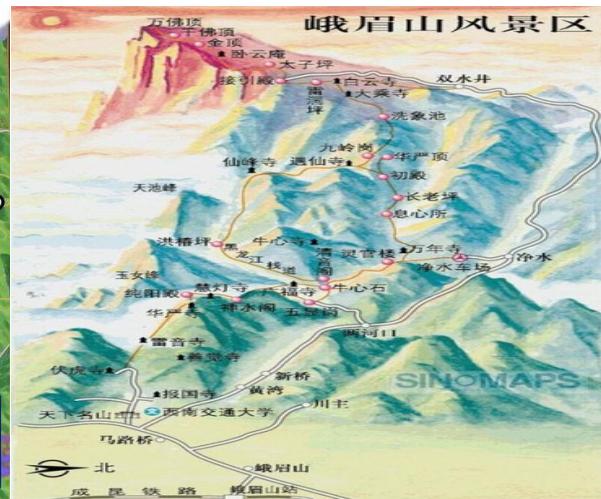
Appendix 9. Survey on commercial activities and tourist spiritual values at Four Great Buddhist Mountains (English)

This survey is designed to help researchers, local communities and tourism industry to understand the degree of commercialisation at Four Great Buddhist Mountains in China and its influence on tourist values. This survey is conducted by Keji Huang, for his PhD study at James Cook University, Australia. The results will provide implications for the sustainable development of religious tourism. This research will make protection of personal information and all data collected will only be used for academic studies. It takes you about 10 minutes to complete this survey. Thanks for your kind cooperation.

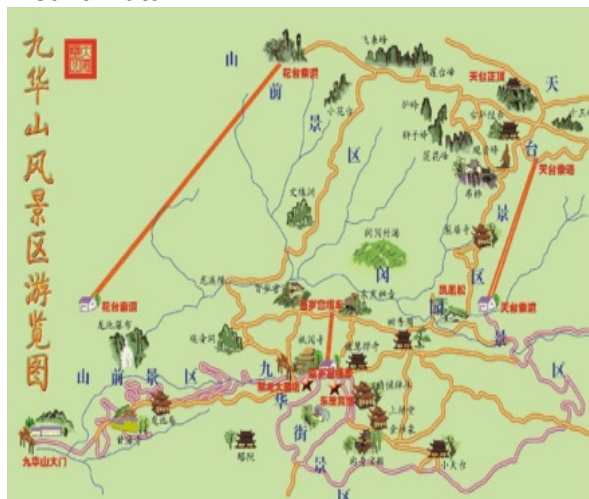
Four Chinese Great Buddhist Mountains



Mount Wutai



Mount Emei




Mount Jiuhua



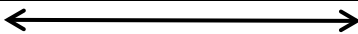
Mount Putuo

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Undecided	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree

Part 1 Commercial Activities

	Disagreed Agreed						
							
Entrance Tickets	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many entrance tickets at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of ticket is expensive at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Food and Beverage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many hotels and restaurants at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of food and beverage are expensive at hotels and restaurants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many food stalls at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of food and beverage are expensive at stalls	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many bars (Coffee, Tea, or Wine) at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of food and beverage in bars are expensive at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Accommodation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many star hotels at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of accommodation is expensive at star hotels	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many budget hotels at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of accommodation is expensive at budget hotels	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many family houses at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of accommodation is expensive in family houses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many hostels at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of accommodation is expensive at hostels	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many beds provided by the temples	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of accommodation is expensive in temples	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Shopping	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many supermarkets and stores at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of goods is expensive in supermarkets and stores	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many selling stalls and walking sellers at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of goods is expensive sold by stalls and walking sellers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Entertainment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many KTV, cinemas and nightclubs at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The level of consumption is high in KTV, cinemas and nightclubs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many other entertainment places at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The level of consumption is high at these entertainment places	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Transportation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many tour buses at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of travelling by tour bus is expensive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many electric cars at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of travelling by electric cars is expensive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many cable cars at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The price of travelling by cable cars is expensive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other Businesses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many travel agents, banks, and other businesses at this site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many forced donations at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many monk beggars at this religious site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part 2 Tourist Values

	Disagreed						Agreed
							
The trip makes me look at things from new and different points of view	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me have a general sense of belonging	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me forgive people who have done me wrong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me go beyond a physical or psychological condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me concerned about destruction of the environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me feel that having a good relationship with others is important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me feel close to nature	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me experience moments of peace in a devastating event	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me feel a kinship to other people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me feel a connection to all of life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me rely on an inner strength in hard times	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me enjoy being of service to others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me go to a spiritual dimension within myself for guidance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me go beyond a body change or body loss	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me have a sense of harmony or inner peace	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me have the ability for self-healing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me have an inner strength	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me have unusual ideas of what space and time are thought to be	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me feel good about myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me have a sense of balance in my life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me have fulfilment in life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me feel a responsibility to preserve the planet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip helps me find the meaning for life which provides a sense of peace	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me trust life is good, even when I feel discouraged	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes my life have meaning and purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me receive emotional support from my relationships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me find inner resource that helps me deal with uncertainty in life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me value my life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me feel a love connection that exist between all open people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip helps me discover my own strength in times of struggle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me feel a part of the community in which I live	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me have a relationship with Buddha and a higher power	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me feel that inner strength is related to a belief in Buddha	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The trip makes me have goals and aims in life	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Part 3 Demographic Information

- Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
- Marriage Status ☐ Married ☐ Single
- Age: ☐ Under 18 years old ☐ 18-35 ☐ 36-55 ☐ Above 55 years old
- Education: ☐ Under senior high school ☐ Technical and Vocational school
☐ College/ University ☐ Postgraduate or above
- Occupation: ☐ Companies ☐ Government Departments ☐ Personal Business
☐ Educational/Academic Institutions ☐ Students ☐ Others
- Buddhism Belief: ☐ Not at all ☐ Moderately ☐ Very high
- Frequency of Visiting Religious Sites Annually: ()
- Place of Residence: ()

Appendix 10. Survey on commercial activities and tourist spiritual values at Four Great Buddhist Mountains (Mandarin)

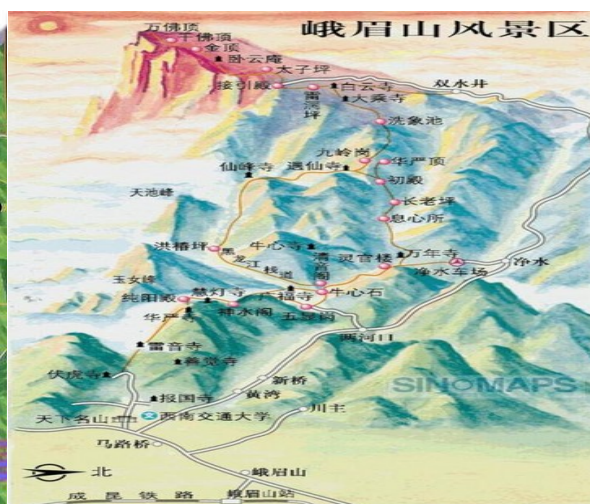
四大佛教名山商业行为和游客精神价值问卷

本问卷旨在帮助研究学者、当地社区以及旅游业深入了解中国四大佛教名山的商业化程度以及其对游客价值的影响。该问卷由黄克己（澳大利亚詹姆斯库克大学商学院博士研究生）进行发放和回收，研究结果将为中国文化旅游业的可持续性发展提供相关建议。另外，该研究将充分保护参与者的个人信息，并且所有数据仅用于学术研究。这可能花费您大约 10 分钟的时间来完成本份问卷，非常感谢您的参与和支持。为了表示感谢，特赠送一些小礼品，希望您能够喜欢。再次感谢您的合作！

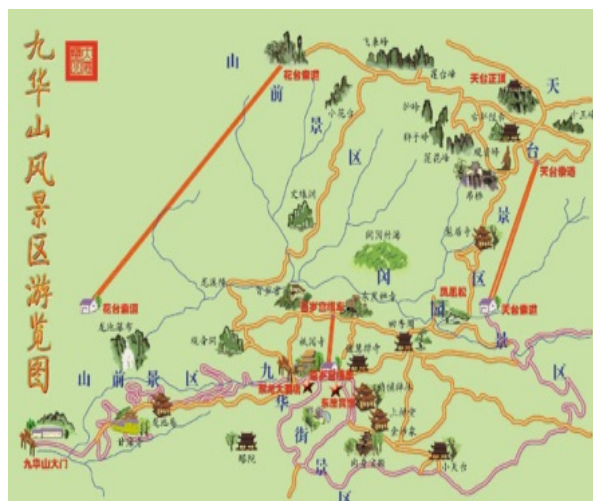
中国四大佛教名山：



五台山



峨眉山



九华山



普陀山

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
非常不同意	比较不同意	一般不同意	不确定	一般同意	比较同意	非常同意

第一部分：商业活动

		非常不同意 不确定 非常同意						
		←—————→						
门 票	该宗教景区需要多种门票	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区门票价格很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
餐 饮	该宗教景区酒店餐馆很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区酒店和餐馆的消费很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区饮食地摊很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区饮食地摊的价格很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区（咖啡/茶/酒）吧很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区（咖啡/茶/酒）吧消费很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
住 宿	该宗教景区星级酒店很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区星级酒店住宿消费很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区经济酒店很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区经济酒店住宿消费很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区家庭旅馆很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区家庭旅馆住宿消费很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区青年旅社很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区青年旅社住宿消费很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区寺庙床位很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区寺庙住宿消费很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
购 物	该宗教景区超市商店很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区超市商店物价很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区贩卖小摊很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区贩卖小摊物价很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
娱 乐	该宗教景区 KTV/电影院/夜晚俱乐部很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区 KTV/电影院/俱乐部消费很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区其他娱乐场所很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区其他娱乐场所消费很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
交 通	该宗教景区观光巴士很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区观光巴士票价很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区游览电车很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区游览电车票价很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区索道缆车很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区索道缆车票价很高	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
其 他	该宗教景区旅行社/银行/其他商业活动很多	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区存在强行买卖或捐款行为	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	该宗教景区很多和尚或乞丐向游客行乞	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

第二部分：游客价值

	非常不同意 不确定 非常同意						
	←—————→						
宗教旅行让我对待事物的看法有所不同	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我感觉到一种归属感	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我谅解曾经伤害过我的人	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我摆脱物质或心理上的束缚	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我关注到自然环境被破坏	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我觉得和他人保持良好关系很重要	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我更加亲近大自然	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我在痛苦或挫折时获得片刻的平静	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我感觉与他人的关系更加亲近	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我感觉和所有的生命都联系在一起	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我在困难的时候依赖于内心力量	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我更加乐意为他人提供帮助	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我寻找到自己精神世界的方向	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
该旅行让我超脱身体上变化或损伤	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我有一种和谐的或内心平静的感觉	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我具备自我康复或疗愈的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我变得内心很强大	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我对空间和时间有一种特殊的认识	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我对自己各方面的表现都感觉良好	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我感觉到自己的生活很平衡	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我感觉到自己的生活很有成就感	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我觉得自己有责任保护地球	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我找到了生活中的意义，从而获得平静	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我相信生活是美好的，即使我失去勇气	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我的生活变得有意义和方向	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我从家人或朋友中获得情感上的支持	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我获得克服生活中不确定性的内在力量	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
该旅行让我更加重视并爱护自己的生活	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我感觉所有开朗的人之间都有爱相连着	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我在艰难痛苦时发现自己内心的力量	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我感觉自己是所生活社区的一部分	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我感觉自己更加接近菩萨或佛祖	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我感觉内在力量与信仰菩萨密切相关	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
宗教旅行让我找到了清晰的生活目的或目标	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

第三部分：基本信息

- 性别: ☐ 男 ☐ 女 2. 婚姻状况: ☐ 已婚 ☐ 单身
- 年龄: ☐ 18 岁以下 ☐ 18-35 岁 ☐ 36-55 岁 ☐ 55 岁以上
- 教育: ☐ 高中以下 ☐ 专科技术学校 ☐ 本科 ☐ 硕士及以上
- 职业: ☐ 公司 ☐ 政府部门 ☐ 做生意
☐ 教育/科研 ☐ 学生 ☐ 其他
- 佛教: ☐ 不信仰 ☐ 一般 ☐ 非常信仰
- 宗教旅行次数: ()
- 工作生活省份: ()