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Shopping destination competitiveness: Scale development and validation

ABSTRACT

As shopping becomes ever more important to tourists, this interest increasingly drives their destination choices. That is, shopping tourists tend to consider destinations as more attractive and competitive if destinations offer key shopping resources. Therefore, this study aims to develop and validate a measurement scale for shopping destination competitiveness, which can provide an identification of shopping- and destination-specific attributes and dimensions. In theoretical terms, this study contributes to the literature by integrating a model of destination competitiveness with a servicescape model and with the current Globe Shopping Index, to investigate shopping destinations at a macro level. 523 usable samples were obtained for data analysis. The findings suggest that shopping destination competitiveness has nine key dimensions: shopping atmosphere, merchandise, store service orientation, affordability, Korean pop culture, safety climate, accessibility, government promotion, and attractiveness.

Keywords: Shopping destination, destination competitiveness, servicescapes, Korea

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1. Introduction

Shopping is one of the world's oldest tourist activities (Choi, Heo, & Law, 2016a). Many tourists consider shopping their most enjoyable leisure activity, without which travel seems incomplete (Choi, Heo, & Law, 2016b; Hsieh & Chang, 2006; Keown, 1989; Timothy, 2005). Tourists shop for not only themselves, but also friends and relatives (Kong & Chang, 2012; Wong & Cheng, 2014). Indeed, shopping plays a key role in the economic prosperity of host countries, as it necessarily involves tourist spending (Rosenbaum & Spears, 2005). Numerous studies have shown that tourists tend to allocate more of their budget to shopping than to accommodation, dining, and entertainment (Turner & Reisinger, 2001). Shopping tourists (i.e., tourists whose major purpose is to shop) have been found to spend three to four times more money on shopping than leisure tourists (Rosenbaum & Spears, 2005).

For example, Korea is an emerging shopping destination, ranked as the ninth best shopping destination in the Asia-Pacific region in 2013 (Global Blue, 2014). Korea also ranked as the world's 12th best shopping destination in 2013 (Kim, 2014). Chinese tourists are the key to Korea's rising numbers of tourist arrivals and increased shopping revenues, as there are close links and short, efficient transport connections between the two countries [Korea Tourism Organization (KTO), 2017]. Chinese tourists contributed US$22 billion to Korea's tourism sector in 2015. In 2016, 70% of the Chinese tourists who visited Korea did so with the major purpose of shopping, and their average spending was US$2,200 per person (e.g., other overseas tourists spent about US$1,100 or less). The favorite activities of Chinese tourists include shopping, food tours, and visits to palaces/historic sites (KTO, 2017).

The benefits from shopping tourism go beyond its economic effects. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization [(UNWTO) 2014, p. 6], "shopping tourism can serve as a platform for urban regeneration by adding value to areas heretofore less visited by tourists. Cities utilize shopping and retail experiences to boost the appeal of the destination, supporting economic growth and income generation. Shopping tourism and cities form a symbiotic partnership." This observation implies that the effective management of shopping destinations plays a critical role for increasing tourism demand and bringing about economic/social revival.

Destination competitiveness is determined by an amalgam of local features and facilities. This amalgam includes core resources and attractions (e.g., landscape, climate, culture and history, mix of activities), destination management (e.g., marketing and organization), supporting factors and resources (e.g., infrastructure, accessibility, facilitating resources), and qualifying determinants such as location and safety (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Enright & Newton, 2004). Shopping destination competitiveness (SDC) is determined by a similar combination of features. As shopping becomes ever more important to tourists, this interest increasingly drives their destination choices (Choi, Law, & Heo, 2016; Timothy, 2005; UNWTO, 2014). That is, shopping tourists tend to consider destinations as more attractive and competitive if destinations offer key shopping resources, such as a variety of malls and products. Such destinations are also more attractive if a convenient visa application process (e.g., a fast visa service or visa on arrival) is available, if the convenience of traveling from the home country to the shopping destination is maximized by increasing the number of flights available (or by operating charter flights), and if a range of shopping events/leisure activities is organized. Accordingly, destination marketing organizations (DMOs) can exploit these opportunities by launching destination-promotion campaigns that focus on tourist preferences and destination attractiveness.

In the past, shopping has usually been regarded as an ancillary activity, characterized merely as souvenir shopping, or as gift shopping for friends and relatives (Kong & Chang, 2012; Wong & Cheng, 2014). Consequently, scholars have paid little attention to shopping destinations, and the dimensions of SDC are under-examined in the tourism literature. Instead, scholars of tourism have conducted research into tourist shopping at a micro level, by investigating shoppers' motivations (Choi et al, 2016b; Tsang, Lee, & Liu, 2014), shopping satisfaction (Heung & Cheng, 2000; Tosun, Temizkan, Timothy, & Fyall, 2007; Wong & Wan, 2013), shopping risk perception (Yüksel & Yüksel, 2007), and souvenir purchasing (Kong & Chang, 2012; Wong & Cheng, 2014).

A few studies have taken a broader focus on preferred shopping destinations (Yeung, Wong, & Ko, 2004; Wong, 2013). However, the scope of these studies has been limited to comparing the relative importance of various shopping attributes (e.g., products or staff service), rather than comparing overall destination-specific attributes. As a result, the dimensions of SDC remain unclear in the shopping tourism literature. This overlooking of destination-related attributes is surprising because the UNWTO (2014) has produced a Globe Shopping Index, which ranks the destination competitiveness of 33 European and 25 Asia-Pacific cities based on their destination-specific attributes. This index consists of quantitatively measured indicators of destination attractiveness, such as shopping type (e.g., malls or international brands), convenience (e.g., use of foreign languages or shopping hours), culture and history (e.g., attractions or international cuisine), affordability (e.g., exchange-rate stability), and the quality of hotels and transportation (UNWTO, 2014). The scores given in this index are used to evaluate the world's best shopping destinations. However, the indicators used to represent shopping are fairly simplistic. For example, the currently used indicators are insufficient to evaluate the customer's degree of satisfaction with a product (e.g., product selection, price, and quality), servicescape (e.g., the cleanliness and layout of shops), shopping information (e.g., in-store merchandise information), or staff service (e.g., attitude and product knowledge). As shopping is the core resource at a shopping destination, measures of such attributes should be included in the assessment. Currently, however, the literature and Globe Shopping Index are limited to reflecting the general features of SDC in terms of qualitative or descriptive evaluations.

Therefore, this study aims to develop and validate a measurement scale for SDC, which can provide an identification of shopping- and destination-specific attributes and dimensions. In theoretical terms, this study contributes to the literature by integrating a model of destination competitiveness with a servicescape model and with the current Globe Shopping Index, to investigate shopping destinations at a macro level. A mixed-methods approach was taken in this study. In-depth interviews on shopping-tourism development were conducted with diverse stakeholders (e.g., government officials and representatives of national tourism organizations (NTOs), travel agencies, duty-free operators, food caterers, and managers of theme parks or hotels), and a systematic process of scale development was adopted. The mixed-methods approach enabled this study to identify unexplored SDC dimensions. From an industry perspective, the findings should prove particularly useful in helping NTOs and DMOs to establish destination-development strategies.

2. Literature review

2.1. Shopping destination

Shopping has drawn the attention of academics for decades. However, the distinction between "tourist shopping studies" and "shopping destination studies" is vague, as these topics are closely interrelated and often overlap. For example, some scholars have investigated the tourist shopping experience (what motivates tourists to shop, or which destination factors are the most or least important to them) in well-known shopping destinations such as Hong Kong or Singapore. Other scholars have placed more weight and focus on the shopping destinations themselves (Getz, 1993; Murphy, Moscardo, Benckendorff, & Pearce, 2008). These studies have investigated specific topics such as tourist shopping villages (TSVs), the role of shopping in destination loyalty, and the developmental scale of a shopping destination.

TSVs are "small towns and villages that base their tourist appeal on retailing, often in a pleasant setting marked by historical or natural amenities" (Getz, 1993, p. 15). According to Getz (1993), TSVs are important tools for regional development. This researcher examined strategies for developing and planning TSVs in three case studies in Canada (i.e., Acton, St. Jacobs, and Elora). His findings suggested that government officials and practitioners should consider planning with regard to factors such as shopping, heritage (i.e., harmony between historic buildings and retail outlets), investment, accommodation, marketing, environment, and social capability. Taking a similar approach, Murphy et al. (2008) explored the factors involved in successful TSVs by studying and comparing 29 TSVs in Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. These authors concluded that the key to success was a TSV presentation that struck a balance between heritage themes and retail facilities. A subsequent study of tourist satisfaction with the retail experience in a TSV suggested that the key factors affecting tourist satisfaction were the uniqueness of the local experience, value for money, regionally distinct products, and entertainment value (Murphy, Moscardo, Benckendorff, & Pearce, 2011).

Some scholars have investigated the role of shopping in fostering destination image and destination loyalty. Several such studies have demonstrated that shopping is one of the most popular vacation activities (Choi et al., 2016a, 2016b). In addition to its economic benefits, shopping entertains tourists while they explore authentic environments such as local stores or flea markets, where the tourists can chat and sometimes bargain with the sales staff (Sirakaya-Turk, Ekinci, & Martin, 2015). By interacting with the locals, tourists have a chance to look closer at the host countries, and eventually to form positive images and destination loyalty (Moscardo, 2004; Sirakaya-Turk et al., 2015; Suhartanto & Triyuni, 2016). Sirakaya-Turk et al. (2015) concluded that shopping values (i.e., hedonic shopping and utilitarian shopping values) positively affected destination revisit intention and destination word-of-mouth, as mediated by overall shopping satisfaction.

Wong and Wan (2013) further enabled such studies by developing a scale to measure tourist satisfaction with a shopping destination. Their scale was derived from the tourist shopping literature, and it evaluates four dimensions of product and service attributes. Furthermore, this study examined the antecedents (e.g., destination tourism facility) and consequences (e.g., overall shopping experience) of shopping destinations. Unlike Wong and Wan (2013), Choi et al. (2016) focused on the factor of trust in a destination and developed a scale to measure the dimensions that made a shopping destination trustworthy. The initial dimensions they suggested were based on psychological theory (i.e., regulatory focus theory) and the literature. After assessment and validation, nine dimensions were confirmed: product, predictability, reputation, competence, ability, integrity, transaction security, benevolence, and liking. This study was meaningful in the sense that it extensively integrated measures of interest from the retailer's side, such as product attributes and tourist expectations. However, these various studies were still limited to explaining shopping-specific attributes, and they overlooked destination-specific attributes.

2.2. SDC attributes

2.2.1. Shopping-specific attributes

Various scholars have investigated the dimensions of shopping destinations and compared their relative importance. Given that shopping refers to the purchase of goods, product attributes are generally considered as a core dimension (Hobson & Christensen, 2001). Product attributes include price, selection variety, availability, value for money, fashionability, authenticity, brand image, reputation, and reliability (Heung & Cheng, 2000; Lin & Chen, 2013; Lin & Lin, 2006; Wong & Wan, 2013). Timothy and Butler (1995) asserted that the appeal of shopping tourism is based on the price differentials between the products available in a home country and those offered in a shopping destination. This observation suggested that price difference stimulates tourist shopping. Due to their price incentives of duty-free (tax-free) customs, Hong Kong and Singapore have enjoyed reputations as shopping paradises, and these destinations have attracted shopping tourists from all over the world (Hobson & Christensen, 2001). Due to this reputation, numerous studies of tourist shopping have been conducted in these destinations, where there are free ports and no import (or export) duties. For example, Wong and Law (2003) compared the level of shopping satisfaction among tourists in Hong Kong by their nations of origin (e.g., mainland China, Taiwan, Singapore, U.S.A., Canada, Australia, and Malaysia). These researchers constructed measurement items by assigning weight to product attributes such as price, variety, product quality, and service quality. In general, Western tourists were more satisfied with all of these attributes than Eastern tourists (Wong & Law, 2003). For Chinese tourists, service quality was the least satisfactory attribute, whereas the quality of goods was considered the most satisfactory attribute (Wong & Law, 2003). Yeung et al. (2004) compared and contrasted Hong Kong and Singapore as preferred shopping destinations in terms of 15 items, which ranged from product attributes and staff service to in-store convenience (e.g., choice of payment methods and opening hours). In general, Hong Kong showed strong appeal in terms of product attributes such as price, variety of selection, and product availability, whereas Singapore performed better on staff service attributes, such as language abilities of sales staff and staff attitudes.

Servicescape refers to the physical facility of a shop, which includes its ambient conditions (e.g., temperature, lighting, noise, and music) and its spatial layout and functionality (e.g., shop location, accessibility, and physical design) (Bitner, 1992; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996). The servicescape concept is anchored in the retail and marketing literature, and a number of scholars have applied this concept in studies of consumer behavior in retail outlets. For example, Tosun et al. (2007, p. 89) asserted that “Retailers endeavor to induce positive consumer reactions by changing in-store environments that titillate the senses.” Similarly, Christiansen and Snepenger (2002) argued that the in-store atmosphere, which includes background music, scent, and color, could create a pleasant shopping experience and increase consumer spending. Numerous studies have confirmed the role of the servicescape as a quality indicator (Baker, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1988; Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal, & Voss, 2002). These studies have shown how servicescapes affect consumer evaluations of various factors related to perceived service quality. In the shopping tourism research, scholars have placed an increasing emphasis on the spatial layout and functionality (e.g., shop location, accessibility, and physical layout) of retail outlets (Heung & Cheng, 2000; Tosun et al., 2007; Yeung et al., 2004).

Service is at the core of the hospitality and tourism industry (Wu & Ko, 2013), including the retail sectors of tourist destinations. Courteous staff and professional service create enjoyable shopping experiences (Wilson, 1998), and this sort of hospitality is the most influential factor affecting tourist satisfaction during shopping (Heung & Cheng, 2000). The attributes of staff service include attitude (Choi, Liu, Pang, & Chow, 2008; Heung & Cheng, 2000), product knowledge (Choi et al., 2008; Wong & Wan, 2013; Yüksel, 2004), language ability (Heung & Cheng, 2000; Lin & Chen, 2013), service quality (Li & Carr, 2004; Yüksel, 2004), and appearance (Baker et al., 1988; Baker et al., 2002; Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996).

Store policy and service differentiation is considered one of the key dimensions for shoppers. This dimension relates to customer convenience, which includes opening hours, payment method options, product return and exchange policies, and overseas delivery service (Choi et al., 2008; Heung & Cheng, 2000; Lin & Chen, 2013; Yeung et al., 2004). According to Choi et al. (2008), Chinese tourists shopping in Hong Kong are more concerned with payment method options, product return and exchange policies, and after-sales service than with opening hours or complaint handling. However, Yeung et al. (2004) found opening hours to be more important than payment method options for shopping tourists in Hong Kong and Singapore. These differences in response may reflect the different nationalities and cultures of the sampled tourists. Indeed, a majority of the sample (79.7%) surveyed by Yeung et al. (2004) was non-Asian (e.g., European, African, Middle Eastern, or American).

Shopping information includes information on tourist destinations and in-store merchandise. Clearly, the availability of local shopping information affects tourist perceptions of shopping attributes (Tosun et al., 2007). Similarly, increased amounts of shopping information can positively stimulate purchase intentions (Kim & Lennon, 2008). Rich sources of information (e.g., on shopping districts, types of shopping centers, and promotion periods) enable tourists to plan what to do at a destination, and allow them to organize efficient itineraries.

2.2.2. Destination-specific attributes

Although shopping tourists primarily visit their travel destinations to go shopping (Choi et al., 2016; UNWTO, 2014), they also consider other destination-specific factors when choosing a destination (e.g., core resources and attractions, and supporting factors such as accessibility). This section suggests a number of these additional destination criteria. First, culture is one of the core aspects of destination attractiveness and competitiveness (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). Cultural appeal can stem from a destination's tourist attractions (e.g., World Heritage Sites), international cuisine, popular events (e.g., sporting competitions or cultural festivals), or climate agreeability (e.g., temperature and humidity) (Chen, Chen, & Lee, 2011; Jansen-Verbeke, 1986; UNWTO, 2014). Enright and Newton (2004) confirmed that destination attractiveness included the factors of cuisine, dedicated tourist attractions, cultural distinction, and local climate.

Affordability is also considered a basic destination-specific attribute. Affordability involves the overall expense of dining, accommodations, city transportation, and exchange-rate stability (UNWTO, 2014). According to Crouch and Ritchie (1999), cost is one of the qualifying determinants of destination competitiveness. Dwyer and Kim (2003, p. 403) maintained that price competitiveness, or the “price of a destination visit relative to competitor destinations”, was a situational condition of major significance.

The safety climate is also a key concern for tourists (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2006). This factor involves a destination’s political stability (e.g., freedom from coups or strikes) and safety (e.g., incidence of crime or terrorist attacks) (Sönmez & Graefe, 1998; UNWTO, 2014). Safety is clearly one of the qualifying determinants of destination competitiveness (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). Kim, Guo, and Agrusa (2005) explained that Chinese tourists prioritize safety among various other destination attributes. Sönmez and Graefe (1998) confirmed the influence that concern over terrorism had on foreign tourists’ decisions. Various findings have shown that tourists tend to cancel travel plans or find alternative, safer destinations in response to terrorism risk. Furthermore, Pizam and Smith (2000) found that tourist demand remained low in attacked destinations for one to six months following a terrorist incident, and that only 0.5% of affected destinations recovered within three months or less. This observation implies that no matter how popular a tourist destination is, arrivals of tourists significantly decline after coups, strikes, and/or terrorist attacks.

Destination accessibility refers to the ease of travel between and within countries. Accessibility involves the number of arriving and departing flights and the convenience of transportation to city centers (UNWTO, 2014). Regional infrastructure, facilitating resources, and transportation enterprises are all supporting factors that help to make destinations competitive (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). Many scholars have emphasized that accessibility is a key tourist concern (Hsieh & Chang, 2006; Murphy et al., 2011; Timothy, 2005).

Government promotion is also considered an influential attribute. This factor involves government-sponsored shopping promotion campaigns, and regulations or laws regarding visa applications and tax refunds. According to Crouch and Ritchie (1999, p. 141), "In some countries governments may also exert a direct impact on an industry (e.g., government-run National Tourist Offices and destination promotional campaigns)." Studies have suggested that duty-free (or tax-free) price benefits encourage tourist shopping behavior (Dimanche, 2003; Hobson & Christenson, 2001; Lin & Chen, 2013). These findings imply that the degree of convenience (e.g., the numbers of certified tax-free stores and the availability of self-service tax refund kiosks at airports) may be a consideration among shopping tourists. In addition, visa regulation is an influential attribute that directly affects tourism demand (Song, Gartner, & Tasci, 2012). Song et al. (2012) contended that strict visa regulations tend to reduce the numbers of inbound tourists, and depress the corresponding tourism receipts (i.e., spending per visitor). Similarly, Neiman and Swagel (2009) and Neumayer (2010) stated that visa regulations were closely related to tourism demand.

Table 1 summarizes the various components of shopping destinations. As mentioned previously, SDC is affected by both shopping- and destination-specific attributes. Nevertheless, destination-related domains are largely ignored in the shopping tourism literature. Therefore, this study has rigorously developed and validated an SDC measurement scale to address this research gap.

Insert Table 1 here

3. Methods

This study adopted a multi-staged procedure to develop a measurement scale, as suggested by Churchill (1979) and Hinkin (1995). This procedure integrated both qualitative (e.g., literature searches and interviews) and quantitative approaches (e.g., reliability and validity assessments). The following sections outline the specific procedures.

3.1. Specifying a construct domain and generating an initial item pool

The initial items were adapted from previous studies on tourist shopping and the retail field. Based on these items, in-depth interviews were conducted with three tourists who had gone to Korea as shopping tourists. The interviewees included (1) a female university student in her 20s, (2) a female office worker in her 20s, and (3) a male office worker in his 30s. Open-ended questions on the attributes of shopping destinations were asked, with each participant undergoing a 1.5-hour interview. Most of the responses were consistent with the attributes identified in the literature review. The interviewees were mainly attracted by the available products (e.g., price difference), affordability, and the culture and climate. In combining the items from two sources, 59 items were established across 10 components: product (10 items), servicescape (15 items), store policy and service differentiation (10 items), staff service (5 items), availability of shopping information (2 items), government promotion (4 items), safety climate (2 items), affordability (4 items), accessibility (3 items), and attraction (4 items).

3.2. Refining the instrument

A typical approach to ensuring content validity is to convene a panel of experts and elicit their feedback in a standard manner (DeVellis, 2003). Therefore, to integrate various views on shopping destinations, a panel of experts was invited from academia, the public sector, and the private sector. The academics included three professors with expertise in tourism research. The public-sector experts included four senior government officers from the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (in Korea) and from NTOs (national tourism organizations) from Korea, Hong Kong, and Thailand. Eleven managerial-level practitioners were also invited from various tourism and hospitality businesses, such as airlines, travel agencies, duty-free shops, hotels, food and catering companies, theme parks, and convention or exhibition centers. These sectors were both directly and indirectly related to shopping tourism.

The panel members were informed of the purpose of this study, and were given information on the study site and target sample. They then received copies of the initial item pool. The panel members assessed the representativeness and applicability of the 59 shopping-destination-related items to the associated dimensions. For each item, they assigned a value on a scale of 1 (highly inapplicable) to 5 (highly applicable). The panel members were also invited (but not required) to provide additional comments on the items. Then, 11 of the items with lower values were deleted (e.g., music, scent, parking space, and brochures under the servicescape dimension).

Furthermore, some government officers and a professor suggested including a new dimension, Korean pop culture, which had gained immense popularity in China, Japan, and Southeast Asian countries. These advisors argued that Korean pop culture was an obvious pull factor in attracting Asian tourists to Korea. With reference to the work of previous researchers (e.g., Kim, Agrusa, Lee, & Chon, 2007), four items were included under the dimension of Korean pop culture: (1) My shopping in Korea was induced by Korean pop culture (e.g., drama, music, or film); (2) My shopping in Korea was inspired by Korean pop culture celebrities; (3) My shopping in Korea was motivated by destinations featured in Korean pop culture; and (4) My shopping in Korea was encouraged by products and services featured in Korean pop culture. Ultimately, 52 items were retained for the finalized survey.

3.3. Data collection

Korea, an emerging shopping destination, was chosen as the study site. According to the Globe Shopping Index (UNWTO, 2014), Korea ranked as the ninth best shopping destination in the Asia-Pacific region in 2013. To improve Korea's attractiveness as a shopping destination, its government has held shopping festivals since 2011 that integrate shopping, entertainment, and tourism. Korea also operates a user-friendly tax refund system, and facilitates efficient visa regulations for inbound tourists. This study targeted Chinese tourists visiting Korea, a choice made for two reasons. First, according to the Global Report on Shopping Tourism (UNWTO, 2014), China has beaten a world record by becoming the largest global spender on international tourism. Furthermore, the number of outbound Chinese tourists is expected to reach 200 million by 2020. It is thus worthwhile to explore the shopping activities of Chinese tourists, such as where they go for shopping trips, and which factors stimulate their choices among shopping destinations. Second, China is the top source of visitors to Korea. According to the KTO (2017), during the past five years the number of Chinese tourists to Korea has soared dramatically. In 2011, these tourists accounted for 22.67% (n = 2,220,196) of the total number of inbound tourists. By 2016, however, they accounted for 46.80% (n = 8,067,722). As a screening question, the respondents were asked whether they had visited Korea for shopping purposes within the last year.

Data collection was conducted using a private research software company named "Sojump," which operated under the Shanghai Information Technology Co. Since 2005, "Sojump" has provided self-designed online questionnaires and related services. The company has established a partnership with many renowned institutions in China, assisting them with technical support for data collection. This study's questionnaire was designed with the use of an online platform. Section 1 had 52 items representing the qualities of shopping destinations. Section 2 had three items related to tourist satisfaction. Section 3 had five questions on social desirability bias to identify any response bias. In Sections 1-3, the respondents were asked to rate their agreement with each item on a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = "strongly disagree" and 7 = "strongly agree." Finally, Section 4 collected demographic information, such as the participant's gender, age, education level, income, and frequency of travel to Korea. Five hundred and eighty questionnaires were collected between December 16, 2016 and January 1, 2017. After data screening (i.e., excluding missing values), 523 usable samples were obtained for data analysis.

Table 2 shows the respondents' demographic information. Gender was almost evenly distributed, with 46.3% of the respondents being male and 53.7% being female. In terms of age, the majority of the respondents were in their 20s (35.6%) or 30s (43.4%). Among the respondents, 64.6% had completed undergraduate studies, and 45.1% earned between CNY15,001 and CNY 30,000 per month. Regarding the frequency of travel to Korea, slightly more than half of the respondents (53.9%, n = 282) had never visited Korea previously, and 31.0% had visited twice.

Insert Table 2 here

3.4. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

The sample was randomly broken down into two subsamples to conduct EFA, as proposed by DeVellis (1991). The larger subsample (*n* = 285) was adopted for EFA to check the underlying dimensions, and the smaller subsample (*n* = 238) was used as a holdout sample for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The principal axis factoring and oblique rotation were selected for the EFA to identify the final factors, with eigenvalues equal to or above 1.0. Scales with factor loadings less than 0.4 and communalities lower than 0.5 were removed. Two distinct domains/concepts (shopping- and destination-specific quality) exist over shopping tourism. To meet the overriding assumption of factor analysis that is conceptual rather than statistical (Hair et al., 1998), two EFAs were undertaken individually to group the measures of conceptually related constructs.

According to the EFA results shown in Table 3, four items (opening hours, payment method options, checkout speed, and transaction security) were deleted, as their factor loadings were lower than 0.4. After this, the domain of shopping-specific quality was found to be represented by three dimensions (shopping atmosphere, store service orientation, and merchandise), which explained 61.62% of the variance. The results of the second EFA (shown in Table 4) indicated that three items (agreeable climate, exchange-rate stability, and visa regulations) should be removed due to their low factor loading values. Consequently, destination-specific quality was explained by six dimensions, which accounted for 77.48% of the variance. These dimensions were affordability, Korean pop culture, safety climate, accessibility, government promotion, and attraction. In combining the shopping- and destination-specific quality dimensions, a nine-factor structure was identified, with forty-five scale items.

Insert Tables 3 and 4 here

3.5. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA)

Following the EFA, CFA was conducted to confirm the factors and scales identified from the EFA and to review the model re-specification issue (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). The nine-factor structure was confirmed, with all of the significant factor loadings at an α level of 0.5 (Table 5). The goodness-of-fit indices [$\chi2$ = 2,398.26 (*df* = 909, *p* =.00), RMSEA = $0.05_{<0.08}$, CFI = $0.93_{>0.90}$, NNFI = $0.93_{>0.90}$] suggested that the identified measurement model fit the data well (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). The chi-square value was statistically significant, but this did not pose any threat to the model fit; the chi-square is likely to be significant whenever a sample size is greater than 200 respondents (Hair et al., 1998). In addition, to ensure that the confirmed factor structure explained the best fit to the data, this study explored alternative conceptual models for comparison with the nine-factor structure. As advised by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) and Baumgartner and Homburg (1996), the following four nested models were proposed to check their relative adequacy.

Model 1 (study model): Nine distinct but correlated dimensions of shopping tourism

Model 2: Nine distinct but orthogonal dimensions of shopping tourism

Model 3: Five-factor structure of shopping tourism

Model 4: Single-factor structure of shopping tourism

Table 6 indicates that this study's model (Model 1) exhibited more reliable goodness-of-fit indices than the three other nested models. Also, the chi-square difference between Model 1 and the other three models suggested that Model 1 was more significantly improved than the other models, which indicated that this model explained the data best.

Insert Tables 5 and 6 here

3.6. Scale validation: Reliability, construct validity, and nomological validity

Tables 3 and 4 show that all of the Cronbach's alpha values for the identified dimensions were greater than 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978) and thus satisfied the criteria of reliability. Convergent validity was supported by the finding that all of the average variance extracted (AVE) values of the factors shown in Table 7 were larger than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The convergent validity was further proved by the statistically significant factor loadings for all of the items, at $\alpha = 0.05$ (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). In addition, discriminant validity was evidenced by the finding that the AVE of each factor was greater than the squared correlation under corresponding inter-constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Insert Table 7 here

A nomological validity test was designed to explore "the extent to which predictions based on the concept which an instrument purports to measure are confirmed" (Zaltman, Duncan, & Holbek, 1973, p. 44), and the test was then conducted to determine if the extracted factors worked in line with the theory-based prediction. Theory-based predictions are generally assessed by using antecedents and/or consequences that are embedded in theories and concepts (Tian, Bearden, & Hunter, 2001). As quality theoretically acts as an antecedent of satisfaction (according to the literature), this study checked the nomological validity by correlating the SDC scale with shopping satisfaction (Table 8) and then regressing shopping satisfaction on the measured nine factors (Table 9), as recommended by Pons, Mourali, and Nyeck (2006). All of the correlations exhibited strongly significant relationships in a theoretically predicted direction. To further test the nomological validity, a multiple-regression analysis was then conducted. Six out of the nine factors were shown to be statistically significant and to positively predict shopping satisfaction. These findings are further discussed in the study's implications section. The correlation and regression analyses lent support to the nomological validity of the proposed shopping tourism quality scale.

Insert Tables 8 and 9 here

3.7. Test of method biases: Social desirability bias, non-response bias, and common method bias

Any self-report survey is likely to generate systematic measurement error. Typically, such systematic measurement error (or self-report bias) takes the form of social desirability bias, which arises from the tendency of respondents to express themselves favorably, regardless of their true perspectives or feelings (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). This study tested for social desirability bias by using Reynolds's (1982) short style of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). All of the correlations between the Social Desirability Scale and the 45 items in the Shopping Tourism Scale were shown to be statistically non-significant, indicating that social desirability was not a threat to the validity of this study.

As suggested by Armstrong and Overton (1977), non-response bias was also checked by comparing the perceptions of early survey respondents (i.e., the first 10% of the questionnaires returned) with those of the late participants (the last 10% of the questionnaires completed). As no statistical difference was found between these two groups concerning the items used in this study, it seemed clear that non-response bias was not an issue in this study.

Given that common method bias/variance signifies variance attributed to the measurement method rather than to the construct of interest (Podsakoff et al., 2003), common method variance is a probable source of bias; it can induce systematic measurement error, thereby weakening the validity of a study's findings (Bagozzi & Yi, 1990). As recommended by Bagozzi and Yi (1990), this study implemented an analysis of multitrait-multimethod (MTMM) matrices to investigate whether common method variance caused bias in the findings. In general, method variance does not arise from traits, but is affected by methods. Thus, a trait-only model (i.e., a baseline model) was compared with a trait-method model to check the chi-square difference between the MTMM matrices. The chi-square difference ($\Delta\chi2$ (116) = 126.35, $p > .05$) shown in Table 10 indicated that an introduction of method factors did not enable significant improvement over the trait-only model, thereby intimating that common method variance introduced negligible bias in this study.

Insert Table 10 here

4. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to develop and validate a measurement scale for SDC with shopping- and destination-specific attributes and dimensions. The study targeted Chinese tourists visiting Korea, an emerging shopping destination. After data screening (i.e., excluding missing values), 523 usable samples remained for analysis. As shown in the appendix, the normality of the data set was assessed by estimating the skewness and kurtosis of each item. The skewness values obtained ranged from -1.474 to 0.07 and the kurtosis values from -1.15 to 2.815. Based on Kline's (2011) criteria, the data set showed no serious skewness ($|SI| < 1.60$) or kurtosis ($|KI| < 4.60$), allowing analysis to proceed. The findings suggest that SDC has nine key dimensions: shopping atmosphere, merchandise, store service orientation, affordability, Korean pop culture, safety climate, accessibility, government promotion, and attractiveness.

4.1. Theoretical contributions

Well-managed shopping destinations make an important contribution to the economies of their host countries (Yeung et al., 2004) and improve tourists' overall shopping experience (Wong & Wan, 2013). Despite its acknowledged importance, however, the topic of shopping destinations has received relatively little attention from academics. Although a few studies have been conducted to assess preferred shopping destinations (Yeung et al., 2004), their scope has been limited to comparisons regarding the importance of various shopping attributes. Such studies have generally neglected to compare destination-specific attributes. As a result, the dimensions of SDC have remained unclear. The goal of this study was to fill this research gap by developing and validating a measurement scale for assessing SDC (which integrates both shopping- and destination-specific attributes), based on a model of destination competitiveness. The findings suggest that SDC has nine key dimensions: shopping atmosphere, merchandise, store service orientation, affordability, Korean pop culture, safety climate, accessibility, government promotion, and attractiveness. In particular, shopping atmosphere was found to be a core factor in representing SDC. This factor incorporated servicescape and staff service.

According to the Crouch and Ritchie (1999) model of destination competitiveness, a destination's core resources and attractions fall into six main categories: physiography (e.g., landscape), culture and history, market ties, mix of activities, special events, and superstructures. Given the nature of shopping destinations, this study treated merchandise and shopping atmosphere as the core resources and attractors. Unlike previous studies of tourist shopping, this study addressed a wide range of shopping dimensions, with items covering the factors of merchandise and shopping atmosphere. Scholars have generally tended to use a limited number of dimensions and items to assess tourist shopping (Choi et al., 2008; Heung & Cheng, 2000; Wong & Law, 2003). For example, Dwyer and Kim (2003) viewed shopping as a created resource, along with entertainment, special events, and festivals. However, they considered only five shopping items, all of which were biased toward merchandise.

This study extends the previous literature on shopping destinations by including an analysis of servicescapes. The physical facilities provided by service businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and retail shops have been found to influence customer behavior due to their unique service characteristics, and the simultaneity of those characteristics (Baker, 1987; Bitner, 1992; Booms & Bitner, 1982). In a retail shop, for example, service is generated by the staff and simultaneously consumed by the customers, who are also exposed to the shop's physical features, such as its ambient conditions (e.g., neatness, cleanliness, and temperature) and its spatial layout and functionality (e.g., shop location and physical design). High-quality physical facilities enhance the customers' positive perceptions of the venue and ultimately elicit purchase behavior (Baker, 1987; Bitner, 1992; Booms & Bitner, 1982). The findings of this study regarding servicescapes are generally consistent with those of the current retail literature (Baker, 1987; Bitner, 1992; Booms & Bitner, 1982). These findings confirm that ambient conditions, spatial layout, and functionality all play key roles in SDC.

In the model of destination competitiveness, store service orientation falls into the category of destination management. The study's findings suggest that store service orientation can be divided into the categories of resource stewardship and service. Most studies have focused mainly on staff service, that is, the extent to which staff members have good communication skills and courteous attitudes (Li & Carr, 2004; Lin & Chen, 2013; Murphy et al., 2011). This study surveys service differentiation as provided by stores, including product return/exchange policies, after-sales service, and complaint handling. Generally, tourists are more interested than local consumers in using overseas delivery services for convenience (UNWTO, 2014). As tourists return to their home countries after traveling abroad, they also appreciate clear guidelines for after-sales service. This study confirms that store service orientation is one of the key dimensions of SDC.

The safety of the local environment and affordability are qualifying determinants of SDC. Tourists prefer to visit safe destinations to avoid potential threats such as terrorist attacks, political instability, and natural disasters (Kim, Guo, & Agrusa, 2005; Sönmez, S., & Graefe, 1998). In addition to budgeting for shopping, tourists consider the affordability of hotel accommodation and restaurants (UNWTO, 2014). In general, this study's findings regarding these factors are similar to those of previous studies of destination competitiveness (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Enright & Newton, 2004; Mazanec, Wöber, & Zins, 2007). Interestingly, Korean pop culture is found to be a key dimension of SDC. Korean pop culture and its celebrities have gained immense popularity in greater China (mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan), Japan, and the Southeast Asian countries (Kim, Agrusa, Chon, & Cho, 2008; Shim, 2006) due to the exportation of Korean pop songs, singers' fashion choices (i.e., the items they wear and how they wear them), and even the sites used to shoot their music videos. Indeed, popular media play a core role in stimulating tourist motivations and the tourist decision-making process for holiday planning (Kim & Richardson, 2003; Laing & Crouch, 2009). Urry (1990, p. 3) explained that "place myth and such anticipation is constructed and sustained through a variety of non-tourist practices such as film, TV, literature, magazines, records and videos, which (re)construct and reinforce the gaze." For example, Urry's (1990) study showed that Korean pop culture and Korean television dramas or movies positively affected the intention of Hong Kong residents to visit Korea (Kim et al., 2008). Another study confirmed that Korean television dramas influenced Japanese visitation patterns (Kim et al., 2007). In other words, leisure tourists are commonly motivated to visit the locations featured in television dramas and movies. Unlike previous studies, this study's findings suggest an important role of media/Korea pop culture in the context of shopping tourism. The findings confirm that shopping tourists (i.e., tourists whose major purpose is shopping) are significantly influenced by media. Although the situational dimension considered in this study applies exclusively to Korea, the findings provide evidence for the influence of pop culture on potential tourism demand.

Accessibility and government promotion are also commonly found to be "supporting factors and resources" for tourism. Accessibility and location are key determinants of tourists' inclinations to visit a destination (Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Enright & Newton, 2004). At the destination level, accessibility is measured both between cities/countries and within cities. Tourists prefer to visit retail shops that are conveniently located in a city center or accessible by public transportation (Tosun et al., 2007; Yeung et al., 2004). Government promotion is also identified as a dimension of SDC. The findings of this study suggest that special promotions or campaigns sponsored by the government and user-friendly tax refund schemes both offer key incentives for tourists to visit Korea.

The dimensions identified in this study provide a step forward in developing a better understanding of SDC, and in contributing to the body of shopping tourism literature. The findings extend insights into the representative shopping-specific and destination-specific dimensions of shopping tourism. In particular, the validated scale used in this study can serve as a basis for researchers to conduct more empirical research on shopping tourism.

4.2. Practical implications

The findings of this study provide practical implications for government bodies and for parties concerned with tourism and destination marketing in Korea. The insights gained can assist these various parties in developing proper marketing strategies that reflect the determining factors affecting Chinese tourists' shopping destinations. The results show that the satisfaction of shopping tourists depends on the all-round infrastructure of a destination, including the factors of shopping atmosphere, merchandise, store service orientation, safety, government promotion, attraction, affordability, and accessibility. In addition, that Korean pop culture has a very strong influence on the tourists' satisfaction has great implications for practitioners.

The relationship between tourism and the various aspects of pop culture (such as movies, television dramas, and music videos) is well documented in the tourism-related literature (Kim, Long, & Robinson, 2009). Pop culture plays an important role in the formation of destination image, which in turn has a decisive effect on tourists' destination choice behavior (Kim et al., 2009). Tourism and marketing organizers can take advantage of Korean pop culture to induce Chinese tourists to visit Korea. This kind of promotion can be done by means of celebrity endorsement and product placement within the contents of pop cultural channels. Celebrity endorsement has been commonly used for promotion in the tourism sector. For instance, the popular boy groups SHINee and Big Bang were appointed as honorary ambassadors for Gangnam district in 2014 and for Korea in 2016, respectively. Both groups have been at the center of Korean pop culture, and both won the Ministry of Culture Award in 2016.

As a part of a marketing mix, product placement has also been ubiquitous in mass media. An effective case of product placement can be seen in the American sitcom *Sex and the City*, which contributed to soaring sales of *Manolo Blahnik*, *Jimmy Choo*, and *Fendi* baguette bag products, which were featured on the show. Due to the audience's desire for emulation, those brand items flew off store shelves. Thus, practitioners involved in marketing activities should pay close attention to opportunities for placing products/brands or beautiful scenery in the settings of Korean pop culture channels. Such images can be conducive to forming favorable destination images and to increasing product/brand awareness and recognition. In this way, image placement can stimulate Chinese tourists' intention to visit to Korea and their desire to shop in Korea.

In addition, organizing shopping festivals and Korean pop culture exhibitions with the involvement of famous celebrities can have a powerful appeal for those who have an interest in both shopping and Korean celebrities. In the course of providing a delightful shopping experiences for the tourists, other kinds of infrastructure are also supported. As shopping is a core purpose for shopping tourists, the merchandise and shopping atmosphere cannot be overlooked. Creating a pleasant shopping environment in terms of both its tangible and intangible aspects is key to enabling a satisfying shopping experience. At the retailer level, success can be ensured by providing regular training to improve the attitudes of service staff and enhance service delivery, and by paying close attention to details such as products, prices, cleanliness, temperature, or noise level. Furthermore, safety, convenient public transportation systems, a diversity of lodging facilities, and simple tax refund systems should be ensured at the government level.

As the scale developed in this study may serve as a standardized tool to measure SDC, the application of this scale may provide NTOs and DMOs with comprehensive insights into what a successful shopping destination should be. DMOs may be able to establish more effective destination marketing strategies by first acknowledging the positive impact of shopping destination quality on overall tourist satisfaction, and then by developing strategies to improve a destination's appeal in each of the dimensions identified in this study as significant for competitive shopping destinations. The successful promotion of a shopping destination requires long-term strategic business and marketing plans on the part of all stakeholders, including the retailers and government services concerned. Establishing such strategic plans based on the findings of this study could provide assistance to practitioners as they pursue a more favorable shopping destination image, and as they sustain their competitive edge in the shopping tourism business.

4.3. Limitations and suggestions for future research

This study has a number of limitations to acknowledge. Given the particular target sample (Chinese tourists) and study site (Korea), the findings may not be generalizable to other contexts. Also, according to the UNWTO (2014), Chinese tourists are "generally much more willing to compromise on meals, lodging and to a certain extent, flights, in order to save money for shopping" (p. 34). Thus, the findings of this study should be interpreted carefully when applying them to other nations. Another particularity affecting this study is the way shopping budgets can influence destination choices. Recently, firms offering Korean foods or beauty and fashion products (e.g., cosmetics, fashion, and accessories) have experience rapidly expanding sales in China (Lee, 2016). According to the KTO (2017), during 2016 the Korean-brand shopping items most commonly purchased by Chinese consumers were cosmetics and foods (e.g., ginseng and kimchi). Therefore, cross-cultural studies using diverse samples should be conducted to investigate the differences in preferences across countries, such as Chinese tourists versus Western tourists.

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Appendix: Descriptive statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	Kurtosis
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Product 1	5.55	1.307	-1.313	.107	1.999	.213
Product 2	5.61	1.279	-1.174	.107	1.438	.213
Product 3	5.20	1.281	-.866	.107	.959	.213
Product 4	5.36	1.264	-.959	.107	1.200	.213
Product 5	5.51	1.242	-1.055	.107	1.400	.213
Product 6	5.75	1.225	-1.373	.107	2.335	.213
Product 7	5.46	1.246	-1.029	.107	1.170	.213
Physical facility 1	5.83	1.191	-1.474	.107	2.815	.213
Physical facility 2	5.68	1.179	-1.217	.107	2.152	.213
Physical facility 3	5.61	1.199	-1.190	.107	2.101	.213
Physical facility 4	5.41	1.226	-1.030	.107	1.403	.213
Physical facility 5	5.47	1.180	-1.196	.107	2.121	.213
Physical facility 6	5.64	1.198	-1.203	.107	1.889	.213
Physical facility 7	5.48	1.297	-1.038	.107	1.098	.213
Physical facility 8	5.54	1.163	-1.174	.107	1.848	.213
Physical facility 9	5.57	1.199	-1.021	.107	1.341	.213
Physical facility 10	5.56	1.140	-1.024	.107	1.574	.213
Physical facility 11	5.56	1.150	-1.157	.107	2.075	.213
Store policy 1	5.56	1.136	-1.180	.107	2.156	.213
Store policy 2	5.68	1.216	-1.159	.107	1.763	.213
Store policy 3	5.55	1.136	-1.084	.107	2.153	.213
Store policy 4	5.59	1.159	-1.171	.107	2.296	.213
Store policy 5	5.23	1.343	-.836	.107	.685	.213
Store policy 6	5.33	1.249	-1.135	.107	1.654	.213
Store policy 7	5.43	1.224	-1.091	.107	1.640	.213
Store policy 8	5.34	1.232	-.987	.107	1.323	.213
Store policy 9	5.53	1.194	-1.136	.107	1.912	.213
Staff service 1	5.68	1.224	-1.311	.107	2.213	.213
Staff service 2	5.59	1.207	-1.087	.107	1.510	.213
Staff service 3	5.28	1.202	-.704	.107	.725	.213
Staff service 4	5.86	1.131	-1.269	.107	2.077	.213
Availability of shopping information 1	5.43	1.135	-1.073	.107	1.646	.213
Availability of shopping information 2	5.67	1.182	-1.127	.107	1.649	.213
Government promotion 1	5.52	1.133	-1.145	.107	2.451	.213

Government promotion 2	5.45	1.193	-.915	.107	1.202	.213
Government promotion 3	5.47	1.255	-.969	.107	1.082	.213
Government promotion 4	5.51	1.167	-1.064	.107	1.808	.213
Political factor/safety/climate 1	4.99	1.428	-.856	.107	.614	.213
Political factor/safety/climate 2	5.33	1.322	-.992	.107	1.064	.213
Political factor/safety/climate 3	5.36	1.261	-.751	.107	.500	.213
Affordability 1	5.41	1.175	-1.088	.107	1.533	.213
Affordability 2	5.24	1.293	-.923	.107	.973	.213
Affordability 3	5.32	1.231	-.888	.107	1.134	.213
Affordability 4	5.39	1.228	-.975	.107	1.102	.213
Transportation 1	5.69	1.205	-1.222	.107	1.917	.213
Transportation 2	5.58	1.189	-1.177	.107	1.876	.213
Attraction 1	5.61	1.213	-1.132	.107	1.662	.213
Attraction 2	5.46	1.287	-.926	.107	.912	.213
Korean pop culture 1	5.44	1.330	-1.109	.107	1.337	.213
Korean pop culture 2	5.40	1.374	-1.023	.107	1.101	.213
Korean pop culture 3	5.44	1.314	-1.117	.107	1.376	.213
Korean pop culture 4	5.39	1.303	-1.072	.107	1.162	.213
Satisfaction 1	5.53	1.285	-1.220	.107	1.826	.213
Satisfaction 2	5.48	1.309	-1.188	.107	1.577	.213
Satisfaction 3	5.54	1.252	-1.150	.107	1.737	.213
Social desirability bias 1	3.91	1.791	-.039	.107	-1.150	.213
Social desirability bias 2	3.65	1.728	-.023	.107	-1.004	.213
Social desirability bias 3	3.63	1.832	.070	.107	-1.148	.213
Social desirability bias 4	3.82	1.803	-.061	.107	-1.084	.213
Social desirability bias 5	3.71	1.703	.055	.107	-1.026	.213

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