

Original Research Article

# Analysis of the Impact of Cultural Capital on Visiting Cultural Heritage Attractions (Case Study: Domestic Tourists)\*

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**Abstract** | The travel and tourism industry plays a pivotal role in the global economy and society. From an economic point of view, there is a distinction between general tourism and cultural tourism. Due to its abundant tangible and intangible cultural heritage, Iran has significant potential for cultural tourism. Given the economic importance of tourism, particularly cultural tourism, this study examines factors influencing Visiting cultural heritage attractions, with an emphasis on cultural capital. Factors affecting visitation are categorized into supply-side (facilities available at cultural heritage attractions) and demand-side factors, including tourists' cultural capital. Cultural capital in this study refers to the accumulated cultural capital of tourists measured by indicators such as frequent visits, education, income, and age. The research adopts a descriptive-causal methodology, targeting domestic tourists through a researcher-made questionnaire. Due to the large population, 384 questionnaires were randomly distributed online. Data were analyzed using ordinal logistic regression. The results reveal that cultural capital variables, including age, employment, and frequent visits have positive significant influence on visitation, while the variable of income status for households with high and upper-middle income class has a negative significant influence on visitation. Among supply-side variables, advertising, restaurants, cultural product stores, and reduced congestion have the most positive significant effect on cultural heritage attractions visits.

**Keywords** | Cultural Capital, Cultural Heritage Attractions, Cultural Tourism, Regression Analysis.

**Introduction** | Cultural attractions play a pivotal role in tourism across all levels, ranging from globally

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renowned cultural landmarks to locally rooted attractions that embody regional identities. On the global stage, cultural sites are often perceived as icons of major cultural movements. Moreover, cultural attractions have been instrumental in shaping cultural policies and advancing initiatives aimed at fostering cultural development. UNESCO, for example, during its World Decade for Cultural Development (1987–

1997), underscored the significance of safeguarding cultural heritage not only as a catalyst for economic growth but also as a means to strengthen cultural identity and promote diversity (Richards, 2001, 4–5). The consumption of culture, particularly through cultural and heritage tourism, has increasingly emerged as a strategic tool for economic regeneration (Richards, 1996, 262). To date, Iran has successfully inscribed 26 cultural sites and 24 elements of intangible cultural heritage on UNESCO's lists, a testament to the nation's considerable potential for the expansion of cultural tourism, leveraging both its tangible and intangible cultural assets. Given the critical role of tourism—particularly cultural tourism—in economic development, it is imperative to conduct an in-depth examination of the factors influencing cultural tourism.

The present study seeks to examine the impact of cultural capital indicators—specifically, accumulated cultural capital reflected in prior visits to cultural heritage sites, educational attainment, income level, and age—on visitation patterns to cultural heritage attractions. Furthermore, it endeavors to compare these influences with the role of supply-side characteristics in shaping visitor behavior. In a broader framework, the determinants of cultural tourism in this research are classified into two primary categories: demand-side and supply-side factors. Demand-side factors pertain to the individual characteristics and preferences of tourists, which are deeply rooted in their accumulated cultural capital. These factors fundamentally shape tourists' destination choices and decision-making processes. Variables such as prior visitation history, level of education, income, and age are considered essential elements within this dimension (Apostolakis & Jaffry, 2007, 18). On the other hand, supply-side factors encompass those elements under the control of tourism providers, directly related to the attributes of the tourism product or destination. These factors can play a pivotal role in influencing the decision-making behavior of potential visitors. Noteworthy examples include the level of crowding at the site, promotional initiatives (including price discounts), marketing and advertising activities, admission fees, as well as the availability and quality of visitor amenities and services (Apostolakis & Jaffry, 2007, 22).

By examining the impact of cultural capital on tourists' visitation of cultural attractions, this study offers valuable insights for policymakers regarding tourists' priorities and guides adapting policies to enhance tourist attraction. Moreover, the findings of

this research can help determine whether the primary driver of visitation to cultural heritage sites—aimed at fostering the growth of cultural tourism—is cultural capital, which would require long-term policy planning and investment by the government, or whether it is more dependent on the features of the tourism product and on-site facilities, which could be addressed in the short term through targeted policy measures.

## Research Background

Any phenomenon or motivational factor that creates appeal in a destination (region) and leads people to travel from various locations (near or far) is referred to as an attraction. This means that, beyond its intrinsic value, the phenomenon has also captured the attention of tourists. Tourist attractions are among the primary reasons people travel to a specific destination. They act as a pull factor, drawing visitors from distant regions due to their unique characteristics and appealing features. In fact, tourism products are recognized as a combination of various components, including attractions, facilities, and accessibility (Vosoughi & Khani, 2016, 78).

On the other hand, the growing competition to attract visitors—both among heritage sites and other forms of tourist attractions, as well as within the cultural tourism industry itself—has created a need for a deeper understanding of tourists' preferences and tastes. This is because individual choices are influenced by their tastes and preferences, along with the factors that shape them (Apostolakis & Jaffry, 2006, 451–452).

A review of the theoretical foundations and related studies on the factors influencing tourists' likelihood of visiting an attraction—including cultural tourism attractions—indicates that, in general, tourists' choices and decisions to visit can be categorized into two main groups of factors: (1) supply-side factors, which relate to the features, amenities, and facilities of the tourist attraction, and (2) demand-side factors, which depend on the characteristics of visitors, their tastes, and preferences (Fig. 1). Among these, cultural tourism, as a fo individuals possess social and cultural competencies. Bourdieu (1984) classified cultural capital into three distinct forms: embodied cultural capital, which depends on an individual's social class and way of thinking and is measured through indicators such as income and age; objectified cultural capital, which relates to the consumption of cultural goods and is measured through indicators such as previous visitation history; and institutionalized

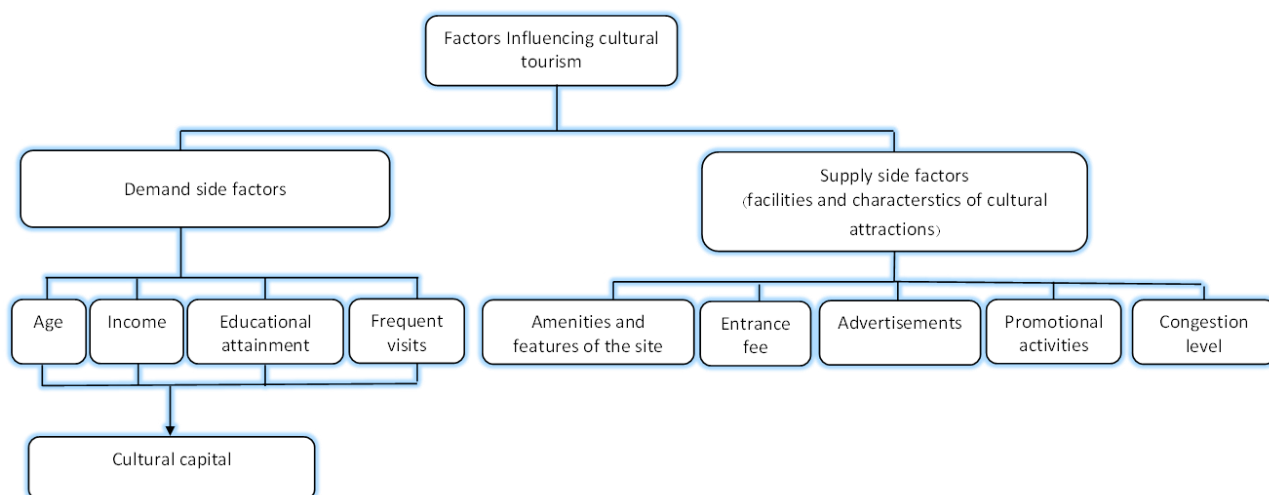


Fig. 1. Factors influencing cultural tourism. Source: Qaderi, 2024; Apostolakis & Jaffry, 2006; Klimczuk, 2015.

cultural capital, which corresponds to the level of educational attainment (Klimczuk, 2015, 1–2).

Furthermore, various studies have consistently confirmed the influence of Bourdieu’s different indicators of cultural capital and their role in cultural participation and visitation. For example, according to Oppermann, prior visitation patterns—such as whether a tourist has previously visited the destination or attraction—along with a lack of awareness or personal circumstances (such as family size or lower educational levels), may significantly influence the likelihood of future visits (Apostolakis & Jaffry, 2006, 451–452). Similarly, socio-demographic characteristics, which convey information about aspects of an individual’s cultural capital—such as frequent visits, educational attainment, income, and age—serve as strong predictors of overall cultural heritage site visitation (Apostolakis & Jaffry, 2007, 18). Emamgholi & Salehi (2023) demonstrated in their study that individuals’ cultural capital, particularly in its embodied form, is at an above-average level in supporting the development of maritime tourism. Furthermore, the hypothesis testing results revealed a significant and positive correlation between cultural capital and tourism development, as well as between public support and the growth of maritime travel. In addition, the findings indicated that as individuals’ educational attainment and age increase, their level of support for the development of maritime tourism also rises.

Zahedi et al. (2018) in their study titled “Identifying the factors influencing the demand for travel to

cultural-historical tourism destinations (Case study: Isfahan)” examined the theories of destination choice from the

perspective of tourists. According to the findings, five factors were identified as influential: tourism services, the attitude of local people and officials toward tourism, safety and security, authentic and unique attractions, and price.

Nazari et al. (2017) conducted a study on “Evaluating the factors influencing the attraction of international tourists using the gravity model,” utilizing panel data methodology and the gravity model. The dependent variable is the number of incoming tourists to Iran, while the explanatory variables include per capita GDP, geographical distance, population, exchange rates, the number of hotel beds, World Heritage-listed attractions, and the country’s brand index. The results indicate that the most significant impact is attributed to the country brand index, followed by the number of hotel beds, while the only negative factor influencing tourist attraction is geographical distance.

Mir & Kakavand (2016) studied the relationship between cultural capital and the tendency toward cultural tourism among young people using a quantitative descriptive correlation method. The results of the study indicate that increasing cultural capital depends on familiarity with and proper guidance regarding the components of cultural capital, which in turn promotes cultural tourism in society.

Eghbali et al. (2016) conducted a study titled “Typology of cultural tourism behavior (Case study:

pilgrims and tourists in Mashhad)” using ordinal regression tests. The results indicate that facilities and amenities, attitudes toward cultural travel, and motivation to undertake travel are influential factors, with the level of education having the greatest impact on cultural travel behavior.

Hosseini & Matlabi Saraji (2014) examined the “Relationship between different types of capital and tourism (Case study: Payame Noor University of Sari)” using multivariate regression analysis. The results indicated that social capital had the greatest impact on the tendency toward tourism.

Ghaffari & Moaven (2013) investigated “The contribution of social and cultural capital to the willingness for tourism in two sites: Hafezieh and Persepolis in Shiraz” using multivariate regression analysis. The findings indicated a relationship between these forms of capital and the willingness to engage in tourism.

Bulut & Ciftci (2024) argue that cultural capital influences creativity and critical thinking. Similarly, in their study titled “Cultural capital and online purchase of tourism services,” Quaglione et al. (2020), using the Probit model, demonstrate that individuals’ participation in cultural activities plays a role in increasing the likelihood of purchasing tourism services online.

Reeves & De Vries (2019), in their study titled “Can cultural consumption increase future income? an examination of the economic returns of cultural capital,” found that there is a positive correlation between cultural consumption and income, as engaging in certain cultural activities leads to the enhancement of social status.

Sullivan (2008), in “Cultural Capital, Knowledge, and Cultural Ability,” interprets Bourdieu’s theory of cultural capital reproduction and discusses the transmission of cultural capital through the family. She identifies knowledge and skills as forms of cultural capital and provides empirical evidence for the differences in cultural knowledge between educated and uneducated individuals.

Apostolakis & Jaffry (2007), in their study “The effect of cultural capital on the probability to visit cultural heritage attractions” examined the relationship between tourists’ cultural capital and the likelihood of visiting cultural attractions in Crete, Greece. Their findings indicate that supply-side factors and management policies play a significant and more decisive role than other factors in determining the likelihood of visiting heritage sites.

Kastenholz et al. (2005) addressed “The influence

of socio-demographic characteristics on tourist behavior: analysis of segments of cultural tourists visiting coimbra.”

DiMaggio & Mukhtar (2004), in their study “Arts participation as cultural capital in the United States, 1982–2002: Signs of Decline?” found that participation in cultural activities declined across all age, gender, and educational groups over the period studied.

The results of the literature review indicate that the impact of cultural capital on visits to heritage attractions has not been studied within the country, highlighting the novelty of the present research in this regard.

## Research Method

As previously mentioned, this study aims to examine the impact of cultural capital indicators—such as accumulated cultural capital in the form of prior visits to cultural heritage attractions, educational attainment, income level, and age—on visits to cultural heritage sites, and to compare this with the influence of supply-side characteristics on such visits. Specifically, the research seeks to address the following questions: (1) How does tourists’ cultural capital influence their likelihood of visitation to cultural heritage attractions? and (2) How do the supply-side attributes (facilities and amenities) of cultural heritage sites affect the probability of visitation? By answering these questions, the study aims to provide valuable insights to enable more effective policymaking and strategic decision-making in this field.

The present study is descriptive-causal in nature. From the perspective of its purpose, the research is applied. The review of studies conducted in the field of cultural capital, characteristics of cultural heritage attractions, and the theoretical framework section is carried out through content analysis, meaning the examination of existing documents and records. In the theoretical foundations section, the method of data collection is library-based and documentary. To estimate the regression model, primary data has been utilized, which was collected through a questionnaire designed by the researcher. The components of this questionnaire and related explanations are presented in Table 1.

The statistical population of the study consists of all domestic tourists. Considering the total number of domestic tourists and the large size of the population, the sample size for large populations was determined to be 384 respondents. To ensure accuracy, 400

questionnaires were completed electronically using an accessible random sampling method. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed through expert opinions, theoretical foundations, and Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the Likert-scale items. Since the alpha coefficient for all variables in the questionnaire exceeded 0.70, and the overall reliability score was 0.814,

it indicates that the questionnaire possesses an acceptable level of reliability.

The dependent variable in this study, the frequency of cultural heritage site visits, is an ordinal variable where respondents’ opinions are categorized into one of the following groups: “Never,” “Rarely,” “Occasionally,” “Often,” and “Always.” Given the discrete and ordinal

Table 1. Components of the research questionnaire. Source: Authors.

| Variables  | Questions  |
|--|--|
| Socio-demographic characteristics  | Gender<br>Marital Status<br>Age<br>City of Residence<br>Education<br>Field of Study<br>Job Title<br>Average Monthly Income<br>Before the outbreak of the coronavirus and the start of travel and visitation restrictions, how many times a year did you usually visit cultural heritage attractions? |
| Dependent variable   | Do you visit cultural heritage attractions at your destination while traveling?  |
| This question was asked to measure the importance of attractions from the visitors’ perspective. | Which of the attractions in the destination made you travel to this city?  |
| Advertisement  | “To what extent does the awareness that your destination city possesses a unique identity (for instance, Isfahan as a UNESCO Creative City of Crafts and Folk Arts and the capital of Islamic culture and civilization) affect your decision to visit its cultural heritage sites?”                  |
| Congestion level   | “To what extent do you consider the level of congestion at a cultural heritage site when deciding to visit it?”  |
| Entrance fee   | “To what extent do you consider the entrance fees (ticket prices) when deciding to visit a cultural heritage attraction?”  |
| Likert scale questions   | Promotional activities<br>“To what extent do you consider price discounts when deciding to visit cultural heritage attractions?”<br><br>“To what extent does the proximity of dining facilities, such as restaurants and cafés, influence your decision to visit a cultural heritage site?”          |
| Complementary facilities   | “To what extent does the accessibility of souvenir shopping facilities near a cultural heritage site influence your decision to visit?”<br><br>“To what extent do you consider the availability of cultural product stores near a cultural heritage site when deciding to visit it?”                 |

nature of the dependent variable, ordered probit and logit models have been employed as analytical frameworks (Greene, 2003, 736). To estimate the research model, the maximum likelihood estimation method was utilized, which will be discussed in the following section.

In the ordered logit model, the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables is defined by Eq. 1

$$\text{Eq. 1} \quad y^* = X'\beta + \varepsilon$$

$y^*$ : is the dependent variable, which is the latent variable,

$X'$ : is associated with a vector of independent variables, which represent measurable factors,

$\varepsilon$ : The errors are considered to be unobservable factors, assumed to be normally distributed across observations, and are assumed to follow a logistic distribution with a mean of zero and a variance of one.

$y^*$ : the unobserved variable is not directly observable, and only the response categories are observable, as described by Eq. 2.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Eq. 2} \quad y &= \cdot && \text{if } y^* \leq \cdot \\ y &= \text{ } \cdot && \text{if } \cdot < y^* \leq \mu_{\text{ } \cdot} \\ y &= \text{ } \cdot && \text{if } \mu_{\text{ } \cdot} < y^* \leq \mu_{\text{ } \cdot} \\ y &= J && \text{if } \mu_{J-\text{ } \cdot} \leq y^* \end{aligned}$$

$\mu_{\cdot}$ s: the unknown parameters which are estimated in this model by  $\beta$ . In other words, the thresholds that describe the observed discrete responses are estimated. If we consider  $y = J$ , we encounter probabilities, as described by Eq. 3.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Prob}(y = \cdot | x) &= \Phi(-x'\beta) \\ \text{Prob}(y = \text{ } \cdot | x) &= \Phi(\mu_{\text{ } \cdot} - x'\beta) - \Phi(-x'\beta) \\ \text{Prob}(y = \text{ } \cdot | x) &= \Phi(\mu_{\text{ } \cdot} - x'\beta) - \Phi(\mu_{\text{ } \cdot} - x'\beta) \\ \text{Prob}(y = J | x) &= 1 - \Phi(\mu_{J-\text{ } \cdot} - x'\beta) \\ \cdot &< \mu_{\text{ } \cdot} < \mu_{\text{ } \cdot} < \dots < \mu_{J-\text{ } \cdot} \end{aligned}$$

Eq. 3

In logit and probit models, the marginal effects or the predicted probabilities of the dependent variable are estimated to examine the impact of the independent variables. The marginal effect is estimated as described by Eq. 4

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \text{Prob}(y = \cdot | x)}{\partial x} &= -\Phi(x'\beta)\beta \\ \frac{\partial \text{Prob}(y = \text{ } \cdot | x)}{\partial x} &= [\Phi(-x'\beta) - \Phi(\mu_{\text{ } \cdot} - x'\beta)]\beta \\ \frac{\partial \text{Prob}(y = \text{ } \cdot | x)}{\partial x} &= \Phi(\mu_{\text{ } \cdot} - x'\beta)\beta \end{aligned}$$

Eq. 4

According to Eq. 1, the regression model employed in the present study includes both dependent and independent variables, as outlined in Table 1. Given the discrete and ordinal nature of the dependent variable, an ordered logit regression model has been used to estimate the impact of cultural capital on the likelihood of visiting cultural heritage attractions. Based on theoretical foundations, the factors affecting visits are categorized into demand-side and supply-side factors. The cultural capital of the visitors is considered a demand-side factor, while characteristics of the visit location are considered supply-side factors. To estimate the effect of these factors on the probability of visiting cultural attractions, it is necessary to incorporate all of these variables into a single regression model, which will allow for the identification of their significance, intensity, and explanatory power regarding the likelihood of visits. The variables related to cultural capital include age, educational attainment, employment status, income level, and prior visitation experience (frequent visiting), while the supply-side factors include advertising, congestion level, entrance fees, promotional activities (price discounts), the presence of restaurants and cafés, souvenir shops, and cultural product stores at the cultural heritage site

### Data Analysis

The data were collected through a questionnaire, and to estimate the ordered logit regression model, Stata MP 16 software was utilized for data analysis. Table 2 presents the independent and dependent variables, their methods of entry, coding, and categorization, as well as their means and standard deviations.

The dependent variable in this study is the frequency of visits, which is treated as an ordinal variable (ranging from 1 to 5) in the model. To categorize respondents by age group, participants were classified into four distinct groups and included in the model as a discrete variable (ranging from 1 to 4). Income level was also treated as a discrete variable, coded from 1 to 4, representing low-income groups, lower-middle income, upper-middle income, and high-income

Table 2. Description of the variables used in the ordered logit regression model. Source: Authors.

| Name of the variable     | Type of the variable           | Codings  | Mean  | Standard deviation |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--|-------|--------------------|
| Frequency of visits      | Dependent (Ordinal discrete)   | Never = 1, Rarely = 2, Sometimes = 3, Often = 4, Always = 5  | 385.3 | 1.179              |
| Age                      | Independent (Ordinal discrete) | Age 15–24 = 1 (reference category)<br>25-44 years = 2<br>45-64 years = 3<br>65 years and over =4   | 2.365 | 0.839              |
| Educational attainment   | Independent (Dummy variable)   | Less than high school diploma = 0 (reference category)<br>High school diploma = 1, Associate degree = 2, Bachelor’s degree = 3, Master’s degree = 4, Doctorate = 5                                       | 2.802 | 1.328              |
| Job status               | Independent (Dummy variable)   | Income without employment = 0 (reference category)<br>Homemaker = 1, Student = 2, Educator = 3, Apprentice = 4, Self-employed = 5, Employee = 6, Professional and managerial = 7, Retired = 8, Other = 9 | 3.977 | 2.596              |
| Income status            | Independent (Ordinal discrete) | Low income = 1 (reference category)<br>Lower-middle income = 2<br>Upper-middle income = 3<br>High income = 4   | 2.095 | 0.979              |
| Frequent visits          | Independent (Ordinal discrete) | Never = 1<br>Once or twice a year = 2<br>Three to four times a year = 3<br>Monthly visits = 4<br>Weekly visits = 5   | 2.96  | 1.119              |
| Advertisement            | Independent (Ordinal discrete) | Not at all = 1, Slightly = 2, Moderately = 3, Very much = 4, Extremely = 5   | 3.605 | 1.152              |
| Congestion level         | Independent (Ordinal discrete) | Not at all = 1, Slightly = 2, Moderately = 3, Very much = 4, Extremely = 5   | 3.137 | 1.186              |
| Entrance fees            | Independent (Ordinal discrete) | Not at all = 1, Slightly = 2, Moderately = 3, Very much = 4, Extremely = 5   | 2.785 | 1.167              |
| Promotional activities   | Independent (Ordinal discrete) | Not at all = 1, Slightly = 2, Moderately = 3, Very much = 4, Extremely = 5   | 3.015 | 1.220              |
| Restaurant and cafe      | Independent (Ordinal discrete) | Not at all = 1, Slightly = 2, Moderately = 3, Very much = 4, Extremely = 5   | 3.25  | 1.249              |
| Souvenir shops           | Independent (Ordinal discrete) | Not at all = 1, Slightly = 2, Moderately = 3, Very much = 4, Extremely = 5   | 3.227 | 1.185              |
| Cultural products stores | Independent (Ordinal discrete) | Not at all = 1, Slightly = 2, Moderately = 3, Very much = 4, Extremely = 5   | 3.207 | 1.132              |

individuals, respectively. The variables of educational attainment (coded from 0 to 5) and employment status (coded from 0 to 9) were defined as dummy variables. To assess the intensity of the impact of supply-side features on visits to cultural heritage sites, respondents were asked to indicate the importance of each feature in their decision to visit, based on a five-point Likert scale.

The results of the ordered logit model estimation are reported in Table 3. The significance of the likelihood ratio statistic (378.05) demonstrates the statistical significance of the overall regression model. Furthermore, the value of McFadden's Pseudo R-squared is 31.14%, indicating a moderate level of explanatory power. It is worth noting that in the context of logit models, Pseudo R-squared values are typically lower compared to those in ordinary least squares regression models, and this value reflects a reasonable degree of model fit.

The age variable, being multi-categorical, treats one category (the age group 15– 24 years) as the reference category, with regression coefficients for the other categories estimated and interpreted relative to the reference group. The coefficients for the age groups 25– 44 years and 45– 64 years are statistically significant at the 99% confidence level, whereas the coefficient for the age group 65 years and older is significant at the 95% confidence level. These results suggest that individuals from all age groups, relative to the 15– 24 years age group, exhibit a higher probability of visiting cultural heritage sites.

Given that the coefficient for the education variable is not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level for any of the educational groups, it can be concluded that education does not exert a meaningful influence on the likelihood of visits to cultural heritage sites. However, at the 90% confidence level, individuals with master's and doctoral degrees exhibit a positive and statistically significant effect on the probability of visiting cultural heritage sites when compared to individuals with below-diploma education (the reference category).

The employment status variable treats unemployed individuals as the reference category. The positive and statistically significant coefficients for the employment status across all groups, relative to unemployed individuals, suggest that having employment significantly increases the likelihood of visiting cultural heritage sites. The coefficients for the Apprentice, Self-employed, Employee, Retired, and Other categories are statistically significant at the 99% confidence level, while the coefficients for

the Homemaker and Professional and managerial categories are significant at more than 99% confidence level. Furthermore, the coefficients for the Educator and Student groups are significant at the 95% confidence level.

The results from the regression analysis indicate that among the four income categories, there is no statistically significant difference in the likelihood of visiting cultural heritage sites between the second income group (lower-middle) and the reference category. However, the two higher-income groups (upper-middle and high-income) have a lower likelihood of visiting cultural heritage sites compared to the low-income group, with a 95% confidence level. This could be attributed to the higher opportunity cost of time for wealthier groups compared to lower-income groups, as visits to cultural heritage sites tend to be time-consuming. Consequently, the positive impact of

increased income and purchasing power on demand is offset by the higher opportunity cost of time for wealthier individuals.

The factor of low congestion level at cultural heritage sites has a positive and statistically significant impact on the likelihood of visiting, with a 95% confidence level. In other words, as congestion increases, individuals' propensity to visit cultural heritage sites decreases.

The presence of cultural product stores, advertisements, and restaurants and cafes at the site has a positive and statistically significant impact on the likelihood of visiting, with a confidence level exceeding 99%. However, the presence of souvenir shops does not have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of visiting cultural heritage sites.

Frequent visits has a positive and statistically significant impact on the likelihood of visiting, with a 99% confidence level.

The factors of entrance fee and promotional activities (discounts) do not have a statistically significant impact on the likelihood of visiting, with a 95% confidence level. This, in conjunction with the positive and statistically significant coefficient of frequent visits, may stem from acquired taste and the occurrence of the rational addiction phenomenon in cultural economics. According to this theory, preferences for cultural and artistic consumption are acquired tastes, meaning individuals continuously and consistently develop stronger preferences for consuming cultural and artistic products as they are exposed to and experience them. Consequently, factors such as price or incentives like discounts do

Table 3. Regression results analysis using the ordered logit model. Source: Authors.

| Name of the variable                  | Categories                  | Coefficient        | Standard deviation | Z Statistic | p> z                 | Confidence interval (95%) |          |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------|
| Age                                   | 25-44 years                 | 0.896              | 0.311              | 2.88        | 0.004                | 0.286                     | 1.500007 |
|                                       | 45-64 years                 | 1.074              | 0.342              | 3,14        | 0.002                | 0.404                     | 1.743    |
|                                       | 65 years and over           | 1.116              | 0.559              | 2.00        | 0.046                | 0.0199                    | 2.212    |
| Educational attainment                | High school diploma         | 0.397              | 0.521              | 0.76        | 0.446                | -0.625                    | 1.419    |
|                                       | Associate degree            | 0.116              | 0.489              | 0.24        | 0.813                | -0.842                    | 1.074    |
|                                       | Bachelor's degree           | 0.861              | 0.463              | 1.86        | 0.063                | -0.0472                   | 1.769    |
|                                       | Master's degree             | 1.099              | 0.478              | 2.30        | 0.051                | 0.162                     | 2.036    |
|                                       | Doctorate                   | 1.108              | 0.608              | 1.82        | 0.069                | -0.084                    | 2.300    |
| Job status                            | Homemaker                   | 1.469              | 0.536              | 2.74        | 0.006                | 0.418                     | 2.520    |
|                                       | Student                     | 1.025              | 0.533              | 1.92        | 0.050                | -0.019                    | 2.070    |
|                                       | Educator                    | 1.444              | 0.570              | 2.53        | 0.011                | 0.326                     | 2.562    |
|                                       | Apprentice                  | 2.426              | 0.653              | 3.71        | 0.000                | 1.1457                    | 3.707    |
|                                       | Self-employed               | 2.85               | 0.627              | 4.54        | 0.000                | 1.615                     | 4.074    |
|                                       | Employee                    | 2.571              | 0.665              | 3.87        | 0.000                | 1.268                     | 3.874    |
|                                       | Professional and managerial | 2.497              | 0.740              | 3.37        | 0.001                | 1.046                     | 3.95     |
|                                       | Retired                     | 3.062              | 0.779              | 3.93        | 0.000                | 1.534                     | 4.590    |
| Income status                         | Other                       | 3.009              | 0.808              | 3.72        | 0.000                | 1.424                     | 4.593    |
|                                       | Lower-middle income         | -0.384             | 0.321              | -1.19       | 0.232                | -1.014                    | 0.246    |
|                                       | Upper-middle income         | -0.675             | 0.403              | -1.68       | 0.050                | -1.464                    | 0.114    |
|                                       | High income                 | -1.120             | 0.505              | -2.22       | 0.027                | -2.109                    | -0.130   |
| Frequent visits                       |                             | 0.357              | 0.114              | 3.13        | 0.002                | 0.134                     | 0.580    |
| Advertisement                         |                             | 0.579              | 0.119              | 4.88        | 0.000                | 0.347                     | 0.812    |
| Congestion level                      |                             | 0.224              | 0.094              | 2.38        | 0.017                | 0.0393                    | 0.409    |
| Entrance fees                         |                             | 0.102              | 0.096              | 1.07        | 0.286                | -0.0856                   | 0.290    |
| Promotional actions (Price discounts) |                             | -0.092             | 0.092              | -1.00       | 0.318                | -0.276                    | 0.089    |
| Restaurants and cafes                 |                             | 0.410              | 0.101              | 4.03        | 0.000                | 0.210                     | 0.609    |
| Souvenir shops                        |                             | -0.115             | 0.114              | -1.01       | 0.314                | -0.338                    | 0.108    |
| Cultural Products stores              |                             | 0.391              | 0.116              | 3.37        | 0.001                | 0.163                     | 0.618    |
|                                       |                             | Pseudo R2 = 0.3114 | Prob > chi2 = 0.00 |             | LR chi2(28) = 378.05 |                           |          |

not significantly influence demand for those with no preferences, nor reduce demand for those who have strong preferences for visiting. Thus, the effect of frequent visits and previous consumption experience is positive and statistically significant, whereas entrance fees and discounts lack a significant effect on the likelihood of visiting.

To gain a deeper understanding of how the various classifications of the explanatory variables in the model affect the likelihood of visiting cultural heritage sites, it is essential to calculate the marginal effects of these variables on the probability of visiting. After the regression estimation, the results of the marginal effects are presented in Table 4. It is noteworthy that the marginal effects are estimated and interpreted only for the coefficients of the variables that show statistically significant effects.

**Marginal effects of the age variable:** The estimated marginal effects for all age groups, relative to the reference group, are negative at lower and moderate levels of visitation, but positive at higher and most frequent levels. In other words, as individuals age, the probability of occasional and moderate visits declines, whereas the probability of frequent and consistent visits rises.

**The marginal effects corresponding to the employment status variable:** indicate that, relative to the reference group (unemployed individuals), most occupational categories exhibit negative effects at lower visitation levels and positive effects at higher levels. Put differently, holding a job enhances the probability of frequent visits while diminishing the likelihood of infrequent visits. Among the various employment groups, the strongest positive marginal effects are observed, in order, for retirees, those in the "other" category, self-employed individuals, and employees.

**The marginal effects for the income variable:** indicate that, for both the upper-middle-income and high-income groups, the coefficients are positive at lower visitation frequencies and negative at higher frequencies (frequent and always). In essence, as income rises, the probability of regular or frequent visits to cultural heritage attractions declines, whereas the likelihood of infrequent or occasional visits increases. Despite the expectation that wealthier individuals would exhibit higher visitation rates to cultural heritage sites, the findings of this research do not support this assumption. This outcome may be attributed to the increasing opportunity cost of time as income rises. Consequently, while higher income expands purchasing power and theoretically facilitates

greater visitation, it simultaneously elevates the opportunity cost of time, which, in aggregate, could diminish the inclination to engage in time-intensive activities such as visiting cultural attractions.

**The marginal effects coefficients associated with frequent visits:** are negative at the first, second, and third levels of visitation, while positive at the fourth and fifth levels. Put differently, prior exposure to cultural attractions and the accumulation of cultural capital tend to diminish the probability of low to moderate visitation frequencies while enhancing the likelihood of higher visitation frequencies.

**The marginal effects coefficients related to advertising:** are negative for lower and moderate visitation levels, while positive for higher and very frequent visitation levels. In other words, advertising appears to discourage low visitation frequencies while fostering greater engagement through an increased likelihood of higher visitation frequencies.

**The marginal effects coefficients associated with the level of congestion at attractions:** are negative for lower and moderate levels of visitation, yet positive for higher visitation frequencies. In other words, alleviating congestion diminishes the probability of lower and moderate visitation while simultaneously enhancing the likelihood of higher visitation rates.

**The marginal effect coefficients for the availability of restaurants, cafes, and cultural product stores:** are negative for lower and moderate visitation frequencies and positive for higher visitation frequencies. Specifically, the presence of such amenities at cultural heritage sites reduces the probability of lower and moderate visitation while enhancing the likelihood of more frequent visits.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Based on Tables 3 & 4, the results of the ordinal logit regression and the marginal effects are analyzed, as discussed below.

Age emerges as a significant determinant of visitation rates to cultural heritage attractions. With advancing age, the probability of visiting such sites increases, as evidenced by progressively higher coefficients across age groups relative to the preceding category. Put differently, middle-aged and retired individuals display a stronger inclination toward visiting cultural heritage sites than their younger counterparts. Supporting this, the tourism literature highlights that open-air attractions and, in particular, museums tend to attract greater interest among middle-aged and elderly demographics (Apostolakis & Jaffry, 2006, 464).

Table 4. Marginal effects of explanatory variables on the ordered logit probabilities across different levels of cultural heritage site visits. Source: Authors.

| Name of the variable     | Categories                  | Y=1            | Y=2             | Y=3            | Y=4             | Y=5             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Age                      | 25-44 years                 | -0.0125<br>**  | -0.0827<br>**   | -0.095<br>***  | 0.150<br>***    | 0.0397<br>***   |
|                          | 45-64 years                 | -0.0139<br>**  | -0.093<br>**    | -0.127<br>***  | 0.189<br>***    | 0.0520<br>***   |
|                          | 65 years and over           | -0.0142<br>**  | -0.0957<br>**   | -0.134<br>*    | 0.189<br>**     | 0.055<br>*      |
| Job status               | Homemaker                   | -0.046<br>*    | -0.214<br>**    | 0.053<br>*     | 0.175<br>***    | 0.032<br>**     |
|                          | Student                     | -0.038<br>*    | -0.164<br>*     | 0.079<br>*     | 0.106<br>**     | 0.17/0<br>*     |
|                          | Educator                    | 0.046/0-<br>*  | 0.212/0-<br>**  | 0.055/0<br>*   | 0.171/0<br>***  | 0.031/0<br>**   |
|                          | Apprentice                  | 0.055/0-<br>** | 0.280/0-<br>*** | 0.099/0-<br>*  | 0.341/0<br>**** | 0.093/0<br>**   |
|                          | Self-employed               | 0.057/0-<br>** | 0.295/0-<br>*** | 0.184/0-<br>** | 0.398/0<br>**** | 0.138/0<br>**** |
|                          | Employee                    | 0.056/0-<br>** | 0.286/0-<br>*** | 0.128/0-<br>*  | 0.363/0<br>**** | 0.107<br>***    |
|                          | Professional and managerial | -0.056<br>**   | -0.287<br>***   | -0.113<br>*    | 0.352<br>****   | 0.099<br>**     |
|                          | Retired                     | -0.058<br>**   | -0.301<br>***   | -0.226<br>**   | 0.417<br>****   | 0.168<br>**     |
|                          | Other                       | -0.057<br>**   | -0.230<br>***   | -0.216<br>**   | 0.413<br>****   | 0.160<br>**     |
| Income status            | Lower-middle income         | 0.003          | 0.022           | 0.067          | -0.067          | -0.028          |
|                          | Upper-middle income         | 0.006<br>*     | 0.044<br>*      | 0.112<br>**    | -0.116<br>**    | -0.044<br>**    |
|                          | High income                 | 0.012<br>*     | 0.088<br>*      | 0.152<br>***   | -0.192<br>**    | -0.061<br>**    |
| Frequent visits          | -0.003<br>**                | -0.024<br>***  | -0.058<br>***   | 0.064<br>***   | 0.022<br>***    |                 |
| Advertisement            | -0.005<br>***               | -0.039<br>**** | -0.094<br>****  | 0.104<br>****  | 0.035<br>****   |                 |
| Congestion level         | -0.002<br>**                | -0.015<br>**   | -0.036<br>**    | 0.040<br>**    | 0.014<br>**     |                 |
| Restaurants and cafes    | -0.004<br>***               | -0.028<br>**** | -0.07<br>****   | 0.073<br>****  | 0.025<br>****   |                 |
| Cultural products stores | -0.004<br>**                | -0.026<br>***  | -0.063<br>***   | 0.067<br>***   | 0.024<br>***    |                 |

All figures presented in the table reflect the estimated coefficients of the variables across the five frequency categories (Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always). Coefficients without an asterisk denote insignificance at the 95% confidence level. A single \* indicates significance at the 90% level, \*\* at the 95% level, \*\*\* at the 99% level, and \*\*\*\* denotes significance exceeding the 99% confidence threshold.

From an analytical standpoint, variables such as educational attainment, entrance fees, promotional discounts, and the presence of souvenir shops do not demonstrate a statistically significant influence on the likelihood of visiting cultural heritage attractions at the 95% confidence interval. Accordingly, these elements are not recognized as key drivers in shaping visitation behavior to such destinations.

The frequent visits variable emerges as a significant determinant of visitation behavior. An increase in the number of prior visits to cultural heritage attractions corresponds to a higher probability of future attendance. Consequently, organizing a greater number of tours to these cultural heritage sites is advisable to encourage repeated visitation.

The insignificance of the entrance fee and price discount variables, coupled with the significance and positive impact of frequent visits on the likelihood of visiting cultural heritage attractions, provides compelling support for the emergence of rational addiction and acquired taste phenomena in the domain of culture and art. This insight offers highly valuable guidance for macro-level cultural policy-making. Specifically, by ensuring the widespread and sustained availability of cultural and artistic experiences, consumer preferences for culture and art can gradually be cultivated. Once established, these preferences, much like in addiction models, lead individuals to exhibit lower sensitivity to price-related variables, rendering economic considerations less influential in their decision-making processes.

Employment status is one of the influential factors. Overall, employed individuals show a greater tendency to visit cultural heritage attractions compared to unemployed individuals.

Individuals in the upper-middle and high-income brackets exhibit lower visitation rates compared to those in the low-income group. While it might be anticipated that affluent individuals with greater financial resources would frequent cultural heritage attractions more regularly, the findings of this study do not support this assumption. A plausible explanation lies in the rising opportunity cost of time associated with higher income levels. Thus, although increased income enhances purchasing power and ostensibly facilitates greater access to such experiences, it concurrently elevates the opportunity cost of time. Consequently, this dynamic may diminish the inclination of high-income individuals to engage in time-intensive pursuits like visiting cultural heritage sites.

Advertising emerges as a significant determinant in

encouraging visits to cultural heritage attractions. Increased promotional efforts enhance the probability of visitation. Through well-crafted and targeted advertising strategies, it is possible to effectively foster greater engagement with these sites. Furthermore, governments can play a pivotal role by formulating policies aimed at elevating public awareness, thereby encouraging broader participation in cultural heritage experiences.

The level of congestion at cultural heritage attractions significantly influences visitation patterns. Reduced crowding enhances the probability of visits, as visitors tend to prefer less crowded environments. Consequently, implementing well-designed demand management strategies can effectively improve crowd distribution and, in turn, encourage greater engagement with cultural heritage sites.

The availability of restaurants and cafés plays a significant role in influencing visitation to cultural heritage attractions. A higher presence of these amenities is associated with increased visitor frequency. Thus, enhancing the accessibility and availability of dining options can contribute to greater engagement with cultural heritage sites.

The availability of cultural product shops is a significant factor affecting visitation to cultural heritage sites. A greater number of such shops correlates with a higher frequency of visits. Thus, enhancing the accessibility and expanding the presence of cultural product shops can contribute to an increase in visitor numbers.

According to the results for the coefficients of cultural capital variables, the highest positive final effects are as follows: the employment status variable for the retired group, with a coefficient of 0.41; the age variable for the retirement age group, with a coefficient of 0.189; the income variable for the high-income group, with a coefficient of 0.152; and the visit history variable, with a coefficient of 0.064. Overall, the cultural capital variables exhibit the highest positive final effect, totaling 0.822. Moreover, the variables associated with the features and facilities of cultural heritage attractions have an even higher positive final effect of 1.109, surpassing the cultural capital variables at 0.822.

In conclusion, the findings of this study, along with the lack of significant impact from price and discount variables and the positive influence of advertising, the presence of cultural product stores, and amenities like restaurants and cafes, as well as the negative effect of congestion on the likelihood of visiting cultural attractions, are consistent with existing

literature in the field of cultural tourism. This suggests that in most cultural tourism studies, cultural tourists and individuals with higher cultural capital exhibit considerably less sensitivity to price-related variables than to factors associated with the quality of the cultural attractions they visit (Poon, 1993; Apostolakis & Jaffry, 2006). This finding offers crucial guidance for policy development, particularly in cultural tourism,

emphasizing that the quality of the tourist experience at cultural attractions should be prioritized by policymakers over other factors.

### Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in the conduct of this research.

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