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# Who wears Hanfu clothing when they travel? Experience-based cultural tourism market segmentation – the case of Xi'an, China

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TOURISM **Verso running head :** L. ZHONG  
ET AL.

 [0000-0001-7802-1563](#) [Lina Zhong<sup>a</sup>](#),  [Liyu Yang<sup>a</sup>](#), [0000-0002-0754-1083](#) [Alastair M. Morrison<sup>b</sup>](#), [Mengyao Zhu<sup>a</sup>](#), [Hai Nguyen<sup>b</sup>](#), [Weijie Lang<sup>a</sup>](#) <sup>a</sup>Institute for Big Data Research in Tourism, School of Tourism Sciences, Beijing International Studies University, Beijing, People's Republic of China <sup>b</sup>School of Management and Marketing, Greenwich Business School, University of Greenwich, London, UK

**CONTACT** Lina Zhong  [zhonglina@bisu.edu.cn](mailto:zhonglina@bisu.edu.cn)

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## ABSTRACT

The Han culture is the Chinese national culture as well as a significant part of the world's costuming heritage. However, Han clothes (Hanfu) are little known outside of China. This research selected Xi'an, a famous historical city, as the case to collect data using the survey questionnaire method. Factor analysis explored the variables involved in the cultural tourism experiences of wearing Hanfu clothing. Two-step clustering was used to prepare a market segmentation of this form of cultural tourism. The experience of wearing Hanfu clothing was influenced by the five factors of entertainment, aesthetics, culture, escape, and cosplay (costume play). Tourists who wore Hanfu clothing while travelling were classified into the four types of immersive cultural, aesthetic experience, culturally refined, and passing tourists. These groups had dissimilar sociodemographic characteristics and experience priorities. This research expands the knowledge on Hanfu clothing and cultural tourism experiences and provides insights for the management of cultural tourism destinations.

## KEYWORDS

- Cultural
- tourism Hanfu
- clothing
- tourism
- experiences
- cosplay market
- segmentation

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## 1. Introduction

Tourism as an experience is often closely related to culture (Macleod & Carrier, 2009) and cultural tourism is an essential part of tourism consumption (Richards, 2018). Compared with economic development, culture is a continuous driving force for tourism. Cultural tourism plays a positive role in promoting destinations and cultural development (Csapo, 2012). Clothing is an essential part of culture (Chattaraman & Lennon, 2008) and a form of human expression (Crocombe, 1987). National dress has the potential advantage of preserving and promoting the culture of a country, region, or people. Understanding the cultural tourism market and the consumption behaviour of tourists is crucial for tourism policy, planning, and design (Lee et al., 2022; Schiffman et al., 2013).

Han culture represents the Chinese national culture (Tibberts, 2021). Hanfu has a history of more than 3000 years as a cultural heritage of China

(Pingting, 2008). At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the culture of Hanfu clothing was reintroduced into the commercial market, and

Hanfu admirers made multiple purchases (Qu et al., 2019). Experiential travel by people wearing Hanfu at tourist attractions with historical and cultural connotations, such as the Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven, and Datang ("the city that never sleeps"), is a new form of domestic tourism in China. Travellers wearing Hanfu clothing often share their photographs and videos on social media (Shi, 2021). More people are becoming aware of this special experience in China and abroad. Also, Hanfu festivals have emerged in China since 2003 (Yang, Luo, et al., 2022). Hanfu culture has gradually transformed from a niche interest to a fashion trend (Wang et al., 2020). Clothing can bring a culture alive, and positively affect the experiences of tourists. The integration of Hanfu culture and tourism may further enhance the cultural connotations of tourism destinations (Hansen, 2004). For urban development, Hanfu tourism can play a role in cultural dissemination and stimulate tourism spending (Dodds et al., 2016).

Previous articles have explored the market segmentation of cultural tourism, but most grouping systems are based on cultural activities and motivations (McKercher et al., 2002; Özel & Kozak, 2012). There are fewer research studies based on tourism experiences of cultural tourism. Notably, the extant research pays little attention to the culture of Hanfu clothing. The analysis of the experiences of wearing Hanfu clothing while travelling will provide greater understanding of the segmentation and structure of urban cultural tourism markets. This will assist in the management of local cultural industries and cultural dissemination of destinations. This research examined the Xi'an cultural tourism market through the following three research questions: (1) What are the experiences in Hanfu tourism? (2) Which experiential factors positively correlate with re-experience behaviour? (3) What are the current markets for Hanfu tourism experiences and how can they be segmented?

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Cultural tourism experiences and clothing

Culture and tourism have always been inextricably linked (Taheri et al., 2014). Culture has complex elements including knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other abilities and habits that people develop as members of society (Tylor, 1871), all of which can provide solid backgrounds and high-quality content. Cultural attractions provide an impetus for travel, and travel itself generates cultural tourism (Richards, 2018). There has been an increasing recent focus on the nature, structure, and elements of cultural tourism experiences (Cetin & Bilgihan, 2016; Chen & Rahman, 2018). Cultural tourism experiences that involve discovery and participation in novel and profound cultures of an aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, or psychological nature, may become memorable tourist experiences (Lee, 2015; Reisinger, 2011)

As non-verbal symbols, part of fashion and cultural inheritance, clothing serves as an important expression of a country's culture (Buckley, 2003; Crane & Bovone, 2006; Hsiao & Grauman, 2021; Ni, 2020). Clothing and culture complement each other. Currently, a number of tourism destinations use clothing to attract tourists as part of their marketing strategy. Kyoto, for example, has an extensive kimono industry, and there are many shops that rent kimonos to tourists (Farsani & Jamshidi, 2021). Cosplay (costume play) has become more international, including cosplay competitions as well as online communication platforms that foster a global cosplay culture (Okabe, 2012). In Akihabara, waitresses in maid cafes wear cute maid uniforms, and tourists also dress up sometimes to experience the different themes and designs of each branch (Liu et al., 2022; Steine, 2019). In Europe, the most important competitions are the EuroCosplay Championship (ECG) held as part of the London MCM Comic Con (Lamerichs, 2013). International anime tourists in Norway are motivated to visit Japan by role-playing activities (Clyde, 2020). The emerging roleplaying subculture also is having an have

impact on Hong Kong (Rahman et al., 2012). Tourism is gradually incorporating more traditional and ethnic trends. According to previous studies, traditional clothing experiences in cultural tourism are vital in improving tourist perceptions of destinations (Lee & Lee, 2019). These examples highlight that clothing can be effectively integrated and can be transformed into a special cultural tourism experience (Proje & Bizjak, 2017).

China is a multi-ethnic country. The costumes of ethnic tourism are varied, colourful, and striking. Hanfu clothing as part of Chinese culture, refers to the traditional clothing of the Chinese Han nationality (Kopania & Szpotakowski, 2020). There has been a trend since 2003 in which people have been wearing Hanfu clothing in public areas in China (Wang et al., 2020). In contemporary China, Hanfu travel has become increasingly popular among young people (Yang, Luo, et al., 2022). Travellers who wear Hanfu clothing enjoy taking photos and sharing their experiences online through photos or videos. As these visual contents spread throughout China and other countries, more people are becoming aware of this new form of travel (Shi, 2021).

Although wearing Hanfu clothing as an experience is becoming increasingly popular in tourism, very few studies have been conducted on this topic, so its experience dimensions and components remain unexplored (Yin, 2021). The concept proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1998) is widely applied in cultural tourism experience research in the four dimensions of entertainment, education, aesthetics, and escapism. From the perspective of entertainment, wearing Hanfu in tourism is essentially a hedonic experience (Carlson et al., 2016). From the educational perspective, people can learn more about Chinese traditional culture by wearing Hanfu, representing its prominent educational and learning features (Richards, 1996). From the perspective of escape, tourists wearing Hanfu clothing may have a strong spiritual drive and view cultural tourism as a means of escaping (Gurel & Nielsen, 2018). From an aesthetic perspective, travelling with Hanfu clothing provides young adults with a cultural experience that integrates traditional Chinese elements into a modern design (Proietti & Addis, 2022).

From the perspectives of cultural identity and value creation, cosplay has become more common with globalization and technological advances (Iles, 2008). In China, cosplay is part of the youth culture including dressing up in Hanfu. Creating the appearance of a character is the purpose of cosplaying, which can be both a hobby and a way to express one's personality. The roleplay can be an enjoyable experience that creates meaningful memories, engagement, and personal fulfilment (Klimmt et al., 2009; Luff, 2000). In the process of wearing Hanfu, tourists transform themselves into characters connected to traditional Chinese culture (Lamerichs, 2014). The original four realms for explaining experience included entertainment, educational, aesthetic and escapist (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). This research added cosplay as a fifth dimension of Pine and Gilmore's paradigm (1998).

## 2.2. Tourist market segmentation

Market segmentation is a common marketing strategy component for tourism destinations. One of the greatest benefits of market segmentation

is that it allows destinations to provide more specialized and differentiated services to different customer segments, thereby improving competitive advantage. There are many studies on market segmentation in tourism including for rural tourism (An & Alarcón, 2021; Eusébio et al., 2017), cultural tourism (Liu, 2014), wellness tourism (Chen et al., 2013), and e-tourism (Dolnicar, 2020). Several scholars have used tourist motivations (Carvache-Franco et al., 2019; Fraiz et al., 2020; Rid et al., 2014), tourist demand (Pulido-Fernández et al., 2022), and activities (McKercher et al., 2002) as segmentation criteria.

There is some research related to cultural elements that provide insights on cultural tourism segmentation. For example, (McKercher, 2020) proposed five segments: purposeful cultural, sightseeing cultural, serendipitous cultural, casual cultural, and incidental cultural tourists. Pafi et al. (2020) identified the five landscape experiences of well-being, serious travel, nature, coastal change, and cultural experiences. Chiang et al. (2015) clustered tourism motivations and found three distinct groups of cultural tourists: leisure tourism, sightseeing, and new knowledge seekers. A cluster analysis based on learning motivation of cultural history found the three distinct groups (culturally centred, concerned, and appreciative tourists) who varied widely in behaviour and experiences (Nyaupane et al., 2006). Despite the continuing development and understanding by researchers of the cultural tourism market, there are fewer market segmentation studies based on cultural tourism experiences and clothing. Many studies use K-means for clustering in tourism studies (Birdir, 2015; Srihadi et al., 2016). This clustering method is unsupervised, which can only cluster quantitative data, and the results of the clustering are unknown. It is appropriate to adopt new and more effective clustering approaches. Therefore, this research tried to fill some of gaps in cultural tourism experience market segmentation by utilizing a two-step clustering method to segment the Hanfu tourism experience market.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Data collection

In May 2021, the research team fielded an offline survey questionnaire in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, at the Datang Night City for visitors dressed in Hanfu clothing, with the survey lasting over three days. Xi'an was chosen as the site for questionnaire distribution due to its strong historical and cultural heritage. It hosts Hanfu cultural events such as the China Hanfu Art Festival and China Chinese Costume Day. Moreover, the Datang Night City has become a popular destination for tourists dressed in traditional Chinese costumes. The research team tested the reliability of the questionnaire after the first day of distribution. Sixty questionnaires were used to pre-test the reliability and validity. The data analysis results revealed that the questionnaire had good reliability and validity; the Cronbach's alpha values were higher than 0.7 and factor loadings were above 0.4. So, distribution was continued, although these 60 questionnaires were not used for future analysis. Finally, 541 questionnaires were returned, 527 of which were valid, for an effective rate of around 90%.

#### 3.2. Data analysis

The questionnaire consisted primarily of questions about experiences and behaviours. It also included demographic information such as gender, age, monthly income, and other variables such as knowledge of Chinese costumes and ancient poems and songs. The scales for experience were developed by Oh et al. (2007) and Gardiner et al. (2022) and adapted to the characteristics of the cultural tourism experience of wearing Hanfu clothing. The scale for measuring re-experiencing behaviours in wearing Hanfu clothing was based on the scale of Gill et al. (2007). The scales contained 23 items, and a five-point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly were used.

Factor analysis and clustering were conducted using SPSS 22.0. Factor analysis was used to conduct exploratory factor analysis on the experience items. Second, Pearson correlation analysis investigated the relationship between the experience factors and re-experiencing behaviours in wearing Hanfu clothing. Finally, the tourism experiencers of Hanfu clothing were clustered using a two-step clustering method. The two-step clustering method considered both quantitative and definite class data, improving clustering results. In addition, this study used one-way ANOVA to investigate the clustering results after two-step clustering. Independent chi-square tests were then used to explore the differences in sociodemographic variables across clusters.

### 4. Results

#### 4.1. Respondent profile

Table 1 shows the respondent profile, and it can be seen that the majority of people who wore Hanfu clothing to experience cultural tourism were female. Most people who were wearing Hanfu clothing to experience cultural tourism were under 30 years old. Most were students or company staff. Furthermore, these travellers were primarily accompanied by friends, reflecting the fact that people who favoured Hanfu clothing preferred to travel with their friends who also had the same interest.

**Table 1.** Respondent profile.

Demographic variables	Levels	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	66	12.52
	Female	461	87.48
<b>Age</b>	below 20	166	31.5
	21–30	318	60.34
	31–40	30	5.69

	41–50	7	1.33
	51–60	6	1.14
<b>Education</b>	Junior high school and below	282	53.51
	High school	115	21.82
	College	45	8.54
	Undergraduate	52	9.87
	Graduate and above	2	0.38
<b>Occupation</b>	Students	282	53.51
	Company employees	115	21.82
	Public institutions/civil servants	45	8.54
	Freelancers	52	9.87
	Retirees	2	0.38
	Others	31	5.88
<b>Monthly income</b>	3000 yuan or less	283	53.7
	3001–6000 yuan	130	24.67
	6001–8000 yuan	48	9.11
	8001–10,000 yuan	28	5.31
	10,001–20,000 yuan	23	4.36
	20001 or more yuan	15	2.85
<b>Travel companion</b>	Alone	102	19.35
	With family	83	15.75
	With friends	206	39.09
	With partners	38	7.21
	Other	98	18.6

#### 4.2. Dimensions of experiences of wearing Hanfu clothing

Factor analysis examined the dimensions of tourism experiences of wearing Hanfu clothing. Items with factor loadings below 0.4 were excluded (Lee et al., 2004). Then the remaining items were retained for further analysis. The results showed that the tourism experiences of Hanfu clothing could be divided into five

dimensions: entertainment, aesthetic, culture, escape, and cosplay. These variables were responsible for 79.41% of the total variance.

The first factor was entertainment, which explained 45.89% of the total variance and had a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.93. Entertainment was an emotional experience of wearing Hanfu clothing in tourism, where tourists enjoyed travelling dressed this way and found it satisfying, enjoyable, and attractive. The second factor was aesthetics, which explained 12.73% of the total variance. Because modern Hanfu clothing has various colours and styles, this makes people wear more elegant Hanfu clothing when they are being photographed. With a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.894, culture explained 7.84% of the total variance. People wearing Hanfu clothing learned more about traditional culture, and specifically the culture of Hanfu clothing. During the process, it was also possible to learn new skills and share experiences of wearing Hanfu. The fourth factor was escapism, which explained 7.24% of the total variance. People regarded wearing Hanfu clothing while travelling as a way to escape daily life and forget about physical and psychological stress. The fifth factor was cosplay, explaining 5.7% of the total variance. Cosplay combines the imaginative self and performance identity (Rahman et al., 2012), where participants feel like they are in ancient times and dressed as an ancient character.

Overall, in descending order, the mean values of these five factors were aesthetics, culture, entertainment, cosplay, and escape. This indicated that tourists who wore Hanfu clothing for cultural tourism experiences wanted to look good in photos and improve their external appearances. They were also motivated by a sense of mission in spreading the Chinese traditional culture. Wearing Hanfu clothing provided emotional experiences and made participants feel like they were in ancient times, which was exciting and memorable. They wanted to get away from everyday life. Most were young people and were more likely to pursue the beauty of Hanfu clothing and more willing to spread related information to others (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Dimensions of experiences of wearing Hanfu clothing.

Factors	Factor loadings	Variance explained (%)	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Means
<b>Factor 1: Entertainment</b>		45.894	0.930	3.98
When I travel, I like to wear Hanfu clothing	0.808			
When I wear Hanfu clothing while travelling, I feel satisfied	0.869			
When I wear Hanfu clothing while travelling, I feel happy	0.830			
It is fun to wear Hanfu clothing while travelling	0.826			
<b>Factor 2: Aesthetic</b>		12.734	0.913	4.39
Wearing Hanfu clothing to take photos is very good for travel	0.815			
Wearing Hanfu clothing while travelling looks very elegant	0.794			
Hanfu clothing has lovely colours.	0.820			
Hanfu clothing has lovely styles	0.804			
<b>Factor 3: Culture</b>		7.836	0.894	4.36

I love the culture of Hanfu clothing	0.825			
I love the traditional culture	0.875			
I enjoy discovering cultural things.	0.664			
I am pleased to introduce traditional Chinese culture to others	0.701			
<b>Factor 4: Escape</b>		7.243	0.929	3.40
Escape from the daily physical stress	0.887			
Escape from the daily mental stress	0.911			
Escape from everyday life	0.833			
<b>Factor 5: Cosplay</b>		5.703	0.826	3.61
Wearing Hanfu clothing while travelling makes me feel like I am really in the ancient world	0.748			
While travelling, wearing Hanfu clothing makes me feel the fusion of ancient and modern	0.643			
Wearing Hanfu clothing while travelling makes me look like an ancient character	0.777			
Wearing Hanfu clothing while travelling makes me feel like I am communicating with the soul of ancient characters	0.660			

Notes. Mean values were measured based on a five-point Likert scales (1: strongly disagree, 3: neutral, 5: strongly agree).

#### 4.3. Experience and behaviour of wearing Hanfu clothing

Skewness and kurtosis were used to assess the normality of the data distribution. All factors had absolute skew-indexes lower than 3.0 and kurtosis indexes lower than 8.0 (Kline, 2015), implying that the assumption of normality was satisfied. According to the results, all five tourism experiential factors impacted re-experiencing behaviours in wearing Hanfu clothing, but the degree of impact varied by factor. The influential factors were entertainment, culture, aesthetics, cosplay and escape in descending order. The correlation between entertainment and re-experiencing behaviour was positive, indicating that tourists were more willing to wear Hanfu clothing when they perceived greater entertainment from their experiences. The aesthetic and cultural experiences while travelling also influenced decisions to wear Hanfu clothing (Table 3). However, cosplay and escapism had low correlations with the experiences of wearing Hanfu clothing, indicating that these two factors had a lesser influence on re-experiencing wearing Hanfu clothing.

**Table 3.** Factors influencing re-experience behaviour of wearing Hanfu clothing.

Construct	<i>r</i>	Correlation	Hypothesis
Entertainment – re-experiencing behaviour	0.760**	High positive correlation <sup>a</sup>	Supported

Culture – re-experiencing behaviour	0.633**	Moderate positive correlation <sup>a</sup>	Supported
Aesthetic – re-experiencing behaviour	0.502**	Moderate positive correlation <sup>a</sup>	Supported
Cosplay – re-experiencing behaviour	0.464**	Low positive correlation <sup>a</sup>	Supported
Escape – re-experiencing behaviour	0.202**	Little positive if any correlation <sup>a</sup>	Supported

Notes. \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

<sup>a</sup> Consistent with (Asuero et al., 2006[Q3]) recommendations.

#### 4.4. Market segmentation of tourists wearing Hanfu clothing

According to the five factors of tourism experience of wearing Hanfu and socio-demographic variable characteristics, the market of tourists wearing Hanfu was sub-divided. Gender and educational background were regarded as the basis for segmenting the market (Friedmann & Lowengart, 2019; Oh et al., 2002; Yiadom & Tait, 2022), and also are closely linked with cultural tourism (Babb, 2012; Su et al., 2020[Q4]). Therefore, these two categorical variables were selected. Five factors of Hanfu tourism experiences were used as quantitative data, gender and education level were categorical data, and a two-step clustering of Hanfu travel experiencers was conducted. The four clusters derived were immersive cultural (17.27%), aesthetic (37.95%), culturally refined (10.82%), and passing tourists (33.97%) (Table 4). Then, the Welch's Test was used to test the homogeneity of variances assumption. The results indicated that the comparison groups had similar variances. Then, one-way ANOVAs on the five factors of these four clusters were conducted and there were statistical differences in the four clusters, so the classification was reasonable.

**Table 4.** Market segmentation of tourists wearing Hanfu clothing.

Dimensions	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	F-value	Sig.
	Cultural tourists	Aesthetic tourists	Realistic scene tourists	Spatial illusion tourists		
	(n = 28)	(n = 51)	(n = 62)	(n = 74)		
Entertainment	3.96 <sup>a</sup>	3.01	4.37	4.51	81.489	0.000
Aesthetics	3.77	4.02	4.64	4.92	73.477	0.000
Culture	4.21	3.58	4.55	4.76	77.705	0.000
Escape	3.05	2.55	3.54	3.67	89.620	0.000
Cosplay	3.59	2.92	3.79	4.00	87.940	0.000

**Notes.** Under blue colour are the mean values of each cluster in different dimensions, which were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The Welch's test was used to determine the value of *F*.

To better understand the demographic characteristics of the four clusters, chi-square tests of independence were performed on each cluster. Chisquare tests were used to test if demographic characteristics in different clusters had significant differences. The results showed statistically significant differences among the four clusters in terms of gender ( $\chi^2(3) = 415.147, p = 0.000$ ), age ( $\chi^2(15) = 28.495, p = 0.000$ ), education level ( $\chi^2(12) = 282.944, p = 0.000$ ), occupation ( $\chi^2(15) = 31.434, p = 0.000$ ), monthly income ( $\chi^2(15) = 31.403,$

$p = 0.024$ ), and travel companions ( $\lambda^2(12) = 32.340, p = 0.000$ ). In addition, to test the attributes related to Hanfu culture, one-way ANOVAs were used to analyze the Hanfu culture attributes of different clusters and it was found that there were statistical differences.

#### 4.4.1. Immersive cultural tourists

This cluster accounted for 17.27% of the respondents. Experiencing the highest perceptions of entertainment from Hanfu culture and cosplay was the main feature of this cluster. The value of the entertainment factor for this cluster was 4.61, much higher than the other groups. This group also had the greatest perception for culture and cosplay. Wearing Hanfu during travel allowed them to have an immersive experience in entertainment, enjoying aesthetic, culture, escape and cosplay elements more deeply, acquiring new knowledge, and promoting traditional culture.

This cluster consisted solely of females. They were mainly under 30 years old and those between 31–50 years old were also higher than the average. This cluster was dominated by junior college students (51.65%). The monthly income of this cluster was lower, mainly below 6000 yuan. The proportions of occupations were even and freelancers were more compared to other groups. In addition, they liked to travel with familiar people like family and friends wearing Hanfu (35.16% with friends, and 27.37% with family). They were eager to talk with ancient people through ancient poetry and song and experience the historical scenes described in ancient people's words.

#### 4.4.2. Aesthetic tourists

This cluster accounted for 37.95% of the respondents, which was the largest group. The pursuit of beauty was the main feature and the value of the aesthetics for this cluster was 4.82, much higher than the other groups (4.80 for immersive cultural tourists, 4.52 for culturally refined tourists, 3.66 for passing tourists). These people felt that the colours and styles of Hanfu were good-looking, and in the process of travelling in Hanfu, they could improve their temperaments and take photos to show others. The rankings of other experience factors were also high but did not reach the levels as for immersive cultural tourists.

This cluster also only included females, were relatively young, mainly aged 21–30, and there were few people over 40 years old. The education level of this group was generally undergraduates, most had Bachelor's degrees or higher qualifications. The occupations were mainly students (60.50%) and civil servants (11.50%). Because most were students, monthly incomes were lowest; 59% of with monthly incomes less than 3,000 yuan. They liked to wear Hanfu with friends when travelling (47%). This group had greater knowledge of ancient poetry, song and Hanfu, but this was not as high as for the culturally refined tourists.

#### 4.4.3. Culturally refined tourists

This cluster accounted for 10.82%, which was the lowest of the four clusters. The pursuit of beauty and culture was the dominant feature of this group since the values of entertainment, aesthetics and culture for this cluster were all greater than four, while the mean values of escape and cosplay were all less than four. They participated to experience the culture and beauty of Hanfu. Wearing Hanfu while travelling brought them happiness, and they also had a relatively deep sense of escaping from daily life and travelling back to ancient times through perceptions of cosplay experiences.

The group consisted of 96.49% males, which was unique among the clusters. Older people above 40 years old (7.02%) was higher than for other clusters. The distribution of education levels in this cluster were more even than for other groups. They were mainly students (52.63%) and company employees (29.82%). The proportion of people with higher monthly incomes was also more than other groups. They preferred experiencing Hanfu clothing alone (35.09%). This cluster had the most profound knowledge of ancient poetry and song. In addition, they had the deepest understanding of Hanfu.

#### 4.4.4. Passing tourists

As the second largest cluster among the four, this group accounted for 33.97%. Most were passing travellers and most likely experienced Hanfu clothing for the first time. Therefore, they did not attach relatively high values to all experiences, as they only were 'skimming the surface' of Hanfu experiences. They travelled with Hanfu primarily for aesthetic and cultural reasons, rather than for entertainment or escape.

Most were females, but there was also some males. They were mainly young and middle-aged, and the group aged 21–30 accounted for more than 90%. These people had higher levels of education and most held Bachelor's degrees or higher qualifications. The cluster comprised students, company employees, public institution and civil servants, and freelancers. Tourists from this cluster earned modest monthly incomes. They liked to travel with friends in Hanfu (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Socio-demographic analysis of clusters.

		Cluster 1 Immersive cultural tourists	Cluster 2 Aesthetic tourists	Cluster 3 Culturally refined tourists	Cluster 4 Passing tourists	
<i>N</i> (%)	Total	91 (17.27)	200 (37.95)	57 (10.82)	179 (33.97)	Chi-square test <i>p</i> value
<b>Gender</b>						$\lambda^2$ (3) = 415.147, <i>p</i> = 0.000
Male	12.52	0.00	0.00	96.49	6.15	
Female	87.48	100.00	100.00	3.51	93.85	
<b>Age</b>						$\lambda^2$ (15) = 28.495, <i>p</i> = 0.000
Under 20	31.5	27.47	35.50	24.56	31.28	
21–30	60.34	57.14	59.00	61.40	63.13	
31–40	5.69	8.79	4.50	7.02	5.03	
41–50	1.33	4.40	0.50	1.75	0.56	
51–60	1.14	2.20	0.50	5.27	0.00	
<b>Education</b>						$\lambda^2$ (12) = 282.944, <i>p</i> = 0.000
Junior high school and below	4.36	18.68	0.00	7.02	1.12	
High school	9.87	16.48	7.00	10.53	9.50	
Junior college	13.66	51.65	0.00	15.79	8.94	
Undergraduate	58.82	0.00	86.50	47.37	61.45	
Graduate and above	13.28	13.19	6.50	19.30	18.99	
<b>Occupation</b>						$\lambda^2$ (15) = 31.434, <i>p</i> = 0.000
Students	53.51	39.56	60.50	52.63	53.07	
Company employees	21.82	25.27	17.50	29.82	22.35	
Public institutions/civil servants	8.54	7.69	11.50	3.51	7.26	
Freelancers	9.87	15.38	7.00	10.53	10.06	
Retirees	0.38	1.10	0.00	1.75	0.00	

Others	5.88	10.99	3.50	1.75	7.26	
<b>Monthly income (yuan)</b>						
3000 or less	53.7	41.76	59.00	49.12	55.31	$\lambda^2$ (15) = 31.403, $p = 0.024$
3001–6000	24.67	37.36	25.00	17.54	20.11	
6001–8000	9.11	9.89	6.00	17.54	9.50	
8001–10,000	5.31	5.49	3.50	3.51	7.82	
10,001–20,000	4.36	4.40	4.50	3.51	4.47	
More than 20,000	2.85	1.10	2.00	8.77	2.79	
<b>Travel companion</b>						
Alone	19.35	17.58	17.50	35.09	17.32	$\lambda^2$ (12) = 32.340, $p = 0.000$
With family	15.75	26.37	13.50	17.54	12.29	
With friends	39.09	35.16	47.00	19.30	38.55	
With partners	7.21	5.49	5.00	7.02	10.61	
Other	18.6	15.38	17.00	21.05	21.23	
<b>Hanfu-related attributes</b>						
Knowledge of ancient poetry and song	3.78	4.01	4.09	4.28	3.17	$F = 91.054$ , $p = 0.000$
Knowledge of Hanfu	3.58	3.86	3.89	3.96	2.97	$F = 93.828$ , $p = 0.000$

## 5. Discussion and conclusions

### 5.1. Discussion

This research has specific theoretical significance. First, it expands the research on Hanfu tourism in experiential clothing tourism and enriches the empirical analysis of Hanfu tourism. The existing research related to clothing experience tourism has studied Japanese animation cosplay (Clyde, 2020), Japanese kimono (Farsani & Jamshidi, 2021), and Korean traditional clothing (K.-Y. Lee & Lee, 2019). Few studies have examined Chinese Hanfu. As an essential part of Chinese culture (Kopania & Szpotakowski, 2020).

Second, experience was utilized as a variable for clustering and expands the selection of clustering variables for the market segmentation of tourist groups. Most of the current tourism market segmentation is based on tourist motivation (Fraiz et al., 2020) (Carvache-Franco et al., 2019) and demand (Pulido-Fernández et al., 2022). There is less research on market segmentation by experience. These few studies mainly focus on clustering for natural scenic areas (Pafi et al., 2020), and there are few studies on cultural area experience segmentation.

Third, the experience economy concept proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1998) was extended by adding the dimension of cosplay to its four dimensions (entertainment, education, aesthetics, and escapism). This paper verifies the applicability of the experience economy concept of Pine and Gilmore (1998) in the travelling experience with Hanfu.

Fourth, the clustering method for market segmentation were improved. Most previous studies use the K-means clustering method (Srihadi et al., 2016) that can only cluster quantitative data. This study incorporated socio-demographic characteristics into the clustering and used a two-step clustering method to cluster quantitative and categorical variables.

This study also has practical implications. Market segmentation is a valuable tool for developing effective tourism marketing strategies (Srihadi et al., 2016). The findings can provide a reference for the management of cultural tourism destinations. First, with the market segmentation of Hanfu tourists, management organizations can carry out precise marketing according to the socio-demographic characteristics of each group. For example, holding more cultural activities (such as guessing lantern riddles and poetry exhibitions), and adding more cultural elements at scenic areas, will attract cultural tourism experiences. For those who experience aesthetic tourism, the Hanfu rental stores in the scenic area can strengthen the aesthetic elements of Hanfu clothing and styles or add more places to take photographs. Second, cosplay and re-experience behaviour had a low positive correlation and tourists perceived lesser feelings of cosplay. Therefore, cultural tourism scenic areas should enhance the imaginative and cultural atmosphere. They can offer the opportunity to demonstrate tourists' performance skills by holding Hanfu Cultural Festivals, Hanfu Days, and other activities. Also, it is possible to create stories with performance identity and immersion through various experiences such as gamification, strengthening narratives, and inviting tourists to participate. In addition, there is a lack of stimulation of international opinion leadership. There is a possibility for Chinese destinations to invite domestic and international online opinion leaders on different social media platforms to attract young people to learn more about Hanfu and to encourage them to experience these clothing styles.

This research also had some limitations. First, due to the particularity and scarcity of groups who wear Hanfu for travel, the sample size in this study was small. With more financial and human resource support in future studies, the sample sizes should be expanded. Second, although Xi'an is a typical cultural tourism destination in China, this study did not conduct further investigations on tourists wearing Hanfu at tourist attractions in other Chinese cities such as Beijing, Nanjing, and Suzhou. Other cultural tourism destinations need to be studied in the future. Finally, as a unique Chinese cultural symbol, Hanfu can profoundly impact cultural tourism experiences. This was an exploratory study on the segmentation of the cultural tourism market in Xi'an. Future research should further explore the dimensions and impacts of Hanfu cultural tourism, such as studying tourists in different market segments. Looking globally, there are other situations in which costumes are worn, often during festivals such as Carnival celebrations in Brazil and the Caribbean and in historical re-enactments in the U.S., U.K., and elsewhere. Future researchers should consider these settings for more related research.

## 5.2. Conclusions

Through a questionnaire survey of Hanfu tourists, factor analysis determined five dimensions of Hanfu tourism experiences and explored the relationship between the five factors and likelihood of wearing Hanfu again when travelling. Experiencers were clustered into four broad categories to provide actionable insights for marketing organizations.

First, it was found that the travel experiences of wearing Hanfu clothing were divided into entertainment, aesthetics, culture, escape, and cosplay. Aesthetics was the most critical factor in the Hanfu tourism experience, followed by culture, and the third was entertainment. The main purposes of wearing Hanfu to travel were to gain a better temperament and take beautiful photos; the second was to pursue cultural elements and promote Hanfu culture.

Second, the study found that the most influential factor in Hanfu tourism re-experience intentions was entertainment, followed by culture, cosplay, aesthetics, and escape. Aesthetics had the highest average of the five factors, but its effect on future behaviour was smaller. Entertainment ranked third on the average of the five factors but had the greatest impact on re-experiencing behaviour. This suggested that a large part of reasons for wearing Hanfu was for emotional pleasure brought by the experience of costuming in Hanfu clothing, rather than for superficial beauty.

Third, Hanfu tourism experiencers were divided into the four categories of immersive cultural, aesthetic, culturally refined, and passing tourists.

Immersive cultural experiencers had the highest entertainment, beauty, escapism, culture and cosplay perceptions. They were totally immersed in the ancient world and had an excellent experience with Hanfu clothing. Aesthetic experiencers pursued the beauty of Hanfu and taking beautiful photos, also having a relatively strong experiences of entertainment and culture. Culturally refined tourists knew Hanfu best and had the most profound understanding of ancient Chinese poems and songs. Passing experiencers were not

eager to escape from reality and usually they just 'skimmed the surface' of Hanfu experiences.  
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## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s[Q5]).

## ORCID

Lina Zhong <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7802-1563>

Alastair M. Morrison <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0754-1083>

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