

Understanding the Behaviour of International Tourists from China Visiting Malaysia: Proposing a Conceptual Model

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ABSTRACT

The growth of international tourist receipts and arrivals to Malaysia from year 2010 until 2019 demonstrated an unstable and declining pattern. Specifically, this study intends to investigate international tourists from China visiting Malaysia because China is listed in the top three international market of tourists visiting Malaysia. However, lesser repeat visits from this country were recorded compared to first-time visits to Malaysia in 2019, indicating a severe problem in terms of destination loyalty. Hence, the study aims to mitigate this issue by proposing a new conceptual framework consisting of service quality, destination image, perceived value, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty. The study expects to discover eight direct effects and four mediation effects between these constructs which will be tested in one complex model. Further to this, the study will explicitly examine the international tourists from China, which is important for tourism management in Malaysia to develop effective market positioning because each population has different belief, lifestyle, and culture.

Keywords: Mediator, Service quality, Destination Image, Perceived Value, Tourist Satisfaction, Destination Loyalty, Tourist Destination, Chinese International Tourists, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

Tourism refers to the activities of individuals who travel and stay in places outside their normal environment for more than 24 hours and less than 365 days for business, leisure, and other purposes (UNWTO, 2010). The World Tourism Travel Council (2019) reported that the tourism industry had provided 330 Million jobs and contributed US\$ 8.9 trillion (10.3 % of global GDP).

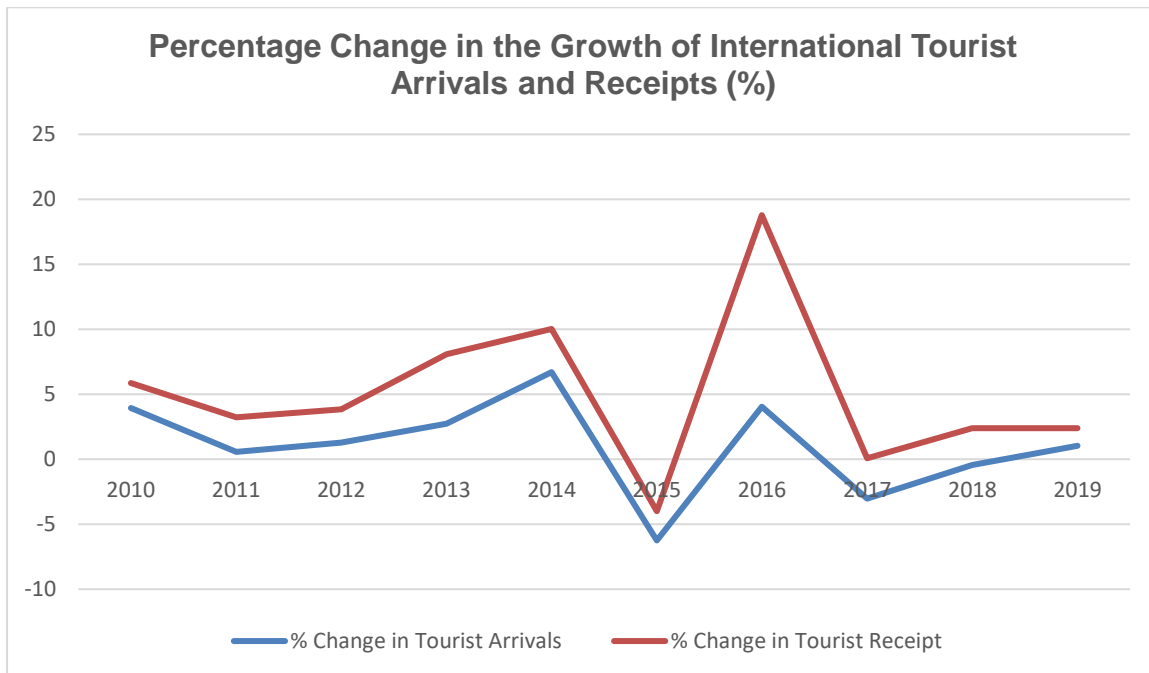
Malaysia is considered one of the favourite tourism destinations in the Asia Pacific and Asia. In 2018 and 2019, Malaysia earned a lucrative income from the travel and tourism industry, which were RM 84.14 Billion and RM 86.14 Billion respectively (Tourism Malaysia, 2021). Unfortunately, the growth of international tourist arrivals and tourist receipts over the last nine years (2010-2019) demonstrated an unstable and declining pattern (refer to Figure 1).

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Figure 1: Percentage Change of the Growth of International Tourist Arrivals and Tourist Receipts to Malaysia, the Year 2010- 2019 (%)



Source: Tourism Malaysia (2021)

Hence, this study proposes to examine the international tourists from China visiting Malaysia. The selection of the target population is based on several criteria: (1) The country should be listed among the top three international tourist arrivals to Malaysia (Tourism Malaysia, 2021) (2) The country should be among the largest population in the world, which could benefit the travel destination with frequent visitations to the destination.

Every destination's ultimate tourism goal is to attain the highest level of destination loyalty among tourists, which can be measured through repeat visits of tourists to the destination (Lv & McCabe, 2020). However, international tourists from China visiting Malaysia in 2019 were recorded to have a lower percentage of repeat visits (21.4%) compared to first-time visits (78.6%) (Tourism Malaysia, 2021). Hence, an immediate and effective solution needs to be proposed to the Malaysia tourism management to increase the level of loyalty among tourists. Sustaining the highest level of destination loyalty would facilitate the expansion and steadiness of tourism destination and organisation (Abdul Rahim et al., 2019; Pechlaner et al., 2012; Vinh and Long, 2013; Kim et al., 2013). Maintaining loyalty among the tourists to one particular destination is considered to be a central concept in behavioural research and it represents a positive sign that excellent service is offered to the tourists (Demir, 2013). Past research works reported that service quality (Nasir et al., 2020), destination image (Dewi & Abidin, 2021), perceived value (Carvache-Franco, 2020), and tourist satisfaction (Mohamad et al., 2019) were the main factors that could enhance the level of destination loyalty.

However, only a limited number of past studies integrated these five latent constructs together in one research model. Table 1 summarises selected research works of different authors where the service quality and destination loyalty relationship were examined whilst the destination image, perceived value, and tourist satisfaction were treated as mediators.

Table 1 also indicates whether or not the past research works selected international tourists from China visiting Malaysia as their specific target population.

Nevertheless, Table 1 illustrates that none of the listed studies examined the causal relationships among service quality, destination image, perceived value, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty in one model simultaneously. Consequently, none of the listed studies had proven the eight direct effects and four mediators in one model. Most importantly, none of the listed research works focused solely on international tourists from China visiting Malaysia as the target population.

Therefore, the main goal of this study is to develop a new conceptual model which simultaneously examines the service quality and destination loyalty relationship whilst treating the destination image, perceived value and tourist satisfaction as mediators. Furthermore, this study focuses explicitly on international tourists from China as a target population instead of the general population of international tourists visiting Malaysia. This is extremely crucial for developing market positioning strategy since each population has different culture, belief, and lifestyle.

Table 1: Research Gaps (Past Research Work: Model and Population)

Author	Hypotheses Proposed												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Dewi and Abidin (2021)	/	/	X	X	X	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	X
Chia et al. (2021)	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Haji et al. (2021)	X	/	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	/	/	X	X
Thawornwiriya trakula, and Meepromb (2020)	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Carvache-Franco (2020)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	/	X	X	X
Govindarajo and Khen (2020)	/	/	X	/	X	/	X	X	X	/	/	X	X
Nasir et al. (2020)	X	X	X	X	/	/	X	X	X	/	X	/	X
Jahmani, Bourini, and Jawabreh (2020)	X	/	/	/	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Huete Alcocer and López Ruiz (2020)	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dedeoğlu (2019)	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jeong and Kim (2019)	/	X	/	/	/	/	X	/	X	/	X	/	X
Mohamad et al. (2019)	X	/	X	/	/	/	X	X	X	/	/	/	X
Mai et al. (2019)	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X

Hanafiah et al. (2019)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Hasan et al. (2019)	/	X	X	/	/	/	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Nadarajah & Ramalu (2018)	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X
Yap et al. (2018)	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Harun et al. (2018)	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Permatasari et al. (2017)	X	X	X	/	/	/	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
Heidarzadeh (2017)	/	X	X	/	/	/	/	X	X	X	/	X	X
Prajitmutita et al (2016)	X	X	/	/	X	X	X	/	/	/	/	X	X
Present Study	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Note:

1 = Service quality has a significant positive influence on the destination image.

2 = Service quality has a significant positive influence on destination loyalty.

3 = Service quality has a significant positive influence on perceived value.

4 = Service quality has a significant positive influence on tourist satisfaction.

5 = Destination image has a significant positive effect on tourist satisfaction.

6 = Destination image has a significant positive effect on destination loyalty.

7 = Destination image mediates the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty.

8 = Perceived value has a significant positive effect on destination loyalty.

9 = Perceived value mediates the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty

10 = Tourist satisfaction has a significant positive effect on destination loyalty.

11 = Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty.

12 = Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between destination image and destination loyalty.

13 = International Tourists Specifically from China Visiting Malaysia (Target population)

(/) = Tested the relationship/ population

(X) =Does not test the relationship/ population

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review section explains in detail each construct of the study: destination loyalty, service quality, destination image, perceived value, and tourist satisfaction.

Destination Loyalty

Customer loyalty studies continue to receive growing interest among scholars because customer loyalty implies a stable income source for a tourist destination (Mohamad et al., 2019). Loyal tourists benefit the tourist destination by spreading positive word-of-mouth to their families and friends. Furthermore, they also revisit the destination, thereby increasing their expenditure on tourism products and services during their stay in a particular destination.

Magatef and Tomalieh (2015) described loyalty as a customer's attitude and behaviour in choosing one particular brand over another due to their satisfaction when using those products or services. The key expressions in this definition are 'attitude' and 'behaviour'. In the tourist destination context, Zhang et al. (2014) claimed that attitudinal loyalty was a mental expression of the intention to revisit or suggest to other potential visitors, while behavioural loyalty emphasised on the behavioural outcome like repeated visit. Hence, this

study proposes destination loyalty as the tourist's intention to revisit and recommend the destination to other potential tourists.

Attitudinal, behavioural, and composite are the three dimensions of destination loyalty (Suhartanto & Triyuni, 2016). Furthermore, three different ways were proposed by researchers to manifest destination loyalty. Firstly, the researchers measured destination loyalty by focusing on one specific dimension, either attitudinal or behavioural (Prayag, Chen & Del Chiappa, 2018). Secondly, the researchers applied two dimensions of destination loyalty, whereby attitudinal and behavioural dimensions were treated independently in their research models (Antón, Camarero & Laguna-García, 2017). Thirdly, destination loyalty was measured using a unidimensional construct with several items, and this approach used a composite dimension in the research model (Liu, Fu & Li, 2017). Hence, this study measures destination loyalty using the third approach, whereby composite loyalty is treated as a unidimensional construct with several items.

Service Quality

Providing excellent service quality is vital to achieve long-term business success. Cong (2016) described service quality as a visitor's quality experiences, feelings, and overall destination evaluation. This definition highlights the tourist mental evaluation and emotional feelings on the services they received during their trip to a specific destination.

The SERVQUAL model is among the earliest models proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1988) to examine the service quality. The SERVQUAL, commonly known as performance-expectation measures of service quality, comprises of five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, empathy, responsiveness, and assurance. Markovic and Raspor (2010) highlighted that the SERVQUAL model had been criticised, especially on its reliability, validity, dimensional structure, and operationalisation of expectations. Alternatively, the SERVPERF model, commonly known as performance only measure of service quality, was proposed by Cronin and Taylor (1992), where it was used to measure service quality. It is highly recommended that the SERVPERF model is used to measure service quality at the destination level since it is attained by separate means and to rely on this model's performance at the consumption stage (Moutinho et al., 2012).

In the context of tourist destination, Kayat and Abdul Hai (2014) measured service quality using two dimensions: perceived hospitality service quality and perceived tour service quality. Meanwhile, a more comprehensive measurement of service quality was suggested by Tosun et al. (2015), where it consisted of seven components: accommodation, cleanliness, local transport, hospitality, activities, airport service, and language communication. Hence, this study adopts the measurement by Tosun et al. (2015) to evaluate service quality since it is a comprehensive and complete representation of a particular destination's service quality. Several authors (Cham et al., 2020; Dewi & Abidin, 2021; Fam et al., 2021; Govindarajo & Khen, 2020; Jeong & Kim, 2019) reported that high quality of services offered by the service providers led to a better image of the destination. Besides, several other authors (Jahmani, Bourini, & Jawabreh, 2020; Mohamad et al., 2019; Mai et al., 2019; Nadarajah & Ramalu, 2018) found that service quality directly affected the destination loyalty. It was also found that there was a significant relationship between service quality and perceived value (Jahmani, Bourini, & Jawabreh, 2020; Jeong & Kim, 2019). Delivering the finest quality of service to tourists would also enhance their satisfaction (Cheng et al., 2019; Jeong & Kim, 2019; Hasan et al., 2019; Permatasari, Murwani, & Suharto, 2017; Heidarzadeh, 2017).

Based on the above background, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1a: *Service quality has a significant positive influence on the destination image.*

H1b: *Service quality has a significant positive influence on destination loyalty.*

H1c: *Service quality has a significant positive influence on perceived value.*

H1d: *Service quality has a significant positive influence on tourist satisfaction.*

Destination Image

Destination image refers to a combination of trust, attitude, and thought that persons and groups hold about tourist destinations and aspects of the destination (Cham et al., 2021; Weaver & Lawton, 2010). This definition focuses on the perception of the demand-side (tourists). However, Hallman et al. (2015) provided a more comprehensive definition that included perceptions from both demand-side (tourists) and supply-side (tourist destination). These authors described destination image as the sellers' and tourists' views on the characteristics and attractions in one particular destination, which was essential for explaining, advertising, amalgamating, and delivering its product distribution.

Akroush et al. (2016) stated that two dimensions had been used in their research to measure the destination image, namely physical environment and physical characteristics. These dimensions are usually used to evaluate the general impression of the destination. On the other hand, a more inclusive measurement of destination image was proposed by Ramseeook-Munhurrin et al. (2015), which included five dimensions of destination image: travel environment, attractions, events, infrastructure, and sports. There is an important relationship between destination image and tourist satisfaction constructs (Huete Alcocer & López Ruiz, 2020; Nasir et al., 2020; Mohamad et al., 2019; Vashu et al., 2018). Many researchers (Dewi & Abidin, 2021; Govindarajo & Khen, 2020; Mohamad et al., 2019; Hasan et al., 2019; Harun et al., 2018) contended that an increase in destination image could effectively increase destination loyalty. Some research works (Dewi & Abidin, 2021; Heidarzadeh, 2017; Kuo & Tang, 2013; Vashu et al., 2018) found that the image construct mediated service quality and loyalty relationship in their studies. Hence, the following hypotheses are developed:

H2a: *Destination image has a significant positive effect on tourist satisfaction.*

H2b: *Destination image has a significant positive effect on destination loyalty.*

H3: *Destination image mediates the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty*

Perceived Value

Nowadays, marketers in tourist destinations devote their effort to increase customer value as it appears to be a key determinant of consumer decision-making. Perceived value refers to the process by which tourists accept, choose, arrange, and interpret information based on their experiences on their visitation to a destination in order to develop a valuable picture of destination experience value (Prebensen et al., 2013). Jahanzeb, Fatima and Butt (2013) believed that perceived value was a holistic concept of identifying customers' cognitive and practical perceptions.

Sun et al. (2013) stated that two dimensions had been used to measure perceived value, namely functional value and overall value. Functional value describes the value received for the price paid. In contrast, Bajs (2015) described overall value as a comparison of emotional and functional benefits with the total costs as perceived before, during and after the tourists

visited the destinations. Meanwhile, Lee et al. (2007) found three measurements for perceived value: functional value, emotional value and overall value. This study includes one more dimension of perceived value, namely emotional value. Emotional value refers to the feeling of enjoyment and pleasure among tourists during their visit to a particular destination. This study decides to adopt the dimensions from Lee et al. (2007) since it is an inclusive and complete representation of a tourist destination. Perceived value was found as an important construct that influenced the development of destination loyalty (Carvache-Franco, 2020; Jeong & Kim., 2019; Mai et al., 2019). It was found that perceived value mediated the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty (Prajitmutita et al., 2016). The following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: *Perceived value has a significant positive effect on destination loyalty.*

H5: *Perceived value mediates the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty*

Tourist Satisfaction

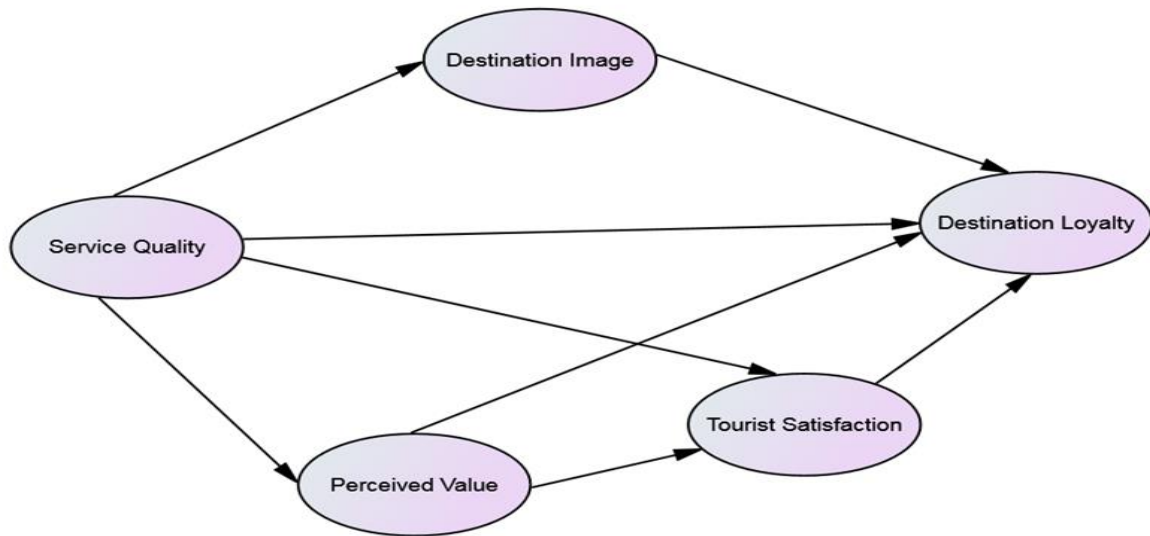
The concept of tourist satisfaction has been widely studied in tourism marketing research. Tran, Nguyen and Nguyen (2018) described tourist satisfaction as comparing real perceivable benefits and expectations. If the actual benefits meet the expectations, then the tourist will be satisfied. Increasing tourist satisfaction level and destination loyalty are extremely crucial and obligatory in tourism destination management (Cheng et al., 2021; Khuong & Ha, 2014; Lim et al., 2019). Alegra and Garau (2010) believed that in an individual's evaluation of the destination, different attributes were essential to examine the overall tourist satisfaction and intention to return.

Several studies (Haji et al., 2021; Thawornwiriyastrakula & Meepromb, 2020; Nasir et al., 2020; Hanafiah et al., 2019; Hasan et al., 2019) stated that tourist satisfaction was an important factor of destination loyalty. A number of researchers (Govindarajo & Khen, 2020; Nasir et al., 2020; Mohamad et al., 2019; Heidarzadeh, 2017) claimed that the tourist satisfaction construct mediated service quality and destination loyalty relationship. Moreover, a few authors (Nasir et al., 2020; Mohamad et al., 2019; Jeong & Kim, 2019) found that tourist satisfaction mediated the relationship between destination image and destination loyalty. Therefore, the following hypotheses are developed:

H6: *Tourist satisfaction has a significant positive effect on destination loyalty.*

H7: *Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty.*

H8: *Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between destination image and destination loyalty.*

Figure 2: A proposed conceptual framework

RESEARCH METHOD

The research methodology section explains the questionnaire design, data collection and data analysis procedure.

The Questionnaire Design

This research uses questionnaires which consist of six sections to gather the data from respondents. The measurement used for all constructs is a 10-point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 10=strongly agree. For the first section, the questionnaire requires the respondents to evaluate Malaysia's quality of service, which comprises of seven dimensions with 33 items adapted from Tosun et al. (2015). For the second section, the questions asked are related to Malaysia's image as a tourist destination, which comprises five dimensions with 23 items adapted from Ramseeook-Munhurrun et al. (2015). The third and fourth sections contain questions related to perceived value and tourist satisfaction. Perceived value contains 15 items with three dimensions adapted from Lee et al. (2007), while tourist satisfaction contains 8 items with a one-dimensional construct adapted from existing studies by Kim et al. (2015) and Lee et al. (2007). The fifth part of the questionnaire is related to Malaysia's tourist loyalty, consisting of a one-dimensional construct with 6 items adapted from the works of Mohamad et al. (2011) and Sun et al. (2013). The demographic profile of the respondents is positioned in the last part of the questionnaire.

Data Collection Procedure and Data Analysis Procedure

The target population for the study are international tourists from China visiting Malaysia. This study selects this population due to several reasons: (1) China is listed among the top three international tourist arrivals to Malaysia (2) China is among the largest population in the world which could benefit the travel destination with frequent visitations to the destination (3) China was reported to have lesser repeat visits compared to first-time visits among tourists who came to Malaysia. Self-administered questionnaires will be held at Kuala

Lumpur International Airport because it is the main exit gate for tourists to return to their home country. There are two stages in data collection. The first stage is the pilot study involving a minimum of 100 respondents. The data collected from this stage is used for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and reliability analysis. The second stage of the data collection is fieldwork. The simple random sampling using the SPSS is utilised to select the data from the sampling frame since the exact number of the total population is not available (Burns et al., 2017). However, the samples are selected from the sampling frame based on the rules of thumb of sample size as suggested by Burns et al. (2017). These researchers recommended using the confidence interval as a formula to calculate the sample size of the study. The data from this stage will then undergo Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to validate the measurement model. Subsequently, when the measurement model has been validated, the model will be converted to a structural model for hypothesis testing using structural equation modelling (SEM).

DISCUSSIONS

This study proposes a conceptual framework that integrates service quality, perceived value, destination image, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty simultaneously in the context of Malaysia tourist destination. The study selects international tourists from China as a target population and a self-administered questionnaire will be held at the departure hall of Kuala Lumpur International Airport. The proposed conceptual model will offer insightful information pertaining to the formulation and validation of domains that measure service quality, perceived value, destination image, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty among international Chinese tourists. This study expects to discover a significant positive influence of service quality on destination image, destination loyalty, perceived value, and tourist satisfaction. The study also predicts that there will be a significant positive relationship between destination image and destination loyalty, where destination image, service quality, and tourist satisfaction will have a positive impact on destination loyalty.

Most importantly, this study will test four mediators together in one model: (1) the mediation impact of destination image on the service quality and tourist satisfaction relationship, (2) the mediation impact of perceived value on the service quality and destination loyalty relationship, (3) and (4) the mediation role of tourist satisfaction on the relationships between service quality, destination image, and destination loyalty. This research will improve the quality of service and image of tourist destinations in Malaysia, thereby offering valuable experience and satisfaction to tourists. Consequently, this leads to an increase in tourist arrivals and receipts to this country.

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

Theoretically, this study has contributed in several aspects. The first contribution is the development of a new research model. This study has integrated five latent constructs simultaneously in one model: service quality, destination image, perceived value, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty. Consequently, twelve hypotheses are proposed, including eight direct effects and four indirect effects. This study proposes a research model which is considered to be a significant contribution to the existing knowledge since none of the listed past research works (refer to Table 1) examined these twelve hypotheses together in one model.

The second contribution is the selection of the population of the study. This study intends to focus on examining specifically on the international tourists from China visiting Malaysia. To date, none of the listed past studies (refer to Table 1) have investigated solely on the international tourists from China visiting Malaysia. Basically, the past studies were focused on the general population (combining different nationalities) of international tourists visiting Malaysia. Evaluating specifically on this population is crucial for developing an effective market positioning strategy since each population has different culture, lifestyle, and behaviour.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This study will provide valuable inputs to various stakeholders in the travel and tourism sector in Malaysia. Based on the past literature, one of the components that need to be considered in tourism planning and development is service quality. Delivery of the finest quality of service will propel the tourist destination towards a favourable reputation. The tourism management in Malaysia should be concerned with several aspects of service when dealing with tourists such as accommodation, cleanliness, local transport, hospitality, activities, airport service, and language communication. Firstly, hoteliers should be aware of the importance of sanitation and hygiene. Frequent floor sweeping or vacuuming, dusting, and air freshening at the hotel's guest rooms, lobby area, front desk, and the hallways leading to the rooms will make the hotels clean. The availability of food, taking order on time and serving meals hospitably with good attitudes at hotels should also be a great concern among hoteliers. The hotel frontline staff should always practise effective and efficient work culture when dealing with the customers' needs and wants during their stay. Secondly, the tourism management needs to focus on overall cleanliness at the destination, especially at the beach, sea, restaurants, and bars to make the tourists feel more comfortable.

Thirdly, the tourism management should pay attention to the availability and comfortability of local transportation. This effort will ease the movement of tourists within the tourist destinations in Malaysia. Fourthly, cultivating positive attitudes among the residents and workers in Malaysia's tourist destinations could shape the international tourists' favourable perceptions of this country. Fifthly, this study's target population are international tourists from China, where most of them could not understand and communicate in English. However, Malaysia has an advantage since this country has Chinese residents. Hence, travel-related businesses and travel-related agencies should also recruit Chinese workers to ease their communication with tourists. For the sixth aspect, the activities that tourists can participate in this country are of the utmost importance. It is highly recommended that tourist guides bring tourists to the shopping complex, especially in Kuala Lumpur, since three of the world's ten largest malls are located in Kuala Lumpur. Apart from that, the tourists should enjoy the nightlife at the bars and clubs. Tourists should be exposed to several entertainment activities in Malaysia such as participating in scuba diving activities in the beautiful islands in the East Coast and West Coast of Malaysia, hiking at Mount Kinabalu and watching the cultural performances in Sabah and Sarawak. For the seventh aspect, the airport management should offer efficient service all the time such as the availability of local transport services to fetch the tourists from the hotels to the airport to avoid missing their flights, availability of shops and facilities, and efficient check-in and check-out service at the airport.

Consequently, these aspects facilitate the development of a favourable image of the destinations in Malaysia among the tourists. The tourists tend to perceive Malaysia as a safe

and secure destination, clean and unpolluted destination, and also a destination with spectacular beaches and mountains, unique history and heritage, a variety of entertainment, tempting cultural events, a selection of bars and restaurants, a variety of shopping facilities, a wide choice of high-quality accommodation, no language barriers for foreigners, and exciting water sports activities. Instilling a positive image in tourists' minds could help Tourism Malaysia to encourage the existing tourists to revisit this country in the future. Providing superb quality of services would also initiate tourists' perceptions that travelling to Malaysia is worth the value, which means that they receive so much experience and enjoyment with every single penny they spend on their trip. This feeling will lead to their overall satisfaction when visiting this country. Therefore, Malaysia's tourism authority should continuously comprehend and fulfil tourists' demands through regular satisfaction surveys at famous tourist destination sites or international airports in Malaysia. Subsequently, it will encourage the existing tourists to revisit Malaysia and spread positive word-of-mouth to other people.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This paper presents a research project's proposal with regards to the effect of service quality, destination image, perceived value, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty to recommend effective strategies for the travel and tourism industry in Malaysia. The next step of this research is to execute the pilot study in order to run Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and reliability analysis. EFA is used to determine the underlying structure among the latent constructs. Meanwhile, reliability analysis will be conducted to examine the instruments' internal reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. Hence, a new set of questionnaires will be developed after the redundant items have been removed.

The field work will be executed and the data collected will be analysed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to validate all latent constructs in the research, namely service quality, destination image, perceived value, tourist satisfaction, and destination loyalty for unidimensionality, validity, and reliability. When the measurement model is validated, it is converted to a structural model for the purpose of hypothesis testing among the latent constructs in this study using the structural equation modelling (SEM). Most importantly, the researchers are required to test these four mediations effects using bootstrapping approach suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2008).

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