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Shopping mall attributes : tourist satisfaction and loyalty

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Shopping Mall Attributes: Tourist Satisfaction and Loyalty

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Abstract. *Tourism shopping has become an important motive for traveling. Yet, research on tourists' satisfaction and loyalty towards shopping malls is still in the nascent stage. Given that, the objective of this study is to examine and justify the factors that influence tourists' satisfaction during their shopping experiences. To test the proposed hypotheses of this study, 1000 self-administrated questionnaires were distributed using the convenience non-probability sampling method among international tourists who have visited the mega shopping malls in Malaysia. The findings revealed that variables like communication, accessibility, and convenience, tangibility and facilities, pleasure and entertainment, as well as product assortment have a positive and significant impact on tourists' satisfaction and loyalty in the shopping malls. The contribution of this research is to evaluate the relationships between the variables and tourists' shopping satisfaction. The findings of this research can assist the shopping mall management team to provide more tailor-made products and experience for tourists. In line with this, the theory of planned behavior, the disconfirmation model and stimulus-organism-response model are applied in this study.*

Keywords: *shopping mall design; tourism destination; tourist shopping preferences; tourist shopping habits; tourist shopping experiences; souvenir shopping.*

Introduction

In a span of 40 years, retrospective studies acknowledged that tourism shopping has become an important activity and motive during traveling (Lai & Nguyen, 2017; Panda & Swar, 2013). Having a high-density level of tourists is the main purpose for any mega shopping mall, as it allows the mall tenants to have higher revenue and overall helps the retail industry to provide job opportunities and long-term business sustainability. Given that, this tourism shopping culture plays a critical factor in such a saturated competitive landscape. Therefore, it is essential for mall managers to focus on the factors and behavior of shoppers towards a particular mall. This is because the managers need to be well informed and aware of the tourists' feelings and perceptions before the shopping experience take place so that they can provide the pleasant and wonderful traveling experiences for them (Oviedo-García, Vega-Vázquez, Castellanos-Verdugo, & Reyes-Guizar, 2016).

Satisfied shoppers are most likely to spend more during the trip and repeat visits to their preferred shopping destinations in their future traveling. As such, tourists are one of the most valuable revenue resources, as they contribute immensely to the mall tenants' income and economic benefits. Drawing from this, to ensure the tourists will have the tendency of spending in a mall, tourist satisfaction and loyalty need to be achieved (Lai & Nguyen, 2017; Naseeb, Shah, & Jan, 2018). Retail management is therefore urged to create superior customer value to meet the tourists' evolving needs due to the increasing number of shopping malls and online shopping. Reflecting this, tourist's positive shopping experience is a key role in the competitive differentiation among the retail industry. When a tourist feels the shopping experience meets his/her expectations, the tourist will feel satisfied and subsequently, loyalty and revisit intention will occur (Lloyd, Chan, Yip, & Chan, 2014; Vega-Vázquez, Castellanos-Verdugo, & Oviedo-García, 2017).

In spite of all pieces of evidence, limited and inconsistent researches showcase an ambiguous measure of tourist shopping satisfaction. Also, a tourist's cognitive response experienced during shopping travel is given the least attention. The dimension of reaching tourist shopping satisfaction during a traveling trip also remains under-researched. Hence, the sparse data of tourist's perception of the shopping mall has nudged the necessity for this research (Kim, Lee, & Suh, 2015; Mishra & Azeez, 2014). To gain better understanding, this present study seeks to contribute to this limitation on the factors that influence tourist's satisfaction and loyalty towards the shopping destination, extend the current theories used, narrow the gaps in tourism literacy by examining how the shopping mall attributes affect tourist's preference and eventually, assisting mall tenants to achieve sustained competitive advantages.

In this research, the factors to be discussed about the tourist's visits to the shopping destination are communication, accessibility, tangibility, pleasure and product assortment. Overall, the purpose of this study is to explore the factors that influence a tourist's satisfaction, loyalty and intention to revisit to the shopping mall. Tourism advertisements/promotions are no longer sufficient to ascertain the tourist's satisfaction nowadays. The tourist might encounter dissatisfaction in the external environmental factors during the traveling trip that refrains him/her from feeling satisfied towards the shopping destination (Wong & Wan, 2013). Given that, it is worthwhile to understand comprehensively on the factors that influence the tourist's perception towards shopping malls.

Thus, this study employs the theory of planned behavior (TPB), disconfirmation model and stimulus-organism-response model (SOR) to identify how a tourist acquires the shopping satisfaction and engages in revisiting intention. Given that, the developed factors that influence the tourist's satisfaction and loyalty can be justified and predicted (Lai & Nguyen, 2017; Prashar, Singh, Parsad, & Vijay, 2017). Hence, drawing from the theories, the hypotheses will be conducted and tested in the following sections.

Literature review

Theory of planned behavior

Understanding the mechanism of tourist's behavior towards the shopping malls is a necessity for marketers to distinguish themselves from their rivals and gain profit in such a competitive tourism landscape. Empirical studies posited that intention is a good predictor of overall behavior globally. As such, the theory of planned behavior (TPB), the extended version of the theory of reasoned action reinforced that a person's intention is a crucial determinant to perform or not to perform a particular action. Given that, TPB provides better insights to predict tourist's behavior towards the shopping mall (Jiang, Xiao, Jalees, Naqvi, & Zaman, 2018; Ortegón-Cortázar & Royo-Vela, 2018). According to the theory, the intention is the predictor from three antecedents: attitude towards the behavior, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control.

Attitude towards the behavior and perceived behavioral control reside within a person and they are related to the tourist's intention (Rodríguez, Paredes, & Yi, 2016; Wendy Gao & Lai, 2015). The tourist's attitude/perception of "impression feeling" towards the shopping mall or his/her past patronage experience will influence the tourist's expectation of the shopping destination. In this sense, to predict the tourist's intention, he/she needs to have a favorable perception of the shopping mall and the tourist believes that he/she will gain an exciting and joyful shopping experience during his/her coming trip.

On the other hand, the subjective norm is elaborated as the motivation given by a person's close parties and it will increase the likelihood of executing the suggested behavior (Abidin, Piah, & Usman, 2016; Jain, Khan, & Mishra, 2015; Seo & Namwamba, 2014). Potential tourists can be influenced by his/her family members, friends or neighbors during their daily conversation when they discuss weekly plans, holidays or travel destinations. If these parties share their positive shopping experiences during their traveling, the potential tourist will be prompted to engage in this suggested behavior and probably go for the same shopping destination.

Disconfirmation model

Today, the disconfirmation model is widely used in the tourism and retail industry to predict a person's cognitive response towards his/her shopping experience. In this model, the perceived expectation and perceived performance (delivered value) theorize that there is a substantial influence on a person's satisfaction. As such, empirical studies implied that a person will attain positive emotion/surprise with a little arousal if, the performance delivered exceeds his/her expectation and thereby, causing him/her to feel satisfied (positive disconfirmation) (Hasan, 2015; Oviedo-García et al., 2016). To further describe this point, the person's cognitive state of feeling contented is being sufficiently rewarded with the exchange of what he/she has forgone financially or emotionally (Vega-Vázquez et al., 2017).

In the case of tourist shopping satisfaction, if the shopping mall possesses a unique structural design, excellent and complete facilities, passionate store working for staffs with a wide range of product assortment, it will exceed the tourist's perceived

expectation; the tourist will feel being rewarded and it is worthwhile, and thus, giving him/her a positive surprise on the shopping experience. Given that, tourist's satisfaction and purchase intention are based on the fulfillment of his/her perceived expectation.

Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) Model

In stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model, stimulus refers to the factors that influence the emotional responses of a person and subsequently stimulate him or her (Choi & Kandampully, 2018; Ortegón-Cortázar & Royo-Vela, 2018; Parboteeah, Taylor, & Barber, 2016). Given in this study, the stimuli are the environmental inputs and shopping mall characteristics (communication, convenience, tangibility, and pleasure). On the other hand, an organism is defined as a process occurs between the stimuli of a person and the reaction taken. It includes feeling, physiological, cognitive response, and arousal (Dedeoglu, Bilgihan, Ye, Buonincontri, & Okumus, 2018; Gilboa, Vilnai-Yavetz, & Chebat, 2016). Therefore, positive feelings will lead to positive responses to the shopping mall. Through the lens of SOR model, response is the final decision making of consumers (approach or avoidance behavior) and this study focuses on positive response as shopping mall retailers commonly try to create favorable environment to induce purchase behavior (Lucia-Palacios, Pérez-López, & Polo-Redondo, 2015; Prashar, Sai Vijay, & Parsad, 2017). Essentially, shopping mall characteristics will influence consumer perceptions which in turn will affect tourist satisfaction toward shopping malls.

Development of research hypotheses

Satisfaction and loyalty

Travel practitioners revealed that when a tourist's satisfaction is achieved, it will stimulate loyalty and revisit intention towards a specific destination. Given that, satisfaction and loyalty become the primary drive for a shopping mall's sustainability, long-term profit, and its future development. Thus, this explains why enhancing tourist's satisfaction is the key success for the retail industry (Lai & Nguyen, 2017; Prashar, Singh, et al., 2017).

In particular, loyalty is defined as a person of having the intention to repeat the purchase from the same supplier or organization in the future, despite the pulling effect of other competitors that might cause switching behavior. It is emphasized that having a customer retention strategy is more profitable for the organization than creating a new potential customer (Rodríguez, Paredes, & Yi, 2016; Wendy Gao & Lai, 2015). This is because a loyal customer indirectly assists in multiplying new potential customers through positive word of mouth to his/her networks and family members upon recalling the joyful experience. Supported by disconfirmation model, when the shopping mall is able to deliver the excellent service quality (perceived performance) which transcends a tourist's perceived expectation, he/she will feel joyful and satisfied (Mehta, Sharma, & Swami, 2013; Wong & Lam, 2016; Wong & Wan, 2013). Therefore, all the attributes mentioned are the pull factors that lead to the tourist's satisfaction and loyalty.

Many reviews on current literature demonstrated that loyalty usually is followed by two dimensions: word of mouth (WOM) and revisit intention. To address the first dimension,

WOM can be termed as an informal communication method between the experienced parties with their close ones regarding the assessment of goods/services they encountered (Inman & Nikolova, 2017). Up to date, tourism scholars recognized that WOM has been an influential contributor to a tourist's attitude and behavior. Positive WOM acts as the tourist loyal advocate by recommending their preferred shopping destinations to the people around them and subsequently, increase the probability of new potential visiting crowd (Lloyd et al., 2014; Naseeb et al., 2018). To further underpin this viewpoint, tourists generally will share their traveling photos or the items they bought overseas through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram and many more. Given that, positive WOM will become an unpaid form of promotion when these tourists post and share their joyful traveling experiences in a particular shopping mall (Rodríguez et al., 2016; Wendy Gao & Lai, 2015).

On the other hand, when a tourist plans to visit a destination, limited information towards that new destination usually leads him/her to rely on another person's suggestion who has experience in the specific traveling destination. Hence, if this potential tourist gains positive feedback from his/her trusted ones, this will probably raise his/her intention to visit the recommended destination (Luk, Sharma, & Chen, 2013). Correspondingly, retail management should realize the importance of positive WOM and consistent effort to provide an exhilarating shopping experience should be highly focused.

Positive service quality always comes with satisfaction; satisfaction always brings tourist retention which will subsequently increase the profit of the shopping retailers (Bhalerao, 2017; Naseeb, Shah, & Jan, 2018; Boer, 2013). As such, tourist satisfaction is important because they usually travel to a destination without any traveling experience beforehand and their perceptions towards a place are solely determined by the visual sensation and emotional stimulation during their travels (Abrudan & Dabija, 2014; Oviedo-García et al., 2016). This therefore also indicates that tourist's motivation to spend more money comes from the satisfaction of both utilitarian and hedonic perspectives (Lai & Nguyen, 2017; Naseeb et al., 2018).

Utilizing the disconfirmation model, if the tourist found the shopping experience is joyful and excited, he/she will feel satisfied (positive disconfirmation) (Kim et al., 2015; Yim, Yoo, Sauer, & Seo, 2014). Corresponding to this effect, satisfaction is the evaluation between the service quality gained from the tourist's shopping experience and his/her perceived expectation. With that being said, the greater satisfaction reached impacts the higher loyalty attained (Albayrak & Çömen, 2017; Hui, Ning, & Chan, 2016). Thus, to investigate the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty, the following hypothesis was conducted:

> *Hypothesis 1:* There is a relationship between tourist satisfaction level and loyalty towards shopping malls.

Communication

Tourist's shopping experience can be further induced by the unplanned approach such as service provided by the store personnel. Tourist's buying intention will be influenced by the involvement of the salesperson (Alhouti, Gillespie, Chang, & Davis, 2015; Hasan, 2015). Given an example, tourists might encounter minor issues during their

patronizations such as ambiguous/not labeled product price or inquiry on further information regarding a product. When this situation arises, communication on a personal level by the salesperson plays an important role to present a friendly and courteous first impression to the tourists, to solve their inquiries with adequate peripheral information as well as to promote the potential product to them.

In stimulus-organism-response (SOR) model, when the tourists interact with the salesperson and they feel pleased by his/her helpful attitude and polite manner, intrinsically, positive responses will be stimulated. The tourists will perceive that they are being served well and emotions are being positively fulfilled. Mediated by the music background, when the tourists feel satisfied with the overall approach and explanation by the sales staff, buying intention in the store will be induced significantly.

In addition, information boards should be updated frequently using multiple main foreign languages to assist the tourists to obtain the information needed. Another method to help tourists is by having a shopping mall concierge. With a multilingual receptionist, helpful customer service with full attention given to the tourists, their possible negative emotions will be reduced instantly. With all the above combined, the influence of communication towards tourist satisfaction on a shopping mall can be described as a jigsaw, with all equivalent important pieces to be well-fitted together to create loyalty and revisit intention. Therefore, to study the relationship between the importance of communication and tourist satisfaction, the hypothesis was conducted:

> *Hypothesis 2:* There is a relationship between the importance of communication and tourist satisfaction in shopping malls.

Accessibility and convenience

In recent times, accessibility and convenience have been the main focus of shopping malls to increase the visiting crowd (Abidin, Piah, & Usman, 2016; Wei Khong & Sim Ong, 2014). With that in mind, the concept in this study refers to the ease of a person to reach the destination such as by public transportations or shuttle bus.

Through the lens of the SOR model and disconfirmation model, accessibility and convenience significantly influence tourist's shopping destination selection (Lloyd et al., 2014). For instance, unexpected delay, long waiting time for a bus, uncomfortable waiting seat in the station; plus, getting held up in congestion, later on, will further affect the tourist's perception and cause dissatisfaction (Prashar, Gupta, Singh, Vijay, & Parsad, 2016; Wong & Wan, 2013). This is because the feeling of frustration will reduce the overall service quality perception of a shopping mall as it happens right before the real shopping experience. To improve business opportunities, shopping mall management can display a transportation board at the waiting station to show the departure and arrival time of the public transportations (bus, taxi, train).

Based on recent findings, reports showed that one of the main critical factors on mall selection is that tourists nowadays prefer a one-stop shopping mall with all the products needed in one mall, at one time (Kushwaha, Ubeja, & Chatterjee, 2017; Rousseau & Venter, 2014). Thus, market retailers also need to emphasize keeping the balance of store categorizations to increase mall-visit frequency.

Undoubtedly, there is a time limit for tourists to spend in a destination. This explains why the tourists will be dissatisfied if the shopping mall is either hard to access or inconvenient. Consequently, based on the TPB and disconfirmation model, negative word of mouth might happen when they express their shopping experiences to their friends. This behavior will discourage the new potential tourist from the negative response of the subjective norm. Hence, accessibility and convenience have exhibited the importance of creating tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. To investigate the relationship between convenience and tourist satisfaction, the hypothesis below has been suggested:

> *Hypothesis 3:* There is a relationship between accessibility and convenience towards tourist satisfaction in shopping malls.

Tangibility and facilities

Based on the review of the relevant literature, tangibility and facilities associated with service rendered is the main concern for the mall retailers (Wei Khong & Sim Ong, 2014). In relation to this, it refers to the physical infrastructures that facilitate the shoppers or provide ease/convenience for them during their patronizations (Chen, 2013; Jayasankaraprasad, 2014). Generally, functional tangibility such as lift, washroom, and escalator add superior customer value to the shoppers because these facilities represent the completeness of the services rendered in the shopping mall.

Given the example, if the washroom is clean and hygiene, toiletries are sufficient and complete; escalators and lifts are well maintained and meet safety requirements; it will give the shoppers an overall image that this mall management has put in sufficient effort to maintain it. Explaining in TPB and disconfirmation model, the tourist will feel that the perceived performance (completeness and the functionality of the facilities) exceeds his/her expectation and he/she is being rewarded emotionally and it is financially worthwhile; thus, the tourist feels happy and satisfied (Abidin, Piah, & Usman, 2016; Rousseau & Venter, 2014). Likewise, having a favorable shopping experience will influence the tourist's mall selection and increase his/her revisit intention to the same shopping destination. Hence, to investigate the relationship between the facilities and tourist satisfaction, the following hypothesis was conducted:

> *Hypothesis 4:* There is a relationship between tangibility and facilities towards tourist satisfaction in shopping malls.

Pleasure and entertainment

A shopping mall environment is composed of a wide variety of characteristics that shape the shopping mall atmosphere. As such, it is coined this atmosphere as the effort to trigger environmental cues to manipulate the consumer emotions that enhance tourist satisfaction in the shopping mall. In accordance, situational characteristics like joyful, happy, and feeling pleased will affect the tourists' sensory shopping experiences and the amount of money spent in the mall during their patronizations. Given that, modern design of a shopping mall, magnificent display features such as a mini fountain and sculptures are the first steps to impress tourists' overall perceptions towards their anticipated shopping experiences (Bagdare & Roy, 2017; Muhammad, Musa, & Ali, 2014; Yoon, 2013). This is because tourist satisfaction and purchase intention are based on their cognitive and emotional responses.

Utilizing the SOR model and disconfirmation model, the tourist's emotional response will be stimulated by the environmental perspective. To further explain, the choice of music takes its effect in further modifying a tourist's emotion and in-store attitude. Music acts as a prominent role in influencing a tourist's time spent in the shopping mall and purchase intention (Petruzzellis, Chebat, & Palumbo, 2015; Teik et al., 2015). Additionally, slow-tempo music such as classical/sentimental type would be chosen to slow down the tourists' footsteps, stimulate their relaxation mood and enhance their pleasure feelings. During the patronization, the tourists will feel that they are satisfied with the experience gained (positive disconfirmation) and eventually, increase their spending opportunities in the malls (Attri & Jain, 2018; Kusumowidagdo, Sachari, & Widodo, 2016).

On the other hand, the color of the store's exterior is another influential emotional stimulus and given the example, green/blue color is used to reduce the tourist's tense atmosphere during his/her purchase decision-making process (Jain, Khan, & Mishra, 2015; Abrudan & Dabija, 2014). Moreover, the lighting effect like bright lighting gives the sensory impression of the overall cleanliness and wide spacing of the shopping environment (Prashar et al., 2016; Steen, 2011). As such, the tourist's mood will be evoked, anticipating the affective response and joyful feeling while patronizing. The tourist will, therefore, perceive that he/she gains the worthiness of their time spent in this specific shopping mall. Subsequently, it will trigger the tourist's intention and willingness to spend more time in the mall. Hence, to identify the relationship between pleasure and tourist satisfaction during their patronizations, the following hypothesis was proposed:

> *Hypothesis 5:* There is a relationship between pleasure and entertainment towards tourist satisfaction in shopping malls.

Product assortment

The other important attribute that influences tourist satisfaction is the product range in a shopping mall. Today, tourists prefer a vast choice of products during their patronizations because they are seeking for unique souvenirs and/or brand which is only available overseas for their friends and family members (Albayrak & Çömen, 2017; Yim, Yoo, Sauer, & Seo, 2014; Yoon, 2013). The tourists will usually gain positive reinforcement such as pleasurable feelings from their friends' compliments on the souvenirs they received, explained by subjective norm in TPB. Furthermore, trendy features, good quality, and advanced technology of a product could greatly attract and trigger the tourists' buying impulse particularly, especially when some tourists expect to gain emotional and hedonic value through shopping experiences. Therefore, product assortment becomes a basic yet very important feature in any shopping destination (Wei Khong & Sim Ong, 2014).

Also, tourists tend to gain satisfaction from hedonism rewards through the buying of needed products in the utilitarian efforts (Abidin, Piah, & Usman, 2016; Seo & Namwamba, 2014). Therefore, tourists will be keen to expose themselves to the new products, peppering themselves with the positive influence by the store personnel, making them feel worthwhile for the money spent and keeping up to the trend with their peers and subsequently, purchase the products during shopping.

This sentiment implies the importance of product assortment towards tourist buying behavior and given that, in order to examine the relationship between product assortment and tourist satisfaction, the hypothesis has been developed:

> *Hypothesis 6:* There is a relationship between product assortment and tourist satisfaction in shopping malls.

Mediation role of satisfaction

This research tends to test the relationships between determinants and satisfaction as well as the direct relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. Relatively, the main factor that is able to provide a better understanding for the industry players and academicians is how the determinants can influence the level of loyalty and how satisfaction can mediate these relationships if any. As a result, the below-proposed hypotheses were conducted to analyze the mediation effect of satisfaction on the relationships between communication, accessibility and convenience, tangibility and facilities, pleasure and entertainment, product assortment and loyalty:

> *Hypothesis 7:* Satisfaction mediates the relationship between communication and loyalty.
> *Hypothesis 8:* Satisfaction mediates the relationship between accessibility/ convenience and loyalty.
> *Hypothesis 9:* Satisfaction mediates the relationship between tangibility/ facilities and loyalty.
> *Hypothesis 10:* Satisfaction mediates the relationship between pleasure/ entertainment and loyalty.
> *Hypothesis 11:* Satisfaction mediates the relationship between product assortment and loyalty.

Methodology

The population in this study are international tourists who visit the shopping mall in Kuala Lumpur, Federal Territory and state of Selangor in Malaysia. Overall, there are 255 existing shopping malls in this area, excluding 14 coming new entrants in 2018. However, to focus on the shopping malls with the highest level of tourists, the following five major shopping malls were selected for data collection; Suria KLCC, Pavilion Kuala Lumpur, Berjaya Times Square, One Utama, and Sunway Pyramid. Subsequently, 1000 self-administered questionnaires were distributed among tourists after their visits from the above-mentioned malls using a non-probability convenience sampling approach.

As noted above, the questionnaire is divided into two sections; the first section evaluates the measure of communication, accessibility, and convenience, tangibility and facilities, pleasure and entertainment, product assortment towards tourist satisfaction and loyalty in shopping malls. On the other hand, the second section is demographic information which includes age, country, income and educational level (*please refer to appendix A*). In facilitating this, the questionnaire was worded in the English language to ease the participants from the majority parts of the globe to have a better understanding of the questions. Throughout the data collection process, postgraduate students were recruited to assist the participants during the survey.

Data analysis

After the distribution of questionnaires, the research team successfully collected 928 samples. However, 61 samples were eliminated from the final analysis as the majority of the questions were not answered by the participants. After filtering the incomplete samples, 867 samples were included for further data analysis**.**

Table 1. Demographic information

		Frequency	Percent			Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	467	53.9	**Marital Status**	Single	497	57.3
	Female	400	46.1		Married	370	42.7
	Total	867	100.0		Total	867	100.0
Country /Region	ASEAN	238	27.4	**Age**	18-25	245	28.3
	China	141	16.3		25-29	157	18.1
	Europe	128	14.8		30-34	246	28.4
	Middle East	97	11.2		35-39	100	11.5
	India	67	7.7		40-44	58	6.7
	North America	55	6.3		45-49	26	3.0
	Africa	55	6.3		50 and above	35	4.0
	Others	86	9.9		Total	867	100.0
	Total	867	100.0				

Table 1 above is the demographic information of the participants. Given that, almost one third (27.4%) of the tourists are from the ASEAN region. It is then followed by Chinese tourists (16.3%). European tourists stand in the third-ranking (14.8%) whilst Middle East tourists take the fourth place (11.2%). Therefore, it is assumed that Malaysia is a multilingual country and thus, it significantly facilitates the tourists during their patronizations in the shopping malls. Evidently, one of the main attractions in Malaysia is the amazing array of mega shopping malls which is most of the tourists' favorite and a motive during their trips. Reflecting on this, one-third of the tourists are age between 18-25 (28.3%) and 30- 34 (28.4%) respectively. Age between 25- 29 stands for 18.1% whilst only almost one-quarter of the tourists are at an older age.

To further extend the previous research and conduct a tourist shopping mall satisfaction and loyalty scale, the reliability and validity analysis was developed as above *(Table 1).* Given that, the presented analysis comprises four components: factor loading, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha test. The purpose of this analysis is to justify the acceptance range of the reliability and validity of this research.

Table 2. Reliability and validity analysis

	Factor Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Communication				
Communication 1	0.768	0.650	0.847	0.730
Communication 2	0.824			
Communication 3	0.825			
Accessibility and Convenience				
Accessibility & Convenience 1	0.727	0.503	0.802	0.760
Accessibility & Convenience 2	0.723			
Accessibility & Convenience 3	0.737			
Accessibility & Convenience 4	0.647			
Tangibility and Facilities				
Tangibility and Facilities 1	0.740	0.533	0.820	0.707
Tangibility and Facilities 2	0.792			
Tangibility and Facilities 3	0.657			
Tangibility and Facilities 4	0.725			
Tangibility and Facilities 5	Removed			
Pleasure and Entertainment				
Pleasure & Entertainment 1	0.806	0.679	0.894	0.842
Pleasure & Entertainment 2	0.809			
Pleasure & Entertainment 3	0.868			
Pleasure & Entertainment 4	0.811			
Product Assortment				
Product Assortment 1	0.767	0.598	0.856	0.777
Product Assortment 2	0.797			
Product Assortment 3	0.764			
Product Assortment 4	0.765			
Satisfaction				
Satisfaction 1	0.825	0.672	0.891	0.837
Satisfaction 2	0.829			
Satisfaction 3	0.825			
Satisfaction 4	0.798			
Loyalty				
Loyalty 1	0.848	0.677	0.893	0.841
Loyalty 2	0.835			
Loyalty 3	0.815			
Loyalty 4	0.791			
Loyalty 5	Removed			

According to the information above, this research analysis has met the requirements of all the reliability and validity tests. To further clarify, factor loading in *Table 1* represents strong variables where all of the variables are more than 0.5 (from 0.647- 0.868). Next, the range of AVE is from 0.503- 0.679 (above 0.5) whilst CR is from 0.802- 0.894 (above 0.7). In relation to Cronbach's Alpha value, it shows the figure from 0.707- 0.842, which exceeds 0.7. Drawing from this analysis, the reliability and validity in this developed measurement model are considered highly reliable and it is within the acceptable range.

Table 3. Hypothesis results

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Satisfaction → Loyalty	0.3837	0.3834	0.0572	6.7125	0.0000
R^2 = 0.414/41.4%					
Communication → Satisfaction	0.3735	0.3724	0.0383	9.7434	0.0000
Accessibility & Convenience → Satisfaction	0.0788	0.0795	0.0389	2.0273	0.0429
Tangibility and Facilities → Satisfaction	0.1048	0.1063	0.0348	3.0085	0.0027
Pleasure & Entertainment → Satisfaction	0.2934	0.2938	0.0408	7.1969	0.0000
Product Assortment→ Satisfaction	0.1462	0.1456	0.0399	3.6616	0.0003
R^2= 0.62/62%					

Associated with the hypothesis results in *Table 3,* relationships between the determinants and satisfaction as well as the direct relationship between satisfaction and loyalty are all significant as the p-value in the table is not more than 0.05 (0.0000 to 0.0429). Hence, this model proves that it is fit. To further explain, the presented results above show that *H1* (satisfaction, p-value= 0.000), *H2* (communication, p-value= 0.000) and *H5* (pleasure, p-value= 0.000) have a positive and significant relationship towards tourist satisfaction and loyalty in shopping malls respectively.

In essence, these hypotheses posit that communication, pleasure, and entertainment play the highest impact in keeping the tourists satisfied and loyal. Passionate attitude and polite manners of the salesperson, stunning structural design of the malls, comfortable background music, along with the bright soothing lighting are what tourists are always seeking for. Next, it is followed by product assortment. As mentioned earlier, a wide range of product choices with the balance of store categorizations will always able to create satisfaction and maintain a huge visiting crowd.

In the table, the first R-square exhibits that 41.4% variance of the tourist loyalty towards shopping malls can be explained by satisfaction. Similarly, the second R-square also demonstrates that 62% variance of the tourist satisfaction can be explained by the determinants. Thus, the hypothesis results encapsulate its high accuracy in predicting a tourist's satisfaction level and loyalty towards shopping malls in Malaysia.

To test the mediation effect of satisfaction on the relationships between communication, accessibility and convenience, tangibility and facilities, pleasure and entertainment, product assortment and loyalty, the research approach by Barron and Kenny has been used (Baron & Kenny, 1986). In relation to this, *(Table 4)* the direct relationship between

an independent variable and dependent variable should exist without the presence of the mediating variable (Path 6c). Next, the model should be tested with the presence of the mediating variable and all independent variables (Path c'). Lastly, the Sobel test should be run to confirm the mediating role of the intervening variable.

Table 4. Mediation role of satisfaction

Direct Path (Path c)					
	Original Sample	**Sample Mean**	**Standard Error**	**T-value**	**P-value**
Communication → Loyalty	0.1791	0.1787	0.0461	3.8826	0.0001
Accessibility & Convenience → Loyalty	0.1748	0.1771	0.0477	3.6657	0.0003
Tangibility and Facilities → Loyalty	0.0759	0.0789	0.0445	1.7055	0.0885
Pleasure & Entertainment → Loyalty	0.226	0.2249	0.0576	3.9221	0.0001
Product Assortment→ Loyalty	0.1764	0.1771	0.0481	3.6641	0.0003
Direct Path (Path c')					
Communication → Loyalty	0.0369	0.0382	0.0484	0.7615	0.4466
Accessibility & Convenience → Loyalty	0.1435	0.1433	0.0473	3.0318	0.0025
Tangibility and Facilities → Loyalty	0.0344	0.0354	0.0427	0.8063	0.4203
Pleasure & Entertainment → Loyalty	0.1145	0.1136	0.0571	2.0049	0.0453
Product Assortment→ Loyalty	0.1199	0.1206	0.0468	2.5619	0.0106
Satisfaction -> Loyalty	0.3837	0.3834	0.0572	6.7125	0.0000
Sobel test (Mediation Test)		**Sobel T-value**			**P-value**
Communication → Loyalty		3.6049			0.0003
Accessibility & Convenience → Loyalty		1.7545			0.0793
Pleasure & Entertainment → Loyalty		3.4482			0.0005
Product Assortment→ Loyalty		2.5679			0.0102

As the result stated above, (Path c) indicates that satisfaction does not mediate the relationship between tangibility/facilities and loyalty as the direct relationship between tangibility/facilities and loyalty does not exist *(H9).* In addition, the results from the Sobel test demonstrate that satisfaction mediates the relationships between communication, pleasure and entertainment, product assortment and loyalty as the p-values are less than 0.05. Furthermore, the results from (Path c') also reveal that satisfaction has the full mediation effect on the relationship between communication and loyalty as the direct relationship between these two variables become insignificant (p-value= 0.4466) in the presence of mediating variable (satisfaction).

Findings and discussion

The data analysis was examined to justify the hypothesized relationships towards tourist shopping mall satisfaction and as the results have indicated, all the hypotheses

were reported to have a positive and significant influence on tourist satisfaction and loyalty. In line with the findings, communication by the sales personnel *(H2)* has the highest impact on tourist satisfaction in shopping malls. Secondly, pleasure and entertainment *(H5)* stand in the second-ranking in influencing the tourist satisfaction and it is then followed by product assortment *(H6).* Subsequently, tangibility *(H4)* and convenience *(H3)* also have a positive effect on tourist satisfaction and loyalty in shopping malls.

Table 5. Summary of hypotheses

Hypothesis	**Decision**
Hypothesis 1: There is a relationship between the tourist satisfaction level and loyalty towards shopping malls.	Supported
Hypothesis 2: There is a relationship between the importance of communication and tourist satisfaction in shopping malls.	Supported
Hypothesis 3: There is a relationship between accessibility and convenience towards tourist satisfaction in shopping malls.	Supported
Hypothesis 4: There is a relationship between tangibility and facilities towards tourist satisfaction in shopping malls.	Supported
Hypothesis 5: There is a relationship between pleasure and entertainment towards tourist satisfaction in shopping malls.	Supported
Hypothesis 6: There is a relationship between product assortment and tourist satisfaction in shopping malls.	Supported
Hypothesis 7: Satisfaction mediates the relationship between communication and loyalty.	Supported Full-Mediation
Hypothesis 8: Satisfaction mediates the relationship between accessibility/convenience and loyalty.	Not Supported
Hypothesis 9: Satisfaction mediates the relationship between tangibility/facilities and loyalty.	Not Supported
Hypothesis 10: Satisfaction mediates the relationship between pleasure/entertainment and loyalty.	Supported Partial - Mediation
Hypothesis 11: Satisfaction mediates the relationship between product assortment and loyalty.	Supported Partial - Mediation

Associated with all the above, since communication is the salient key drive that highly influences tourist satisfaction, shopping mall managers should further enhance this facet to retain tourist satisfaction and loyalty in the shopping malls. This is because tourists found themselves comfortable when they were approached by well-mannered and helpful store staff (Alhouti et al., 2015; Hasan, 2015).

Evidently, providing an excellent communication service will directly increase the overall revenue in the shopping malls. Given the example, certain measures like communication in this study have been justified as a primary attribute to satisfy the tourists the most and thus, giving the retail managers a diagnosis tool to keep the tourists pleased and contented. Since communication is the main factor in satisfying tourists' traveling experiences, it is suggested that retail management should pay high attention to the working staff in the malls. The staffs' attitude and behavior between the

customers should be under surveillance to reduce possible miscommunication if it occurs; regular spot checks on random stores should be held to maintain good customer communication services; excellent employee service should be awarded to motivate the staff on their jobs. In addition, the shopping mall can provide more interactive stations/directories regarding the information about the layout and available stores in the mall in different languages such as Chinese, English, and Arabic.

The findings also reveal that pleasure and entertainment is another key factor in fostering tourist shopping mall satisfaction. The data analysis and literature review earlier have demonstrated the importance of atmospheric effect in stimulating the tourists' positive feelings. Being influenced by the emotional stimulus, it will give tourists the perceptions of being sufficiently rewarded and worthwhile, and therefore further trigger their buying impulse. Given that, tourists will prolong their time in that specific shopping mall and the probability of revenue gain will increase substantially (Attri & Jain, 2018; Kusumowidagdo et al., 2016).

On the other hand, the findings reflect that product assortment has a direct impact on tourist shopping satisfaction. Given the example that certain stores are specially catered for unique souvenirs/brand for tourists with various styles and sizes. Filling up the shelves with trendy and well-mixed colors of items will significantly attract every tourist who passes by and slow down his/her step. Therefore, this can be justified that with a wide range of product choices, the probability of meeting tourists' item preferences and make them feel satisfied is much higher.

Another interesting finding in this study is although accessibility and convenience have the least impact on tourist satisfaction, it has a high level of influence on loyalty and their revisit intention to the same shopping mall as well as positive word of mouth. Thus, it is advisable for mall management to consider providing shuttle buses and better accessibility to public transportations for their international visitors. In fact, convenience towards shopping destinations should be reassessed to further understand the tourists' perceptions of their satisfaction in the shopping malls.

Overall, tourist satisfaction and loyalty have a direct contribution to job opportunities in the retail industry and economic growth. Therefore, this point should be highly highlighted among retail management to gain cooperation from everyone who is involved.

Limitations for further research

Every research comes with limitations, and so does this research. Firstly, the method used in this study is a non-probability sampling approach (convenience sampling approach) and thus, the results of this study should be generalized by considering this limitation. Secondly, this research has been conducted using a quantitative/deductive approach. In relation to data analysis, only numeric form is presented and this might limit the detailed explanation of the data collected for the scholars and practitioners. Therefore, a mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches should be adopted in future studies to have a more intensive understanding of tourists' satisfaction and loyalty in shopping malls.

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Appendix A

Please tick (√) your answer in the box provided:

Tangibility and Facilities

1. Shopping mall environment is

Dirty and Messy	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Clean and Tidy**

2. Washrooms/Restrooms are ….

Dirty and Unpleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Clean and Pleasant**

3. Number of Washrooms/Restrooms are

Inadequate/ Not Enough	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Adequate/ Enough**

4. Escalators/Elevator

Do Not Work Properly	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Work Properly**

5. The elevators are

Not accessible	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Very Assessable**

Product Assortment

6. How would you rate the style of the products offered in this shopping center?

Old fashion and Off Season	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Fashionable and Trendy**

7. The product selection of this shopping center is

Inadequate	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Adequate**

8. Retailers at this shopping mall are

Not from reputable brands	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Reputable brands**

9. Retailers at this shopping mall are selling

Low quality products	1	2	3	4	5	6	**High quality products**

Pleasure & Entertainment

Explain your feeling after visiting this shopping mall:

10. **Miserable**	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Relax**

11. **Bored**	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Excited**
12. **Unhappy**	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Happy**
13. **Annoyed**	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Pleased**

Accessibility & Convenience

14. This shopping mall's accessibility is

Not strategically located	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Strategically located**

15. Public transportation (Taxies, Buses, and Trains) To/From the shopping center is

Inaccessible	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Accessible**

16. This shopping mall's Operation Hours

Close too Early	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Open till Late**

17. This shopping mall is a one-stop shopping place where I can buy all my needs

Inadequate	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Adequate**

Communication

18. Communication with salespeople

Very Difficult	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Very Easy**

19. Signboards and information boards

Unhelpful and Misleading	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Helpful and Accurate**

20. Information about the services available on each floor of the shopping center can be

Very Difficult to Obtain	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Very Easy to Obtain**

Satisfaction

21. To what degree would you rate your overall satisfaction with?

Very Unsatisfied	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Very Satisfied**

22. The services offered in this shopping mall are;

Very unsatisfied	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Very satisfied**

23. I feel that my experience at this shopping mall has been;

Unenjoyable and Unpleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Enjoyable and Pleasant.**

24. The service quality in this shopping mall is;

Very poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Excellent**

Loyalty

25. This is a kind of place where I would spend more money than expected

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Strongly Agree**

26. I will shop at this shopping mall again.

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Strongly Agree**

27. I like shopping here

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Strongly Agree**

28. I will say positive things about this shopping mall to other people.

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Strongly Agree**

29. I will recommend this shopping mall to someone who seeks my recommendation.

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	**Strongly Agree**

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