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Tourist Police Service Quality and Service Culture Influence on Tourists' Confidence

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Abstract

The travel and tourism sector is a significant economic contributor in Malaysia. Tourist police service quality plays an important role in promoting tourist confidence in the safety of a destination. However, there is less attention in tourism research focuses on tourist policing. Hence, this research fills the gap by examining the relationship between tourist police service quality and service culture influence on tourist confidence. The research is conducted in Penang Island, Malaysia. The dimension of tourist police service quality is conceptualized based on the SERVQUAL model with an additional factor – the service culture. The unit of analysis is international tourists. Based on the convenience sampling approach, a total of 150 completed responses was collected and analysed using the Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) technique. This research finds that tourist confidence in the police is influenced by service quality factors: tangibles, responsiveness, and police service culture. The practical contribution of the research is on the utility of the finding for the Malaysian tourist police department to strategize their organization to achieve a better level of service quality, hence promotes tourist confidence.

Keywords:

Malaysian tourism; service quality; tourist confidence; tourist police

1   Introduction

The travel and tourism sector is a significant economic contributor in Malaysia, with a direct contribution of USD10.4billion in 2016, comprising 4.7% of the country's total GDP and expected to increase to USD24.2 billion, representing 5.4% of GDP in 2027

(WTTC, 2017). Malaysia received around 26 million international tourists' arrivals with inbound tourism receipts of approximately USD17.6 million (MOTAC, 2016). This rapid growth of the tourism industry in the country is due to the dramatic change in international tourist movement from the western world to Asia Pacific (Scott & Gossling, 2015). The Malaysian government has put forth efforts to ensure the country's competitiveness in the travel and tourism sector. Consequently, Malaysia is ranked 26 out of 144 countries in the travel and tourism competitiveness index (WEF, 2017).

Among the actions taken to enhance competitiveness and ensure the industry's growth relates to issues of international tourists' sense of safety and security in Malaysia. Safety and security, among the important indicators, are used to measure tourism competitiveness and comprise four dimensions, including the police's reliability (WEF, 2017). The tourist needs and sense of security was address with the establishment of a specific unit within the Malaysian police force, i.e., the tourist police in 1998 as part of the actions taken to ensure Malaysia is an attractive tourist destination and can reaped economic reward from the tourism sector (The Star Online, 2015). Hence, the tourist police unit was established in four states in Malaysia with high tourist arrivals, i.e., Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Selangor, and Johor. The objectives of the tourist police are to provide information related to law, customs, culture, and attractions at the popular tourism sites thus, it promotes reassuring sentiment for the visitors (The Star Online, 2015). Moreover, the police officers are selected among those who are knowledgeable and familiar with the tourist destinations and possess a good command of English and specialized training in matters on tourism (The Malaysian Times, 2014).

Since then, the Malaysian Tourism Department has worked together with the Malaysian Police to improve the tangibles aspect of safety to ensure tourism confidence by strengthening the tourism police's service quality. Actions were made to increase visibility and presence at the various popular tourist sites, such as placing mobile police stations, police patrolling on electric-bicycle, motorbikes, and car patrol. Besides, in providing quick service delivery, especially about reporting and resolving crimes and assisting tourists in distress. Despite various actions to improve tourists' sense of safety and security, in 2016, Malaysia was ranked at number 41 among the 144 countries on the safety and security measures (WEF, 2017). On measures of the reliability of police services, one of the indicators that comprise the safety and security measure, Malaysia was ranked at number 38 and with a score of 4.50 on a 7-point scale (WEF, 2017).

Thus, safety and security issues need to be examined for Malaysia to be more competitive in the tourism sector because international tourists' confidence to visit a country directly relates to their sentiment about the police authority to preserve security. Word-of-mouth and searches on the internet about the security sentiment among potential tourists before visiting a country as a means of building confidence. Therefore, confidence in security has always been an imperative pulling factor for a visit (Tyagi et al., 2016; Haas et al., 2014; Myhill & Bradford, 2012). As the tourism industry enters the new era of rapid social-media updates and real-time information flow, there

is an urgent need to understand the sentiment of confidence among tourist and their views on the service quality of the tourist police.

However, there is a lack of empirical research on factors that influence tourist confidence in police and inconsistency in measuring the dependent variable used that gauge response from tourists regarding their sense of confidence in the police; therefore, its' effect on promoting tourism is limited. Rajaratnam et al.'s (2014) studies in Malaysian rural tourism service quality look into tourist satisfaction on service provided at the rural tourism destination but not in tourist confidence of the authority or satisfaction on safety. Rajaratnam et al. (2014) used the SERVQUAL model as the foundation. Meanwhile, Tyagi et al.'s (2016) research on the service quality of police used the Expressive model of Confidence as a foundation to explain the predictors of service quality in the context of policing tourist destination in India. It attributed the outcome to tourist confidence in the police.

In addition to the lack of empirical research, there is a limited established service quality measures developed specifically for tourist police and mixed relationship to the attributable outcome found in the literature (Sarrico et al., 2013; Tari, 2006; Tarlow & Santana, 2002; Tyagi et al., 2016; Min Chen et al., 2014; Donnelly et al., 2006; Haas et al., 2014). The measurement of police service quality is complicated due to its' intangible nature as the delivery of service happens at the point of contact with the tourists. Hence, the objective of this paper is twofold. First, it seeks to determine the dimensions of police service quality devised based on the SERVQUAL model that affects tourist confidence. Secondly, it investigates whether the inclusion of service culture together in the SERVQUAL dimension into the model has significantly affected tourist confidence in the police. Hence, this research aims to provide additional insights into tourist police service quality. Thus, it is essential to understand the factors that promote international tourist confidence in the Royal Malaysia Police. Pointing out the relationship between service quality factors and tourist confidence will provide the Royal Malaysia Police and Tourism Malaysia with information for improving their service quality via identifying tourists' priorities for service improvement.

To answer the above question, the case site selected for this research is Penang Island in Malaysia. Penang Island is chosen as it is among the famous island and beach tourist destinations in Asia for international tourists (Siti-Nabiha et al., 2014; Tang & Tan, 2016; Telfer & Sharpley, 2015). The Island, its size about 293 km^2, is located at the northwest of Peninsular Malaysia. Tourism in Penang has become the fourth largest contributor to the Malaysian tourism industry, and it contributed RM9.0 billion (5.4%) to the Malaysian tourism industry (Department of Statistics, 2018). The importance of this sector to Penang can be understood from the fact that tourism increases earnings, creates employment opportunities, encourages the private sector, and develops infrastructure (Department of Statistics, 2018; Dubey, 2017; Mosbah & Saleh, 2014). Tourism in Penang provides the much-needed impetus for economic growth and is a vibrant service industry segment (Ismail & Lai, 2015; Paramati et al., 2017). Due to the importance of the tourism industry in Penang, Penang is among the five states that have

police tourist units comprising 40 police officers stationed at 24 tourist locations on the island (The Star Online, 2015).

2 Literature Review

Research interest in service quality of police has been attributed to its relationship with satisfaction (Dietz, 1997; Sarrico et al., 2013; Tari, 2006), but limited research has examined service quality relationship with confidence (Haas et al., 2014; Myhill & Bradford, 2012; Ren et al., 2005; Tyagi et al., 2016). There are a few studies on service quality related to police, i.e., Tyagi et al. (2016), Sarrico et al. (2013), Tarlow and Santana (2002), and Tari (2006). Tyagi et al. (2016) studied the mediating role of police service quality in exerting the effect of police organizational culture on tourists' confidence. Tyagi et al. (2016) collected data from tourists at tourist sites in Uttarakhand, India. Their study employed Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and found that police organizational culture directly affects tourists' confidence in police and service quality partially mediates the relationship between police organizational culture on tourist's confidence in the police. However, the limitation of CFA using SPSS is in the piecemeal steps in the analysis. Therefore, this research uses Partial Least Square – Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS to test the relationships simultaneously.

Sarrico et al. (2013) studied police traffic services in Portugal and developed the customer quality assessment scale modified from the SERVQUAL model. The study found it is possible to implement the SERVQUAL model into police traffic services. However, in the study new dimension of service quality emerged named promptitude. Hence, Sarrico et al. (2013) added one new dimension into the original five-dimension of service quality. Previously, Tarlow and Santana (2002) carried a comparative case research study on the safety and security continuum and police attitude towards tourism in the United States and Brazil. The research found that police officers need to have greater autonomy and be trained to address the special needs of new travel groups, i.e., foreign-speaking tourists, businesswomen, the elderly, and single women on vacation. This tourist group is concerned about service of quality and safety. On the other hand, Tari (2006) also examined police service quality improvement using the case method. Tari (2006) used the interview to assess the satisfaction and perspective of the Spanish policemen and its citizen towards the police service.

Tourists' contacts with the police may exert a powerful influence on how they feel either satisfied or confident about the police service. Confidence in tourist police service is defined as the perceived sentiment, feeling, and belief on tourist police authority to safeguard the tourist, despite their dissatisfaction or satisfaction towards the authority. Satisfaction has been defined as the consumer's fulfilment response (Narayan et al., 2009). Boateng (2016) and Haas et al. (2014) used the confidence level towards the police service to predict the decision to make a police report related to crime. The research found that lack of confidence towards police is manifested by the act of reluctance to report crimes. A high number of unreported cases is an indication of a

negative perception toward police service. Therefore, a positive attitude to report a crime to the authoritative body indicates confidence towards the authority.

However, the gap in the literature related to tourism and service quality utilized the satisfaction dimension instead of confidence as the dependent variable in the relationship. For example, Dietz's (1997) research on service quality about community policing service used citizen satisfaction as the dependent variable. Hence, Dietz (1997) found little relationship between citizens' satisfaction perceptions of safety on the quality of police services. It is argued that instead of satisfaction, perceived confidence might better explain the relationship. Dietz's (1997) finding concurs with Sarrico et al. (2013) that introduces six dimensions of police service quality named POLQUAL. Police service is very different from other types of customer service or industry due to its' monopolistic nature, bureaucracy, and retention of clients is not an aim (Sarrico et al., 2013).

On the other research, Tyler and Huo (2002) refer to satisfaction in police as like confidence in the police, which is similar to Ren et al. (2005). They uncover that the linking between confidences in the police with the service performance of community policing. Myhill and Bradford (2012) also support the argument that police service quality influences tourist confidence in the police. Therefore, the dependent variable of the research is tourist confidence in the police. The measurement for tourist confidence in police was mainly adapted from Haas et al. (2014) that measures public confidence in the Netherlands police.

As mentioned, there are limited established service quality measures that were developed specifically for tourist police. Hence, in this research, the SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman, 1988) was used as the basis to devise the dimensions of the tourist police service quality. SERVQUAL model was chosen as the basis due to its durability for measuring service quality across industries (Narayan et al., 2009). The SERVQUAL model that was originated from the customer-service industry explained that consumers' perception of the quality of a service offering is a function of five separate quality dimensions. The five-dimension are the current research independent variables: (1) perceived quality of tangibles which refers to aesthetics of physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of personnel; (2) perceived quality of reliability which refers to the ability of the police to perform the promised service dependably and accurately; (3) perceived quality of responsiveness which refers to the willingness to help tourist and provide prompt service; (4) perceived quality of assurance which refers to knowledge and courtesy of police and their ability to convey trust and confidence; and (5) perceived quality of empathy which refers to caring and individualized attention the police provides its customers, all influence tourists' perception of the overall service quality of police.

The current study examined the five-service quality dimensions in terms of tourist police service in Malaysia and hypothesized that the attributed relationship between police service quality influences tourist confidence. Below are the proposed hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: *Tangibles service quality has a significant positive influence on tourist confidence in the police.*

Hypothesis 2: *Reliability service quality has a significant positive influence on tourist confidence in the police.*

Hypothesis 3: *Responsiveness service quality has a significant positive influence on tourist confidence in the police.*

Hypothesis 4: *Assurance service quality has a significant positive influence on tourist confidence in the police.*

Hypothesis 5: *Empathy service quality has a significant positive influence on tourist confidence in the police.*

Tyagi et al. (2016), who studied the tourists' confidence in police service in India, argued that the service quality dimensions of SERVQUAL are not exhaustive, particularly in the context of police service because of the monopolistic nature of the service. Additionally, Tyagi et al. (2016) included police organization culture as a determinant of tourist confidence in the police because the police service's work culture or work style in the different countries differs greatly due to its work culture. Work culture determines the way police served the public, and it has significant effects on public confidence in police (Tyagi et al., 2016). Therefore, police service culture is incorporated in the research model, on top of the five-dimension of service quality (see Figure 1). On this basis, Police Service Culture is included as the sixth independent variable of research.

Skinner Beitelspacher et al. (2011) conceptualized service culture as a customer-centric culture to create superior value through the development of service and performance competencies. Service culture is defined as "a culture where an appreciation for good service exists, and was giving good service to internal as well as ultimate, external customers is considered by everyone a natural way of life and one of the most important values" (Gronroos, 2007). Based on this definition, service culture refers to organizational practices and relates to the manner, values, and behaviour of both the organization and its employees. If an organization has a strong service culture, it will develop employees' positive attitudes toward giving service to their customers.

Being prompt or responsive, willing to help, and having a courteous attitude should be a priority objective for the employees as part of the service culture (Gilbert & Wong, 2003). Ooncharoen and Ussahawanitchakit (2008) argue that service culture is a prerequisite for organizational excellence and customer satisfaction. To date, research on service culture has mainly sought to conceptualize the relationships between service culture and business performance, the linkage between service culture and customer outcomes such as tourist confidence has not been fully explored and empirically tested. For that reason, this study investigated this relationship and hypothesized that police

service culture influences tourist confidence in the police. Below is the proposed hypothesis:

Hypothesis 6:   Police Service Culture has a significant positive influence on tourist confidence in the police.
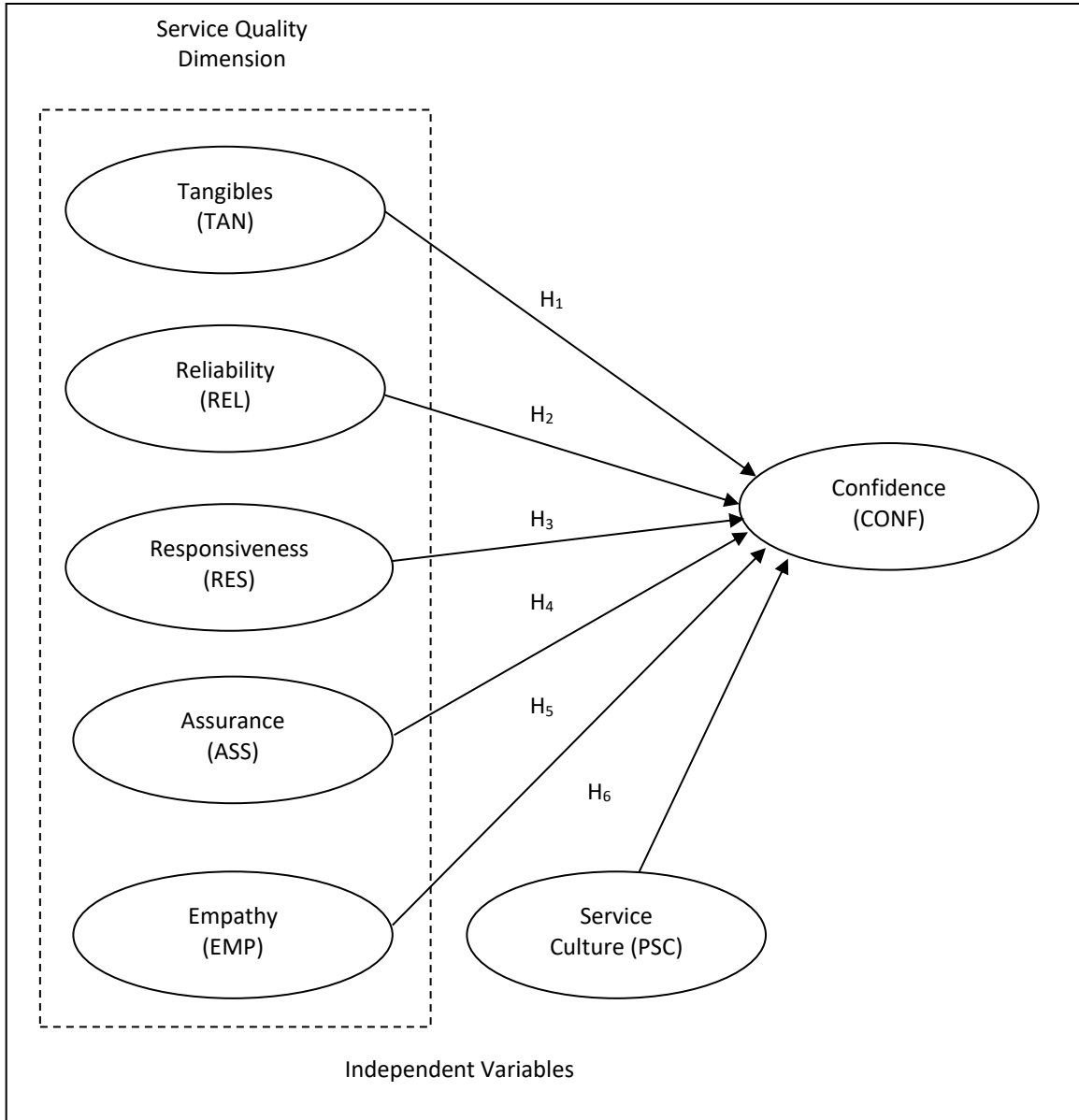

Figure 1: Framework

3 Methodology

3.1 Sampling and Instrumentation

The unit of analysis for this study was international tourists. Investigation in this study revolved around the international tourists' perceptions. The data collection procedure follows convenience sampling, in which respondents are chosen based on their convenience and availability. The G*Power calculator predetermined the minimum sample size to carry out power analysis specific to the model setups. The minimum sample size required (to detect 95% statistical power, an α significance level of 0.05, f^2 effect size of 0.15 with six predictors) is 146 samples. Therefore, a self-administered questionnaire was randomly distributed to international tourists visiting the most visited tourist attractions in Penang. A cross-sectional data collection was carried out within a month at the popular tourist sites: Batu Ferringhi beach, Georgetown city, Gurney drive esplanade, and at the departure hall of Penang International Airport. In the end, 150 completed survey responses were collected for this study.

A challenge faced in this study is the absence of a specific survey questionnaire to measure tourist police service quality. Therefore, this research started devising a 60-item measure based on the SERVQUAL model and contextualized it into the Malaysian tourist police service context. The 60-item measure concurs with the SERVQUAL model with five dimensions with one additional construct police service culture. The independent variable of research is tourist confidence in the police.

The survey questionnaire was developed based on a five-dimension of the SERVQUAL model to measure service quality (see Table 1). A set of structured questions measured each dimension of service quality. Respondents were asked to express their perception of these issues using a five-point and seven-point Likert scale to indicate their strength of agreement to the statement. Survey instruments were validated by higher rank tourist police officials and academics experts in the service quality subject matter as they are knowledgeable about the aspects of a particular service that best define quality. Reliability of the instrument to gauge tourist response was ensured by preparing well-structured and clear statements, which were made possible through pilot testing the instrument to 20 international tourists. Each of the questionnaire items exhibited acceptable internal reliability (coefficient alpha range, 0.80 to 0.88). After the pilot test yield a satisfactory result, the actual data collection took place. One hundred fifty sets of usable data were collected from the international tourist who voluntarily completed the questionnaire Table 1 exhibit 60-item survey measuring seven constructs.

Table 1: Questionnaire Items

No.	Construct	Item	Description Item	Source
1	Tangibles	TAN1	Well uniformed with a well-kept appearance	Sarrico et al. (2013)
2		TAN2	Well maintained equipment	Sarrico et al. (2013)
3		TAN3	Equipped with modern equipment	Sarrico et al. (2013)
4		TAN4	Locations of police agencies were convenient for tourists to report crimes	Min Chen et al. (2014)
5		TAN5	Contact information of police agencies was readily available at tourist spots	Min Chen et al. (2014)
6		TAN6	When handling calls from tourists, police staff willingly provided relevant contact numbers for any follow-up assistance	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
7		TAN7	Facilities of the police tourist	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
8		TAN8	Convenient operating hours	Islam & Ali (2008)
9	Reliability	REL1	Information provided by the police staff was easy to understand	Sarrico et al. (2013)
10		REL2	Demonstrated concern for providing the best service	Sarrico et al. (2013)
11		REL3	Trustworthy attitude	Min Chen et al. (2014)
12		REL4	Law-abiding ability	
13		REL5	Provide the required information in a systematic manner	Min Chen et al. (2014)
14		REL6	Exhibited expertise in policing tourists	Min Chen et al. (2014)
15		REL7	Consistent in the services provided to tourists	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
16		REL8	Attempted to maintain a safe environment for tourists	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
17		REL9	Took appropriate action when I needed their services	Maguire & Johnson (2010)

18	Responsiveness	RES1	Means of identification allowed easy identification of him/her	Sarrico et al (2013)
19		RES2	Showed interest in answering questions from tourists	Sarrico et al. (2013)
20		RES3	Responded promptly to tourist requests	Min Chen et al. (2014)
21		RES4	Fast at executing the work	Sarrico et al. (2013)
22		RES5	Informed me well about the local guidelines to follow	Min Chen et al. (2014)
23		RES6	Answered calls made to them promptly	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
24		RES7	Convenient procedures to lodge complaints	Min Chen et al. (2014)
25		RES8	Courteous	Min Chen et al. (2014)
26		RES9	Attended to the welfare of tourists	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
27		RES10	Took action when problems are brought to their attention	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
28	Assurance	ASS1	Demonstrate adequate knowledge to answer the questions posed	Sarrico et al. (2013)
29		ASS2	Competent and professional	Sarrico et al. (2013)
30		ASS3	Act in a fair manner	Sarrico et al. (2013)
31		ASS4	Carry out their duty without errors	Sarrico et al. (2013)
32		ASS5	The senior officials in the police agency were willing to speak with tourists who had concerns about the local police	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
33		ASS6	Resolve tourist problems effectively	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
34		ASS7	Exhibit problem-solving skills	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
35		ASS8	Attempt to ensure a safe environment for the tourists	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
36		ASS9	Ensure the safety of the tourists	Min Chen et al. (2014)
37		ASS10	Take appropriate action when a tourist needed their services	Maguire & Johnson (2010)

38	Empathy	EMP1	Gave individualized attention to the tourists	Sarrico et al. (2013)
39		EMP2	Understood the specific needs of the tourists	Sarrico et al. (2013)
40		EMP3	Showed commitment to solving problems that are presented by the tourists	Sarrico et al. (2013)
41		EMP4	Took into consideration the feelings of the tourists with whom they liaised	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
42		EMP5	Listened to what the tourists had to say to them	Maguire & Johnson (2010)
43		EMP6	Able to provide immediate aid for the tourists	Min Chen et al. (2014)
44		EMP7	Had knowledge of the surrounding areas	Min Chen et al. (2014)
45	Police Service Culture	PSC1	Strong commitment to quality at all levels of this organization.	Boke & Nalla (2009)
46		PSC2	Follows up on suggestions for improvement	Boke & Nalla (2009)
47		PSC3	Practiced excellent hospitality culture	C.F. Chen (2008)
48		PSC4	Disseminate information promptly	Y.H. Chen, Tseng & Lin (2011)
49		PSC5	Understood the specific needs of tourists	Sarrico et al. (2013)
50		PSC6	Using simple language	Sarrico et al. (2013)
51		PSC7	Behave in a cordial manner	Sarrico et al. (2013)
52		PSC8	Communicate well with the tourists	Min Chen et al. (2014)
53	International tourist confidence	CONF1	Honest to the tourists	Haas et al. (2014)
54		CONF2	Trustworthy when approached	Haas et al. (2014)
55		CONF3	Respect for the police staff	Haas et al. (2014)
56		CONF4	Tourists' rights are adequately protected by the police staff	Haas et al. (2014)
57		CONF5	Refer to the police for help	Haas et al. (2014)
58		CONF6	Present when tourists need them	Haas et al. (2014)
59		CONF7	The behaviour of police staff instilled confidence in tourists	Islam & Ali (2008)
60		CONF8	Transparent in handling tourists	Deepa & Jayaraman (2017)

3.2 Data Analysis

To predict the causal relationship between service quality (independent variable) to the tourist confidence in police (dependent variable), Partial Least Square – Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 3.0 software was employed. PLS-SEM method was chosen because of its versatility in predicting causal relationships with small sample data, and it makes practically no assumptions about the data distributions. The reliability and validity of the survey items and the constructs were tested by employing PLS Algorithm. Items with an outer loading value less than 0.70 are dropped from the construct that it represented. After the measurement model is assessed, the structural model assessment is carried out using Bootstrapping with 2,000 samples and the Blindfolding technique. Structural paths with significant loadings are retained in the path model. The result of significant paths is the answer to the research objectives. Table 2 summarized the respondents' profiles.

Table 2: Respondent Profile (Total Respondents = 150)

Profile	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age (in Years)	18-25	35	23.3
	26-35	58	38.7
	36-45	43	28.7
	46-55	12	8.0
	56 and above	2	1.3
Gender	Male	101	67.3
	Female	49	32.7
Education	Bachelor's degree	67	44.7
	Master's degree	43	28.7
	Professional certificate	20	13.3
	Doctoral degree	11	7.3
	Others	9	6.0
Nationality	Brunei	33	22
	India	24	16
	Indonesia	22	14.7
	Singapore	14	9.3
	Australia	10	6.7
	Thailand	7	4.7
	China	6	4
	Japan	6	4
	French	3	2
	Germany	3	2
	Philippines	3	2
	Hong Kong	2	1.3

	Korea	2	1.3
	USA	2	1.3
	Afghanistan	1	0.7
	Albania	1	0.7
	Andorra	1	0.7
	Angola	1	0.7
	Arab	1	0.7
	Argentina	1	0.7
	Bahrain	1	0.7
	Bangladesh	1	0.7
	Brazil	1	0.7
	Canada	1	0.7
	Myanmar	1	0.7
	Switzerland	1	0.7
	Vietnam	1	0.7
Occupation	Student	50	33.3
	Skilled Workers	26	17.3
	Professionals	25	16.7
	Homemaker	19	12.7
	Own Business	15	10
	Unskilled Workers	8	5.3
	Retired	7	4.7
Frequency of visit to Malaysia including current visit	Once	72	48.0
	2-4 Times	14	9.3
	5-6 Times	53	35.3
	> 6 Times	11	7.3
Purpose of visit	Visiting Family and Friends	68	45.3
	Leisure	42	28
	Business	40	26.7

4   Findings

The assessment of the structural model and the hypotheses are carried out after assessing the measurement model. The details of the measurement properties of tourist confidence and service quality are reported in Table 3. From the measurement model, the latent variables' inner variance inflation factor (VIF) value is lower than 5. Therefore, the issue of multicollinearity among the latent variables is refuted. The main loading for each item is above the cut-off point of 0.500, and in the present study, the item's main loading ranges from 0.707 to 0.861. However, items ASS1, PSC1, PSC7, RES1, and TAN1 were deleted due to low loading. Therefore, the model is left with 55 measured items. Composite reliability was assessed to establish measurement reliability. Composite Reliability (CR) values lie between 0.901 and 0.947, which satisfies the cut-off value of 0.7 (see Table 3). Thus, the measurement model was considered satisfactory with the

evidence of adequate reliability and convergent validity. The Average Variance Extracted (AVEs) value ranged from 0.565 to 0.69 indicates that the AVE fulfils the cut-off value. All seven constructs showed a Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability (CR) greater than 0.80, thereby satisfying the rule of thumb recommended by Hair et al. (2013). The Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio construct thresholds were between 0.85 and 0.9 (see Table 4). Present research concluded that discriminant validity is established since all discriminant validity measurements are satisfied. Overall, the measurement model demonstrated adequate convergent validity and discriminant validity fulfilling the construct validity for the measurement model of PLS. According to the findings, all six independent variables (formative) constructs significantly contributed to forming the police service quality: Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy, and Service Culture.

Table 3: Measurement Model Result

Model Variable	Latent Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's Alpha
IV1	Tangibles	TAN2	0.743	0.565	0.901	0.872
		TAN3	0.770			
		TAN4	0.750			
		TAN5	0.774			
		TAN6	0.707			
		TAN7	0.781			
		TAN8	0.733			
IV2	Reliability	REL1	0.825	0.641	0.941	0.930
		REL2	0.778			
		REL3	0.844			
		REL4	0.802			
		REL5	0.809			
		REL6	0.815			
		REL7	0.773			
		REL8	0.797			
		REL9	0.759			
IV3	Responsiveness	RES10	0.787	0.593	0.929	0.914
		RES2	0.788			
		RES3	0.740			
		RES4	0.730			
		RES5	0.813			
		RES6	0.759			
		RES7	0.738			

		RES8	0.789			
		RES9	0.782			
IV4	Assurance	ASS10	0.781	0.598	0.930	0.916
		ASS2	0.719			
		ASS3	0.768			
		ASS4	0.777			
		ASS5	0.846			
		ASS6	0.791			
		ASS7	0.771			
		ASS8	0.755			
		ASS9	0.743			
IV5	Empathy	EMP1	0.767	0.619	0.919	0.897
		EMP2	0.812			
		EMP3	0.798			
		EMP4	0.814			
		EMP5	0.749			
		EMP6	0.804			
		EMP7	0.759			
MV	Police Service Culture	PSC2	0.783	0.614	0.905	0.875
		PSC3	0.767			
		PSC4	0.785			
		PSC5	0.772			
		PSC6	0.820			
		PSC8	0.774			
DV	Confidence on Police	CONF1	0.832	0.690	0.947	0.936
		CONF2	0.793			
		CONF3	0.853			
		CONF4	0.806			
		CONF5	0.861			
		CONF6	0.831			
		CONF7	0.827			
		CONF8	0.840			

Table 4: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) at threshold value < 0.85

Variable	ASS	EMP	CONF	PSC	REL	RES
EMP	0.788					
CONF	0.484	0.531				

PSC	0.564	0.608	0.593		
REL	0.789	0.815	0.533	0.577	
RES	0.699	0.751	0.723	0.739	0.786
TAN	0.800	0.733	0.576	0.596	0.786	0.695

The results from analysing the structural model by using the PLS Bootstrapping technique (using 2000 samples) are reported in Tables 5 and 6. The coefficient of determination (R^2) suggests that the independent variables together influence the dependent variable (international tourist confidence) to the extent of $R^2 = 0.488$. In the current study, the GOF value is 0.564, and it is well above the threshold value of 0.36 (Hair et al., 2011). The predictive relevance (Q^2 value) was analysed as an additional model fit assessment. It represents the model adequacy to predict and manifest indicators of each latent variable. For a structural model, a Q^2 value that is larger than zero for a certain endogenous latent variable indicates the path model's predictive relevance for this variable (Chin, 2010). The Q^2 value was obtained by using the blindfolding procedure, and in the current study, the predictive relevance of Q^2 for endogenous construct (international tourist confidence) is greater than zero implies that the model has predictive relevance for the endogenous variable (see Table 5).

Table 5: Structural Model Fit

Dependent variable	Goodness of Fit (GOF)			Predictive relevance	
	Average AVE	Average of R^2	GOF	R^2	Q^2
CONF	0.617	0.483	0.546	0.488	0.300

Results of the research hypotheses 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 are depicted in Table 6. Assessment of the direct effect of the independent variables showed that three direct effects of the independent variable were positively and significantly influenced the international tourist confidence (dependent variable). They were tangibles ($\beta=0.202$, $p<0.01$), responsiveness ($\beta=0.5271$, $p<0.01$), and police service culture ($\beta=0.145$, $p<0.05$). The other independent variables' direct effects such as reliability ($\beta=-0.054$, $p>0.05$), assurance ($\beta=-0.085$, $p>0.20$), and empathy ($\beta= 0.026$, $p>0.40$), on international tourist confidence, were not significant. Therefore, hypotheses 1, 3, and 6 were supported.

Table 6: Direct Effects Results

Hypothesis	Direct Path	β value	Standard Error	t Statistic	p-Value	Decision
H4	ASS to CONF	-0.085	0.103	0.822	0.206	Not Supported
H5	EMP to CONF	0.026	0.102	0.250	0.401	Not Supported
H6	PSC to CONF	0.145	0.087	1.668*	0.048	Supported
H2	REL to CONF	-0.054	0.117	0.461	0.323	Not Supported
H3	RES to CONF	0.527	0.090	5.880***	0.000	Supported
H1	TAN to CONF	0.202	0.096	2.110*	0.018	Supported

*Note: *$p < 0.05$, one-tail; ****$p < 0.001$, one-tail*

5   Discussion and Implications

Tourists' sense of security and safety are among the important measures contributing to the country's competitiveness in the world tourism industry. Besides the specific attractions of the country, tourists' confidence and sense of security is an important pull factor for intention to visit and could assist in enhancing the country's image as good tourist destinations. This paper investigates the relationship between police tourist service quality and the relationship to the tourists' confidence in the police in Penang Island, Malaysia. Six dimensions of service quality were investigated: Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy, and Police Service Culture.

This paper's findings revealed a significant positive influence between service quality dimensions, i.e., the tangibles aspect of service quality, the responsiveness of service quality, and police service culture, on the international tourist confidence. The findings were consistent with prior research concerning police service quality, i.e., Donelly et al. (2006), Tyagi et al. (2016), and Myhill and Bradford (2012), specifically in the context of tourist police (i.e., Ren et al., 2005; Tyagi et al., 2016). However, other service quality dimensions such as reliability, assurance, and empathy were insignificant. The possible reason for the insignificance is the respondents', i.e., the tourist's circumstances during the survey, which are not in difficulties or need of the service. For tourist police authority, resources on improving service quality should be on upgrading their physical aspect (tangibles), the interaction of goodwill (responsiveness) of the unit, and police service culture (embed of good service all-over).

The findings have several important implications for the tourist police unit in Malaysia in formulating strategies to enhance their tourism-oriented policy services, which as follows:

1. *Improvement on tangibles aspect of service quality:* The appearance of facilities, equipment, and service personnel directly influences tourist confidence. From the measurement model item loading, tourists perceived importance on the 'condition of

the facilities', 'modern equipment used by the unit', 'convenient location of tourist police', 'availability of contact information of tourist police at tourist spot' and 'convenient operating hours' that provide surveillance to tourist. The tangible presence of tourist police facilities and personnel exuded confidence for international tourists. The managers of tourist police units need to prioritize maintaining and updating the tangibles aspect of the tourist police service. Also, choosing the specific location for the police beat and mobile unit to ensure high visibility is crucial in enhancing the tourist sense of confidence. Most of the time, tourists felt or gauge the police service immediately through seeing. Thus, feel-good factors from the professional setting of the office, proper physical building, presentable personal and modern equipment used should be emphasized.

2. *Responsiveness aspect of service quality:* Responsiveness was found to be positively influencing international tourist confidence. Responsiveness refers to the availability of tourist police to help the client and deliver the service promptly (Sarrico et al., 2013). The respondents rated highest on the importance of 'courteous nature of tourist police', 'well informed the tourist on local guidelines to follow' and 'showing deep interest in answering questions from tourist when being asked'. Respondents rated 'prompt action taken by tourist police when problems were brought to their attention as the fourth most important factor. However, tourists rated low importance on 'ease of identifying police personnel at tourists' spots. Responsiveness was significantly related to tourist confidence concurs with previous literature, i.e., Gilbert and Wong (2003) and Ooncharoen and Ussahawanitchakit (2008). It indicates a good remark on Malaysian tourist police, as they are ever willing to assist international tourists when they are solicited. As mentioned, the Malaysian tourist police are selected from among those proficient in English and were given specialized training related to customs and laws and knowledge about the tourist attractions in their area. Thus, the manager of the tourist unit should continue with the selection policy and the specialized training given.

3. *Police service culture:* Police service culture has a significant positive influence on tourist confidence. The Malaysian tourist police adopted "Smile and Serve" as their serving motto is a manifestation of the enculturation process. Police Service Culture in this research refers to the existence of the norms and appreciation of good service as a natural value in the organization. From the measurement model, good indicators of Police Service Culture as perceived by tourists are 'usage of simple language by the personnel', 'sense of urgency in disseminating information to tourist', 'openness to receive a suggestion for improvement' and 'well communication with the tourist'. Tourists also indicated agreement on perceived 'strong commitment to quality is felt in the organization'. It describes how well each police has come to terms with the already set ideals and values their culture has established. The result indicates the importance of good communication and interpersonal skills for police tourists.

4. *Drivers of confidence in tourist police:* The measurement model for latent variable Confidence was used to measure tourists' sentiment of confidence in tourist

police. From the measurement model, it was identified that tourist prioritize atrributes such as 'Refer to the police for help', 'Tourist have respect for police staff', 'Perceived transparent in handling tourist', 'Honest to tourist', 'Present when needed' and 'The behaviour of police staff instilled confidence in tourist'. This research showed the positive sentiment of confidence among international tourists on the Malaysian tourist police because of the high rating on an item that indicates the authority will be referred to and is respected. Training and socialization process in the job to instil values such as honesty and good conduct of tourist police officer are crucial factors in driving the international tourists' confidence in the tourism-related policing.

6   Conclusion

The paper's findings suggest that dimensions of policy service quality that are important are the tangible aspect of the service, the responsiveness of the police personnel, and the police service culture. The model encapsulated that the independent variables together explained 48.8% of the international tourist confidence. Therefore, other factors influence tourist confidence. The study also validated the 60-item survey questionnaire devised based on the SERVQUAL model in the context of tourist police service in Malaysia. The measurement model also demonstrated adequate validity and reliability, with Composite Reliability values between 0.901 to 0.947 and all latent variables' AVE is higher than 0.5. However, the contribution of this study should be seen in the light of certain limitations because the study employed cross-sectional data collection and covers only selected tourist places in Penang. Hence, researchers could undertake future research in different tourism sites in Malaysia. Since the present study is among the first to study international tourist confidence in Malaysian Tourist Police service quality, there is a fertile area for future research akin to applying the proposed structural model and its measurement model.

7   About the author

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