Research Article

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Developing a Model of Perceived Value, Quality of Life, Place Attachment and Destination Loyalty

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Abstract

Kelantan is located in the East Coast of Malaysia. This state is rich in culture and delicious local dishes. Therefore, it has bright potential to become a tourism hub in this country. However, statistics demonstrated that Kelantan received a small number of domestic tourist arrivals and receipts compared to other states. Hence, to resolve this issue, it is crucial to improve destination loyalty among local tourists. This study intends to propose a new research model which will be tested among domestic tourists visiting Kelantan. Several constructs will be assembled, such as perceived value, place attachment, quality of life and destination loyalty. The research predicts to examine five direct effects. Most importantly, two parallel mediators will be proposed in this model. The study's findings are expected to facilitate tourism management in Kelantan to boost domestic tourism within that state.

Keywords:

Perceived value; quality of life; place attachment; destination loyalty; kelantan.

1   Introduction

Malaysia is considered as one of the top tourism destinations in Southeast Asia and its domestic tourism is one of the contributors to the economic growth. Domestic tourism is crucial to the survival of many countries' tourism sectors, and this holds true for Malaysia as well (Ab Ghani et al., 2021). Kelantan is located in the East Coast of Malaysia, and its capital city is Kota Bharu. Kelantan tourism sector was unleashed to whole world as to promote its mesmerising natural beauty, delicious local foods, and

cultures. Some of the natural attractions in Kelantan are Kuala Koh National Park, Kelantan Beaches and Gunung Stong State Park. Moreover, it is rich with unique cultures where the local tourists can experience, learn and witness traditional events like Wayang Kulit, Dikir Barat, Mak Yong, Main Puteri, Silat, Menora, Wau Bulan (kite-flying), Gasing (top-spinning), and handicrafts made by the locals. Usually, the local tourists also visited Kelantan to taste its local dishes such as Nasi Kerabu, Nasi Tumpang, Nasi Dagang, and Ayam Percik. Even though there are so many attractions in Kelantan, this destination is not considered as the top tourist destination among the local tourists. This is due to many reasons such as lack of facilities and transportation and unhygienic tourism spots. For example, in Kelantan, due to lack of tourism facility such as road signage causing the tourist missed to experience the unique culture within this state (Berita Harian, 2016).

This makes the visitors refuse to visit Kelantan. Evidently, Figure 1 demonstrates that Kelantan was among the states in Malaysia that received the least number of local tourists in 2019. Similarly, when the locals are not interested to visit Kelantan, the income received from this sector would not be encouraging. Again, Kelantan has proven to be among the states in this country that received the least number of tourists as depicted in Figure 2.
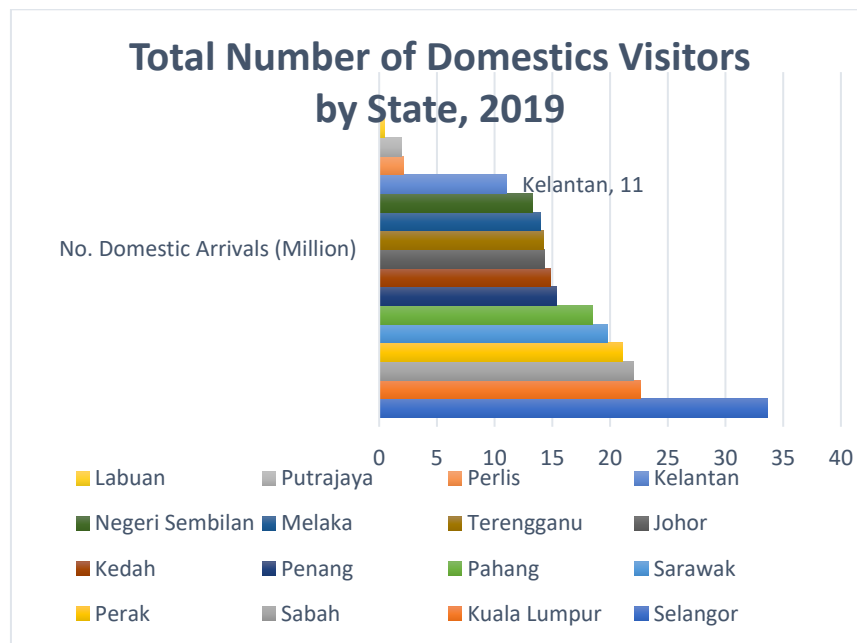

Figure 1: Tourist Arrivals by States (Domestic Tourism in Malaysia)
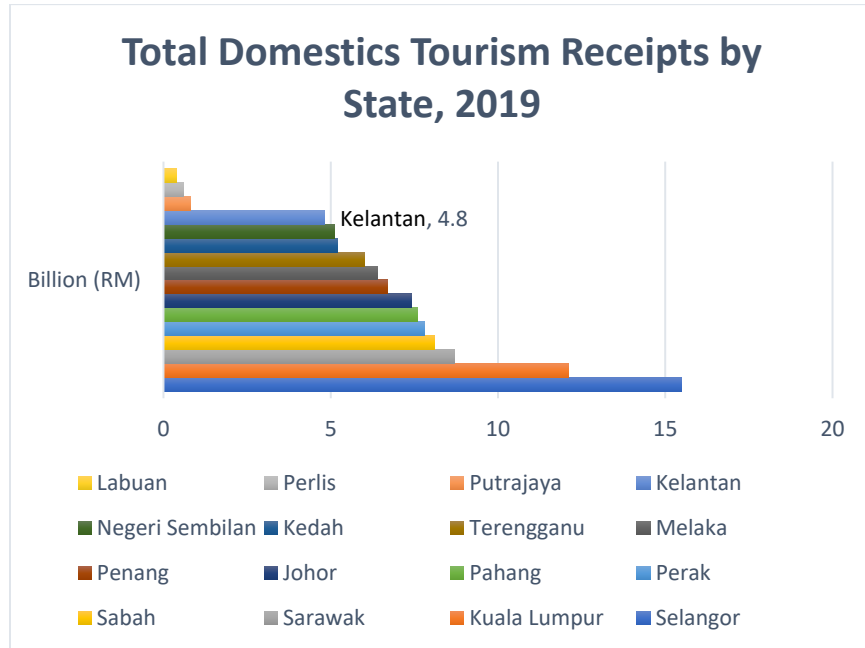Source: Department of Statistics Malaysia (2021)

Figure 2: Tourist Receipts by States (Domestic Tourism in Malaysia)
Source: Department of Statistics Malaysia (2021)

Hence, it is crucial to improve the loyalty among local tourists because loyal tourists would provide a lucrative income to the destination through less marketing costs and the spreading of positive word-of-mouth among the existing tourists (Almeida-Santana and Moreno-Gil, 2018). Moreover, loyal tourists will revisit the destination in the near future. Hence, destination loyalty can be improved through its predictors. It was reported that perceived value (Huang, Gao, and Hsu, 2019), quality of life (Hernández-Mogollón, Di-Clemente, and Campón-Cerro, 2020) and place attachment (Nurbasari, Kuswoyo, Aribowo, and Raharjo, 2021) have effects on destination loyalty. However, limited studies have assembled all of these constructs and tested them together in one model (refer to Table 1). Most importantly, it contributes significantly to the existing knowledge by proposing a new research model comprising four latent constructs that examine simultaneously in one model. Moreover, it also introduces a new pathway where the place attachment mediates perceived value and destination loyalty relationship will be tested in this model. This study also enlightens whether is it worth with the sacrifice that the tourists did in comparison to the experience they gain from visiting Kelantan which would leads to enhancing their personal well-being and building strong connection with tourism destination in Kelantan. Consequently, the tourists will loyal to the destination by repeat visit and recommend to others. This is crucial because loyal tourists will spend more when they visit Kelantan. This can give benefits to tourism related businesses such as hotels, restaurants, e-hailing services and more. Moreover, this will generate income and it could provide more job opportunities to the local community. This will increase the social status of the local people.

Table 1: Research Gaps

No	Researchers	Research Hypotheses						
		H1	H2	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7
		PV → DL	PV → QoL	PV → Att	QoL → DL	PV → QoL → DL	Att → DL	PV → Att → DL
1.	Kim et al. (2015)	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
2.	Sato et al. (2018)	/	X	X	X	X	X	X
3.	Nadarajah and Ramalu (2018)	/	X	X	X	X	X	X
4.	Huang et al. (2019)	/	X	X	X	X	X	X
5.	Mohamad et al. (2019)	X	X	X	X	X	/	X
6.	Rohman (2020)	X	/	X	/	/	X	X
7.	Patwardhan et al. (2020)	X	X	X	X	X	/	X
8.	Hernández-Mogollón et al. (2020)	X	X	X	/	X	X	X
9.	Nasir et al. (2020)	X	X	X	X	X	/	X
10.	Nurbasari et al. (2021)	X	X	X	X	X	/	X
11.	Jiang and Hong (2021)	X	X	/	X	X	X	X
12.	Current study	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Note: PV= perceived value, Qol= quality of life, Att= place attachment, DL= destination loyalty, / = tested, X= not tested.

1.1 Objectives

The aim of the current research work is to bridge the gap in the past research work (refer to Table 1) by proposing to test all constructs of perceived value, quality of life and place attachment in one model. The current research work is undertaken to provide insights and increase the understanding of destination loyalty among domestic tourists visiting Kelantan, Malaysia. Therefore, the research objectives are:

1. To examine the influences of perceived value on destination loyalty, quality of life, and place attachment.
2. To determine the effect of quality of life and place attachment on destination loyalty.
3. To determine the mediating effects of quality of life and place attachment on the relationship between perceived value and destination loyalty.

2   Literature Review

2.1   Destination loyalty

Sustaining a high level of tourist loyalty towards specific destination would create lucrative income for the tourism businesses and destinations (Nasir, Mohamad, Ghani, and Afthanorhan, 2020). This situation happens because loyal tourists would spread positive word-of-mouth to others whereby they act as free marketing agents to the destination by sharing their valuable and enjoyable experiences about their trip to their families and friends. Rodger, Taplin, and Moore (2015) defined destination loyalty as the level of commitment that tourists exhibit towards a destination. Typically, how tourists display their commitment is by revisiting the destination and recommending it to others. Thus, this study defined destination loyalty as the commitment of tourists to repeat visit and spread positive words of mouth about tourist destination in Kelantan to the other people such as families and friends.

This construct comprises of attitudinal, behavioural and composite. Attitudinal refers to an intention to repeat-visit and suggest the destination to others, while behavioural focuses on outcomes like repeat visits (Senarath and Ranasinghe, 2019). The combination of both is called composite loyalty, which provides a complete representation of this construct. This study will employ composite loyalty because it is more comprehensive and increase the predictive power in measuring the destination loyalty (Zhang, Fu, Cai and Lu, 2014; Muhamad Nasir, Mohamad, and Ab Ghani (2021).

2.2   Perceived value

Suhartanto et al. (2020) postulated that perceived value is related to a relative comparison between the sacrifices (what the tourists surrender) and benefits with the product or services consumed during their trip or holiday in certain destination. Similarly, Wang et al. (2017) claimed that perceived value refers to the overall valuation made by visiting tourists based on their comparison between the utility or benefits and the perceived costs or sacrifices related to a destination. Hence, these two definitions indicate that tourists feel being treated fairly if they believe that the proportion between their sacrifices (time and money) and experiences received is equivalent. Hence, the present study defined perceived value as the overall evaluation made by the tourists on the sacrifices they made in terms of money and time in comparison to the benefit they gain such as valuable experience visiting tourism destination in Kelantan.

Perceived value is a multifaceted concept comprising functional value and emotional value (Sun et al., 2013). Functional value refers to the economical and reasonable price the tourists spend on the high-quality tourism products and services during their trip to certain destination. Meanwhile, emotional value refers to the tourist's feelings on their trip to the destination such as they feel pleasure and enjoy visiting the destination. However, Lee et al. (2007) came up with a more comprehensive measurement whereby they added another dimension of perceived value, namely, overall value. Overall value mostly refers to the overall decision made by the tourists to visit the destination whether they made the right decision or not. Most importantly,

destination loyalty (Sato et al., 2018; Nadarajah and Ramalu, 2018; Huang et al., 2019), quality of life (Rohman, 2020) and place attachment (Jiang and Hong, 2021) can be easily predicted by perceived value. Hence, the present study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Perceived value has a significant positive impact on destination loyalty.

H2: Perceived value has a significant positive impact on quality of life.

H3: Perceived value has a significant positive impact on place attachment.

2.3 Quality of life

Peters et al. (2019) claimed that quality of life refers to someone's attitude towards their life as a function of personal evaluation of the individual lifestyle and components of life. Moreover, Ventegodt et al. (2003) illustrated quality of life as a condition shown by an individual when living a good quality of life. In sum, the present study describes quality of life as a state when the tourists optimise their time with enjoyable activities during their holiday to initiate their well-being, such as enhancing their happiness and mental health. Several studies (Kim et al., 2015; Rohman, 2020; Hernández-Mogollón et al., 2020) pointed out that quality of life is pivotal in affecting destination loyalty. Moreover, one study by Rohman (2020) found that quality of life also mediates the relationship between perceived value and destination loyalty. In other words, when the tourist believe that their sacrifice (time and costs) is equivalent to the experience they gain during their trip, they will start to have a good quality of life. Eventually, they will be loyal to the destination by repeat visit and recommend the destination to the others. Therefore, this study proposes two more hypotheses:

H4: Quality of life has a significant positive impact on destination loyalty.

H5: Quality of life mediates the relationship between perceived value and destination loyalty.

2.4 Place attachment

Dwayer et al. (2019) claimed that the concept of place attachment is applied to tourism research to understand the connection between people and destination, which is crucial for tourism management to handle and promote tourism destinations. Scannell and Gifford (2017) claimed that place attachment refers to a cognitive-emotional relationship that forms between people and their environment. Hence, based on this definition, the tourists initially have a positive perception towards the destination (cognitive) before they start to build favourable feelings (emotional) towards the destination, which subsequently build a strong connection between tourists and destinations.

Place attachment is a multidimensional construct. Several authors manifest this construct using two dimensions of place dependence and place identity (Kim et al., 2017; Woosnam et al., 2018). Meanwhile, several other scholars added another two dimensions to measure place attachment, namely place affect and place social bonding (Silva et al. 2018; Chow et al., 2019). In short, this construct can be considered as a two-

dimensional or four-dimensional construct. Several studies (Mohamad et al., 2019; Patwardhan et al., 2020; Nasir et al., 2020; Nurbasari et al., 2021) found that place attachment is essential in developing destination loyalty. Based on previous studies, perceived value is a vital element affecting destination loyalty (Sato et al., 2018; Nadarajah & Ramalu, 2018; Huang et al., 2019) and place attachment (Jiang & Hong, 2021). As mentioned earlier, place attachment also directly affects destination loyalty (Mohamad et al., 2019; Patwardhan et al., 2020; Nasir et al., 2020; Nurbasari et al., 2021). However, the mediating effect of place attachment on perceived value and destination loyalty relationship has rarely been examined especially in the context of tourist destination in Kelantan (research gap). Hence, the present study proposes two hypotheses which consist of one direct effect and another one indirect to fill in the research gap in the existing literature.

H6: Place attachment has a significant positive impact on destination loyalty.

H5: Place attachment mediates the relationship between perceived value and destination loyalty.

2.5   Research Framework

Based on the relationship between the constructs of perceived value, quality of life, place attachment and destination loyalty, the following research model is proposed:
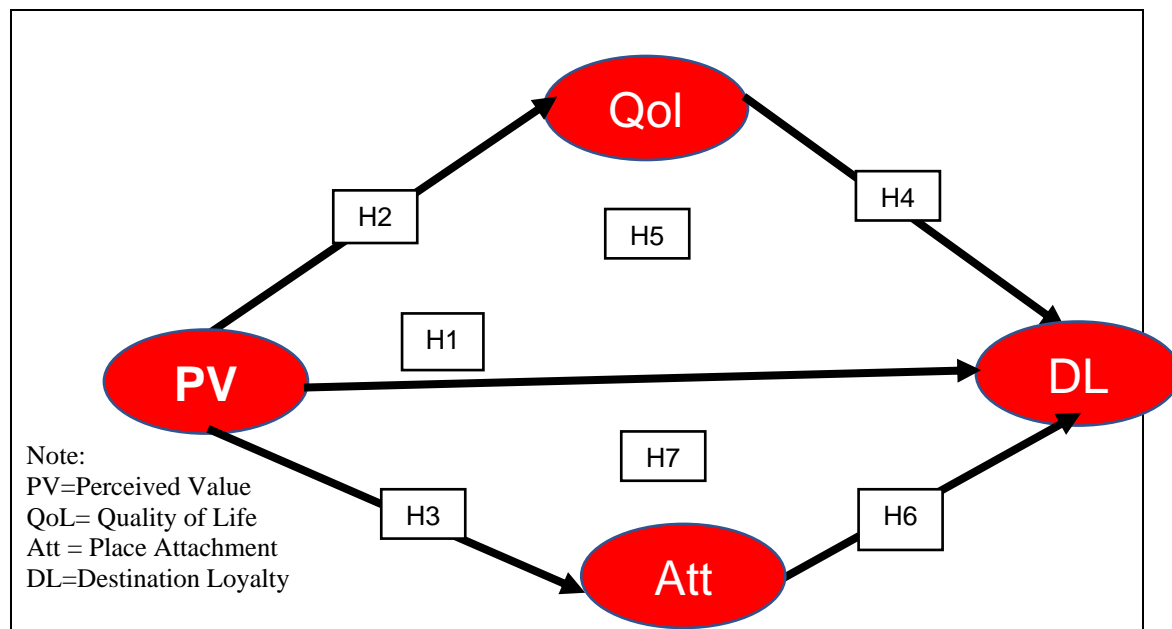

Figure 3: Proposed Research Framework

3 Methodology

3.1 Target population and questionnaire design

As mentioned earlier, the target population for this study is the domestic tourists visiting Kelantan, Malaysia. This population is selected because domestic tourists in Kelantan were found to be among the lowest arrivals and receipts compared to the other states in Malaysia. The study intends to collect the data using self-administered questionnaires distributed at Kelantan airport, Sultan Ismail Petra Airport. It is proposed to collect the data at the airport's departure hall and those respondents who stay for more than one day and less than one year are qualified to respond to the questionnaire. This is because they have enough experience to answer the questionnaire. The present study has to create its own sampling frame since the exact number of population is not available. Hence, the study proposes using purposive sampling to identify the local tourists who stay for more than 24 hours to create the sampling frame of the study. Then, the respondents are selected using random sampling from the created sampling frame.

The questionnaire consists of five sections. The first section relates to the demographic profile of the respondents, while the second to fifth sections relate to variables used in the present study. A 10-point Likert scale is used with value (1) for "strongly disagree" and (10) for "strongly disagree". The items used in this study are adapted from several studies. Destination loyalty is adapted from Sun et al. (2013) and Mohamad et al. (2011), perceived value is adapted from Lee et al. (2007), place attachment is adapted from Xu and Zhang (2016) and quality of life is adapted from Eusobio et al. (2016).

3.2 Data analysis

Before the study executes the fieldwork, pre-test and pilot test are to be performed. The pre-test is to determine the understanding of respondents on the questionnaire that are posed to them. Meanwhile, a pilot study is undertaken to determine the underlying structure among the latent constructs of this study using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). At the same time, the consistency of the items in measuring the constructs is measured using Reliability Analysis. The data from fieldwork is used to execute Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Hence, the measurement model in CFA is tested for unidimensionality, validity and reliability. When the measurement model has achieved all of its CFA requirements, it is converted into Structural Model to test the interrelationships among constructs using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).

4 Conclusion

Tourism destinations in Kelantan received among the least domestic visitors and receipts in 2019 compared to the other states in Malaysia. Hence, it is crucial to find the solution to improve destination loyalty among domestic tourists since loyal tourists tend to repeat visits and spread positive-word-of mouth to the other potential tourists.

Hence, to enhance destination loyalty among domestic visitors to Kelantan, this study proposes a new research model comprising the interrelationships of perceived value, quality of life, place attachment and destination loyalty. This study expects future researchers to confirm this model with empirical data in which perceived value has a direct effect on destination loyalty, quality of life and place attachment. Furthermore, destination loyalty is also explained by quality of life and place attachment. Most importantly, the present study provides an avenue for future researchers whereby two parallel mediating effects are found to be less examined in past studies: parallel mediating effects of quality of life and place attachment on the relationship between perceived value and destination loyalty. Proving these two parallel mediators using empirical data would significantly contribute to the existing literature on tourist behaviour. On top of that, comparing the effects of these two parallel mediators using the phantom model approach will become a unique methodological contribution.

5   About the author

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