Parallel Mediators of Place Attachment and Tourist Satisfaction in Destination Attractiveness, Destination Loyalty and Service Quality

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Langkawi Island, Malaysia, is experiencing a sluggish and unstable growth rate pattern of international tourists' arrival. The main aim of this research is to determine factors that could improve Langkawi Island's destination loyalty to curb the situation from persisting by examining the relationships among service quality, destination attractiveness, tourist satisfaction, place attachment and destination loyalty. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed at the Langkawi International Airport to international tourists from three countries listed among the top 20 international market visiting Malaysia. Respondents were selected using a simple random sampling approach. A total of 365 usable questionnaires were analysed using a Structural Equation Modelling. The roles of parallel mediators were tested simultaneously using the Phantom Model approach. The study illustrated that destination attractiveness has an effect on destination loyalty if the relationship was intervened by place attachment and tourist satisfaction. Conversely, place attachment and tourist satisfaction are only responsible for a part of the service quality-destination loyalty relationship. Even if place attachment and tourist satisfaction were eliminated, the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty still exists, but not as strongly. Several suggestions were put forward as guides to improve Langkawi Island's destination loyalty.

Introduction

Tourism is a multi-sector industry comprising of a variety of activities, services and industries that offer travel experiences, accommodation, transportation, food and beverages, entertainment, and other hospitality facilities and services to individuals who are travelling away from their home (Bhargava, 2009). Globally, the tourism industry is experiencing continued growth and diversification leading to it becoming one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world (World Tourism Organization, 2018). Most countries worldwide earn a lucrative income from the tourism industry which, in turn, stimulates the socioeconomic growth of the nation (World Tourism Organization, 2019).

Equally, Malaysia's tourism industry is undergoing a tremendous development since the year 2000 (Giap et al., 2016). In 2017, Malaysia was listed among the top three tourist friendly destination in Southeast Asia (Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report, 2017). This shows that Malaysia is a popular holiday destination choice amongst international tourists in the region. However, Mohamad et al. (2014) report that the number of repeat visitors amongst international tourists visiting Malaysia was less than first time visitors, highlighting a low level of destination loyalty, which can be determined by examining repeat visitation (Chi & Qu, 2018). Similarly, the arrival of international tourists to Langkawi Island illustrates a sluggish and unstable growth rate pattern amongst international tourists (Langkawi Development Authority, 2019). This should not be the situation because Langkawi Island is considered to be one of the most popular travel destinations and was the first and only one recognised by UNESCO as the Global Geopark in Malaysia (UNESCO, 2018). This signals the need for immediate action to curb the problem of destination loyalty from persisting in Langkawi Island to sustain its Global Geopark status and remain one of the most popular tourist destinations in Malaysia.

Chi and Qu (2008) claim that, the level of destination loyalty among tourists could be accessed by examining repeat visitations. This suggests that destination loyalty declines when the number of repeat visitations decreased because it is does not account for whether travel experiences meet tourists' expectations in terms of destination attractiveness and/or service quality. Consequently, these factors could affect tourists' place attachment and satisfaction, which may also affect their destination loyalty. This study is undertaken to determine the relationships between destination attractiveness, service quality, place attachment, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty. The study focuses on three countries of tourist's origins:

Netherlands, Germany and France. These countries have been selected because they are listed among the top 20 countries from where tourists come from who visit Malaysia but experience a low repeat visitation compared to the first time number of visits between the years 2014 to 2017 (Nasir et al., 2020).

Frequently, the research studying loyalty in a tourism destination context was focussed on establishing the lasting and beneficial relationships between destination and tourist loyalty. The success of a tourist destination relies on tourists making repeat visits to that destination (Alrawadieh et al., 2019). Thus, studying the concept of destination loyalty has been the focus of many practitioners and scholars for the past few decades to establish a benchmark for developing sustainable business strategies (Opperman, 2000). It is important to identify factors that could improve destination loyalty to facilitate greater repeat tourist activity to Langkawi Island. Past studies suggested that service quality (Akroush et al., 2016), destination attractiveness (Xu & Zhang, 2016), tourist satisfaction (Masa'deh et al., 2017) and place attachment (Tsai, 2012) are the crucial determining factors to increase destination loyalty.

Subsequently, several authors have investigated these factors in different tourism contexts. Past studies suggest that service quality has a significant relationship with destination loyalty (Jin et al., 2013; Allameh et al., 2015; Hallak et al., 2018), tourist satisfaction (Cong, 2016; Su et al., 2016; Silvestri et al., 2017) and place attachment (Alexandris et al., 2006). Studies propose destination attractiveness has a significant relationship with destination loyalty (Chien, 2016; Suhartanto & Triyuni, 2016), tourist satisfaction (Xu & Zhang, 2016; Liu et al., 2017b) and place attachment (Xu & Zhang, 2016; Song et al., 2017). Tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty research demonstrates that there is a relationship between these factors (Xu & Zhang, 2016; Lin & Kuo, 2016; Masa'deh et al., 2017). Further to this, a number of studies illustrate that place attachment is the predictor of destination loyalty (Xu & Zhang, 2016; Liu et al., 2017a). Some postulate that tourist satisfaction (Yolal et al., 2017) and place attachment (Theodorakis et al., 2009) are the mediators between service quality and destination loyalty relationship. Studies by Ramseook-Munhurrun et al., (2015) and Huang et al., (2015) found that tourist satisfaction and place attachment (Song et al., 2017) mediate the relationship between destination attractiveness and destination loyalty. However, none of these studies investigate the influence of service quality, destination attractiveness, place attachment and tourist satisfaction on destination loyalty in one complex model. Based on this research, this study is conducted to provide insights into understanding destination loyalty in foreign tourists visiting Langkawi Island, Malaysia. As such, the research objectives are:

1. To examine the influence of destination attractiveness on place attachment, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

2. To ascertain the effect of service quality on place attachment, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty.

3. To ascertain the parallel mediating effects of place attachment and tourist satisfaction on the destination attractiveness and destination loyalty relationship.

4. To ascertain the parallel mediating effects of place attachment and tourist satisfaction on the service quality and destination loyalty relationship.

Literature Review
Destination Loyalty

A clear understanding of destination loyalty is important for destination marketing managers since tourists' loyalty remains a critical indicator of successful destination management (Wu, 2016). The focus of customer loyalty continues to receive growing interest among researchers because customer loyalty implies a stable source of income for a tourist destination. Loyal customers ensure improved sales through repeat purchase or visits and recommend the destination to family, friends and others. Moreover, providing service to loyal customers is less costly than to new customers (Magatef & Tomalieh, 2015) because less money is directed towards destination promoting costs.

There are several definitions of destination loyalty defined by different authors. Wang et al. (2009) suggest that destination loyalty refers to tourists' inclination to recommend the destination to others. This definition addresses the attitudinal aspect of consumer loyalty. Meanwhile, Chen and Tsai (2007), propose that destination loyalty refers to a tourist's decision to revisit the same destination and their willingness to recommend the destination to others. The definition of destination loyalty by Chen and Tsai (2007) addresses both behavioural and attitudinal aspects of loyalty. Several authors (Bhat & Darzi, 2018; Mohamad et al., 2013; Gok & Sayin, 2015) use this definition in their studies of destination loyalty.

Zhang et al. (2014) argue that there are three dimensions of destination loyalty: attitudinal, behavioural and composite. Attitudinal loyalty refers to the tourist's positive internal feelings about the destination such as the intention to revisit or willingness to recommend the destination to others. On the other hand, behavioural loyalty refers to the behavioural outcome perhaps as a result of the attitudinal loyalty such as making repeat visits to the destination. The integration of both the attitudinal and behavioural component is known as the composite approach (Mohamad et al., 2015). Securing both behavioural and attitudinal loyalty are critically important to any business. Behavioural loyalty ensures customers are purchasing the product or services, in this case visiting the same destination, and bringing in revenue. Attitudinal loyalty customers provide great potential for strengthening the image of a destination and attracting other customers through positive word-of-mouth. Based on the

above argument, it is important to use the composite approach of measuring destination loyalty. Therefore, this study applies a composite approach as it enhances the predictive power of measuring destination loyalty (Zhang et al., 2014).

Service Quality

Generally, service quality is defined as the tourist's appraisal of the standard of service delivery performance associated with the travel experience (Chen & Tsai, 2007). Recent definitions of service quality have expanded to include a visitor's emotional response. Service quality could then be understood as the visitor's overall evaluation of a destination based on their experiences and internal feelings (Cong, 2016). The work of Tosun et al. (2015) specifically mention that service quality refers to the evaluation of services delivered and received by the tourist at a given destination. Kayat and Abdul Hai (2014) suggest that service quality also includes an evaluation of facilities, not just limited directly to services. Usually, when a tourist visits a destination, the delivery of services is accompanied by tangible products or facilities. Therefore, service quality could be broadly defined as a tourist's overall assessment of services and facilities performed at a destination based on their experience and internal feelings.

The dimensions of service quality introduced by Parasuraman et al. (1988) known as SERVQUAL recognised the tangible aspects of services. SERVQUAL consists of five dimensions: tangibles, empathy, reliability, responsiveness, and assurance. Tangibles is associated with physical facilities, equipment, and the appearance of personnel. Empathy refers to understanding of, and individual attention to, the needs of different customers. Reliability relates to the ability to dependably and precisely perform the promised service. Responsiveness includes the willingness of staff to provide aid to customers and deliver prompt service. Whilst assurance relates to the competency and courtesy of staff and their ability to acquire trust and confidence.

However, different researchers apply different dimensions when measuring service quality at a particular destination. Kayat and Abdul Hai's (2014) study applies two dimensions to manifest the service quality: perceived hospitality service quality and perceived tour service quality. The perceived hospitality service quality relates to hotel and restaurant services. Meanwhile, the perceived tour service quality relates to transport services, information, immigration, route signs, clean toilets, and complaints handling and the like. These dimensions are not as comprehensive as the ones postulated by (Moutinho et al., 2012). These researchers expand on the measurement of service quality provided by the destination into five dimensions namely: health, shopping, information, transportation and accommodation. Thus, this study adopts the measurement proposed by (Moutinho et al., 2012) as it is a more accurate representation of service quality of a destination than

SERVQUAL. Several researchers working in tourism research found that service quality has a significant impact on destination loyalty (Jin & Lee, 2013; Allameh et al., 2015; Hallak et al., 2018), tourist satisfaction (Cong, 2016; Su et al., 2016; Silvestri et al., 2017) and place attachment (Alexandris et al., 2006). From this research, the following hypotheses are presented:

H1: Service quality has a significant effect on destination loyalty
H2: Service quality has a significant effect on tourist satisfaction
H3: Service quality has a significant effect on place attachment

Destination Attractiveness

Destination attractiveness has been gauged in the same way as destination image (Xu & Zhang, 2016) and these constructs have been used interchangeably. Destination attractiveness is the tourist's perception on the destination attributes that became the most important qualities for the destination promotion (Hallman et al., 2015). These attributes include natural attractions (such as beach, hill and cave), man-made attractions (such as infrastructure and theme parks), and cultural attractions (such as cultural performance and historical buildings). These attractions are important elements in enticing more tourists to a particular destination. On the other hand, Nasir et al. (2020) suggest that destination attractiveness refers to a tourist's emotions, beliefs and opinions about the natural attractiveness, cultural attractiveness and infrastructure within a destination meeting their special vacation needs in terms of availability, within their budget and time.

Akroush et al. (2016) apply two dimensions to measure the destination attractiveness, namely, physical environment and people's characteristics. Physical environment refers to the ease of access, historical and touristic places, the style of the buildings, good transportation and the attractiveness of the environment. People's characteristics includes residents' friendliness and how welcoming they are to tourists. Further to this, a study by Xu and Zhang (2016) provides an inclusive measurement approach of destination attractiveness using three dimensions: natural attractiveness, cultural attractiveness and infrastructure. Earlier research works reveal that there is a relationship between destination attractiveness and destination loyalty (Chien, 2016; Suhartanto & Triyuni, 2016), tourist satisfaction (Xu & Zhang, 2016; Liu et al., 2017b) and place attachment (Xu & Zhang, 2016; Song et al., 2017). Therefore, the following hypotheses are constructed:

H4: Destination attractiveness has a significant effect on destination loyalty
H5: Destination attractiveness has a significant effect on tourist satisfaction
H6: Destination attractiveness has a significant effect on place attachment

Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is defined as the pleasurable feeling experienced by tourists after visiting the destination (Khan et al., 2013). This is the result of their experiences at the destination either meeting or exceeding their expectations. Usually, before travelling to a specific tourist destination, tourists form an expectation about the destination. Whilst at the destination, tourists experience the destination's tourism offerings, which consists mainly of services and to a lesser extent products and they formulate their perceptions of the experience based on their pre-travel expectations. Tourist satisfaction occurs when the tourists' experience exceeds their initial expectations (Deng & Pierskalla, 2011).

Generally, there are two main approaches to measure tourist satisfaction in tourism research: multi-attribute and overall approach. The multi-attribute approach uses several dimensions to measure satisfaction, whereas overall satisfaction approach uses multi items to measure satisfaction. There are researchers who use multi-attribute approach such as Maroofi and Dehghan (2012), Meng at al. (2008) and Chi and Qu (2008). Recent studies on tourist satisfaction appeared to use overall approach of measuring satisfaction; Xu and Zhang, (2016), Lin and Kuo (2016) and Kim et al., (2015). The overall approach in using multiple items of measuring tourist satisfaction is becoming popular for two main reasons: (1) overall satisfaction with multiple items can get a greater variance in explaining overall satisfaction (Kim et al., 2013) and (2) overall satisfaction is considered as a cumulative construct leading to satisfaction with a range of factors in a specific destination (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). In addition, Dmitrovic et al. (2009) suggest that in the multi-attribute approach, tourists sum-up their evaluation of each dimension and do not give equal weight to every construct, making it less accurate compared to the overall approach. Based on this, this study adopts an overall approach of capturing tourist satisfaction.

There are studies (Xu & Zhang, 2016; Lin & Kuo, 2016; Masa'deh et al., 2017) which illustrate that tourist satisfaction has a significant impact on destination loyalty. However, in a study by (Yolal et al., 2017), it is found that tourist's satisfaction plays a role as mediator to the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty. Moreover, a tourist's satisfaction also acts as the mediator in the relationship between destination attractiveness and destination loyalty in studies by Ramseook-Munhurrun et al., (2015) and Huang et al., (2015). As such, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H7: Tourist satisfaction has a significant effect on destination loyalty
H8: Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty
H9: Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between destination attractiveness and destination loyalty

Place Attachment

Place attachment describes the development of a positive relationship between a tourist and the destination (Lee & Shen, 2013). It also refers to the tourist's personal connection with a particular destination (Suntikul & Jachna, 2016). Nasir et al., (2020) suggest that place attachment refers to a positive personal bond between a tourist and a destination where the tourist values the experience at the destination and takes a genuine interest in it. Place attachment is the result of subsequent evaluation at a particular destination. The favourable ties that a tourist has with a destination occurs when the destination is able to fulfil their needs and wants during their visit.

The measurement of place attachment could be carried out by using two, three or four dimensions. Hosany et al. (2017) measures place attachment using two dimensions, namely, place dependence (how well a setting facilitates an individual's needs and objective) and place identity (the relationship between someone's personal identity and a natural setting). On the other hand, Tsai (2012) employs three dimensions to the measurement of place attachment by including place affect in addition to place dependent and place identity. Place affect is how the feeling of visiting a specific destination can stimulate a sense of positive well-being (Kirkup & Sutherland, 2017). An expanded measurement of place attachment is proposed by Xu and Zhang (2016) and Ramkissoon et al. (2014) that uses four dimensions by including social boding in addition to those proposed by Tsai (2012). Social bonding reflects the extends to which destination setting shapes a tourists' personal values through the on-going personal interaction and interpersonal relationship between visitors and their destination. This study adopts the four dimensions to manifest place attachment as it is more comprehensive and reflects better representation of place attachment. Most importantly, place attachment was found to be an important predictor to destination loyalty (Xu & Zhang, 2016; Liu et al., 2017a). Moreover, place attachment plays a crucial role as a mediator to the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty (Theodorakis et al., 2009). Place attachment also mediates the relationship between destination attractiveness and destination loyalty (Song et al., 2017). Thus, the following hypotheses were constructed:

H10: Place attachment has a significant effect on destination loyalty
H11: Place attachment mediates the relationship between service quality and destination loyalty.
H12: Place attachment mediates the relationship between destination attractiveness and destination loyalty.

Table 1 illustrates several research works in the context of tourism destination and identifies the research gap which is addressed by this study. This study models the relationships among

destination attractiveness, service quality, destination attachment, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty simultaneously.

Table 1: Summary of Studies on Destination Loyalty (DL), Service Quality (SQ), Destination Attractiveness (DA), Place Attachment (P) and Tourist Satisfaction (TS).

No	Researchers	Hypotheses Proposed											
		H1a	H1b	H1c	H2a	H2b	H2c	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8
		SQ →DL	SQ →TS	SQ →P	DA →DL	DA →TS	DA →P	TS →DL	SQ →TS →DL	DA →TS →DL	P →DL	SQ →P →DL	DA →P →DL
1.	Alexandris et al. (2006)	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X
2.	Theodorakis et al. (2009)	/	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	/	X
3.	Allameh et al. (2015)	/	/	X	/	/	X	/	X	X	X	X	X
4.	Huang et al. (2015)	X	X	X	/	/	X	/	X	/	X	X	X
5.	Akroush et al. (2016)	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6.	Xu and Zhang (2016)	X	X	X	X	/	/	/	X	X	/	X	X
7.	Cong (2016)	/	/	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	X	X	X
8.	Prajitmutita et al. (2016)	/	/	X	X	X	X	/	/	X	X	X	X
9.	Yolal et al. (2017)	/	/	X	X	X	X	/	/	X	X	X	X
10.	Song et al. (2017)	X	X	X	/	X	/	X	X	X	/	X	/
11.	Hosany et al. (2017)	X	X	X	X	X	X	/	X	X	/	X	X
12.	Current study	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Note: (/) = test the relationship, (X) = do not test the relationship

Proposed Framework of the Study

Figure 1 presents the proposed framework of the study. It illustrates the relationships of all constructs in the study. Destination attractiveness and service quality represent the independent variables. Place attachment and tourist satisfaction are the parallel mediating variables. Destination loyalty represents the dependent variable.

Figure 1. Proposed Framework
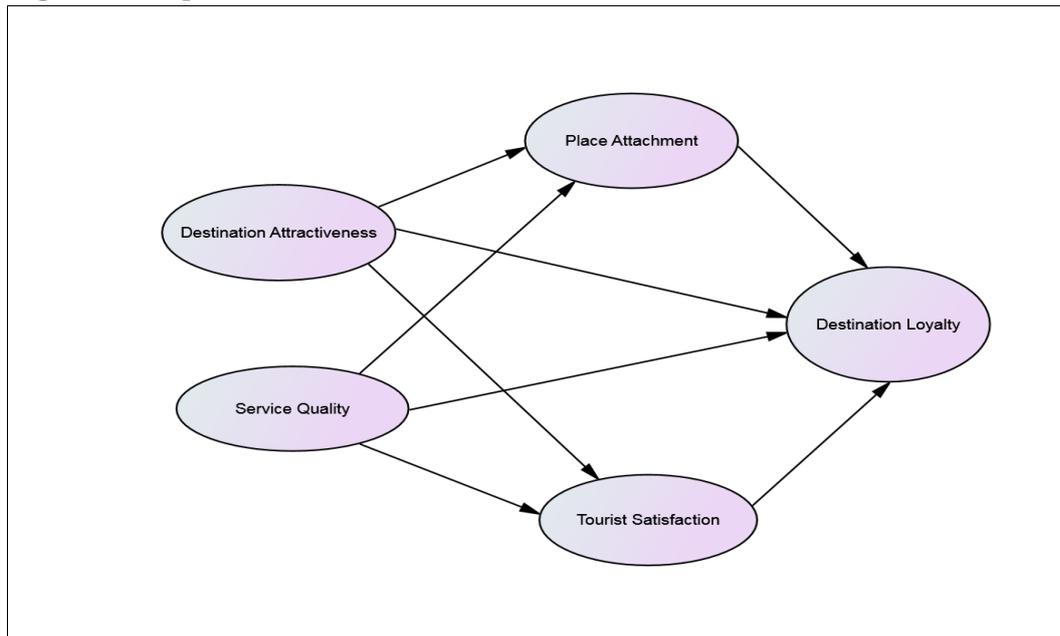
Research Methodology
Research Design

The present study applies a cross-sectional causal research design which tests the variations in exogenous variables expected to cause reciprocal changes in the endogenous variable. The data was collected from the respondents who were international tourists from the Netherlands, Germany and France. A survey was conducted using self-administered structured questionnaires at the departure hall of Langkawi International Airport.

The Questionnaire Design

This study uses closed ended structured questionnaire to collect the data. Basically, all items measuring the constructs in this study were formulated using a 10-point interval scale as it is more independent and meets the requirements for using parametric statistical analysis. The questionnaire consists of seven parts. The first part of the questionnaire contains 27 items, which were adapted from work by (Moutinho et al., 2012), measuring the five dimensions of

service quality: shopping, transportation, accommodation, health and hygiene, information and facilities. The second part of the questionnaire comprises of 21 items which were adapted from research by (Xu & Zhang, 2016) describing destination attractiveness with three dimensions, namely: cultural attractiveness, infrastructure and natural attractiveness. The third part of the questionnaire comprises of a one-dimensional construct with 8 items on tourist satisfaction which were adapted from the research works conducted by (Lee et al., 2007) and (Kim et al., 2015). The fourth part of questionnaire which was adapted from the work by (Xu & Zhang, 2016) consists of 17 items measuring the four dimensions of place attachment: place identity, place dependence, affective attachment and social bonding. The fifth part of the questionnaire contains a one-dimensional construct with 6 items on destination loyalty which were adapted from works by (Sun et al., 2013) and (Mohamad et al., 2011). The final part of the questionnaire is about the demographic profile of respondents in order to gain some basic information about the respondents especially related to their trip to Langkawi Island.

Pre-Test and Pilot Study

A pre-test and pilot study were conducted respectively before performing the field study. The pre-test was conducted to ensure the respondents could understand the questionnaires used in the study. Data collected from the pilot study is subject to Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using IBM SPSS to determine the number of items retained and the underlying dimensions of the latent construct in the study (Hair et al., 2014). Moreover, the data collected from the pilot study was subject to a reliability analysis in order to measure the internal reliability of instruments using Cronbach's Alpha (Hair et al., 2014). Table 2 illustrates that the instruments of this study meet the requirement for internal consistency since the Cronbach's Alpha values of all constructs is more than the required value of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha
1. Destination Loyalty	0.92
2. Place Attachment	0.91
3. Tourist Satisfaction	0.95
4. Destination Attractiveness	0.85
5. Service Quality	0.73

Field Study

Responses from the respondents were captured at the departure hall of Langkawi International Airport. The respondents were selected from a sampling frame using a simple random sampling method. The sample size was ascertained using the conditions proposed by

Hairs et al. (2010) and Burns et al. (2017). Any research performing factor analysis should have at least 5 to 10 times the sample size as items to be analysed (Hair et al., 2010). In addition, Burn et al. (2017) suggest that the sample size should be between 96 and 384. The computed sample size for this study are 365 samples, complying with the range of sample size recommendations by the above authors.

Data Analysis Procedure

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed to validate the measurement model of the study. The model was subject to several tests, such as unidimensionality, reliability and validity before doing hypotheses testing. The unidimensionality of items test was conducted to ascertain whether these items adequately explain the underlying latent constructs. Unidimensionality requirements are met when the factor loading values of the observed items measuring the constructs are equal or greater than 0.60. There are three types of validity tests: convergent validity, construct validity and discriminant validity (Mohamad et al., 2018). Convergent validity was determined through Composite Reliability (CR), the value of CR should be equal or more than 0.7, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), the value of AVE should be equal or more than 0.5. Several goodness-of-fit indexes were used to evaluate construct validity such as absolute fit (RMSEA <0.08), incremental fit (CFI > 0.90 and TLI > 0.90) and parsimonious fit (Chi-square < 3.0). Discriminant validity was assessed using the square root of AVE. The square of AVE for all the constructs should be higher than the values of the correlation between the respective constructs. In addition, the values of these correlations should be less than 0.85 (Hair et al., 2010) to avoid the redundancy problem. The Structural Equation Modelling method was applied to test the relationship between the constructs in a model (Mohamad et al., 2019).

Testing and comparing the specific effects of the two parallel mediators within the developed and validated structural equation model was conducted by adding the phantom model to the main model. The significance of the indirect effect in the model was assessed using the application of bootstrap as recommended by Kline (2010) and Nasir et al. (2020). It was performed on 1,000 samples. Using AMOS software, the conventional procedure could provide an estimate for indirect effect and probability value for hypothesis testing through bias-corrected percentile at 95% corrected confidence with two-tail distribution. The effectiveness of construct in a research model could be ascertained by comparing the value of standardised estimates and size of mediation. Mediation analysis regularly involves partial or full mediation which could be very useful for further clarification. One approach for estimating the size of mediation could be computed using variance accounted for (VAF).

Findings and Analysis
The Respondent Profile

The respondents involved in the study consisted of tourists from the Netherlands (46.3%), Germany (36.7%) and France (17%). There were more female tourists (52.1%) than male tourists (47.9%). Most of them are teenagers and young adults (68%) and they travel to Langkawi Island with their spouse or partner, family and friends. The majority of tourists visit the island for holidays (96%) and stay on the island for more than 10 days but less than 23 days. While on the island, their time is occupied mostly on the beaches, sightseeing in the county side, doing jungle trekking, shopping souvenirs, scuba diving and snorkelling activity. The majority of tourists are first-time visitors to Langkawi Island (80%). They gather the information about the island through social media and websites, and recommendations by relatives and friends who have visited the island. Their main option for accommodation is hotel and homestays.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

Figure 2 illustrates the measurement model of the study. The study achieved construct validity requirements since the measurement model attained acceptable values of goodness-of-fit (GoF) indices (RMSEA<0.08, CFI>0.90, TLI>0.90 and Chi/df<3.0) as illustrated in Table 3. Table 4 showed the values of factor loading, AVE and CR of the measurement model. The findings suggest that the unidimensionality requirement is met as the factor loading values for all items are greater than 0.6. The measurement model also achieves convergent validity and reliability requirements since the value of CR and AVE are greater than 0.7 and 0.5 respectively. Table 5 signifies that the discriminant validity is achieved.
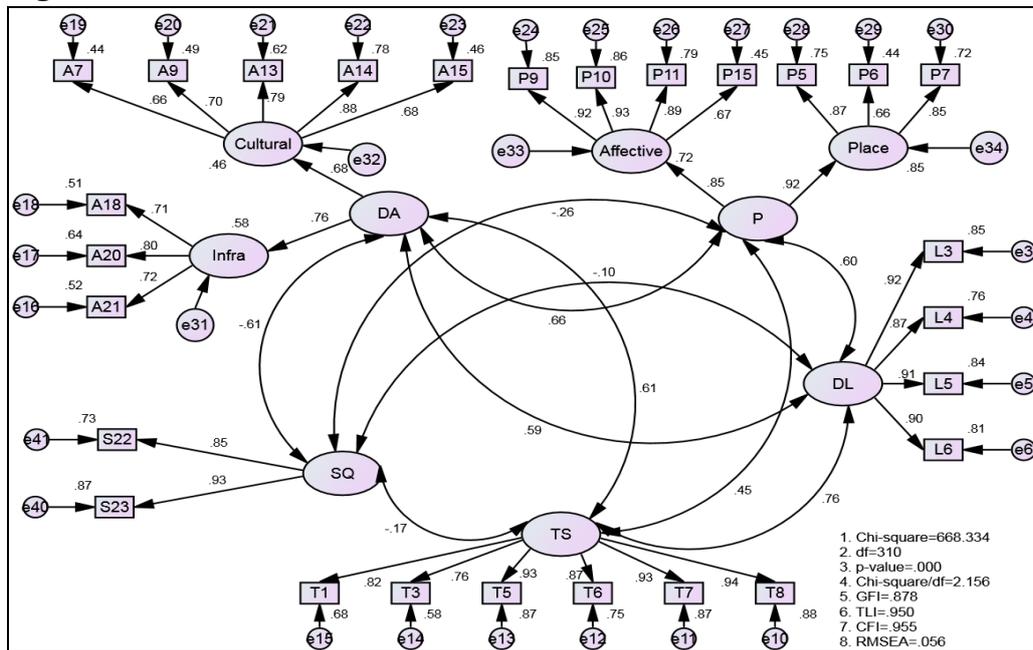
Figure 2. Measurement model

Table 3: Goodness of Fit Indices

Name of Category	Name of Index	Level of Acceptance Suggested by (Hair et al., 2010)	Present Model
1. Absolute Fit	RMSEA	RMSEA<0.08	0.056
2.Incremental Fit	CFI	CFI>0.90	0.955
	TLI	TLI>0.90	0.950
3.Parsimonious Fit	Chi/df	Chi/df<3.0	2.156

Table 4: Factor Loading, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR)

Construct/Item	Factor Loading	AVE	CR
Destination Loyalty (DL)		**0.81**	**0.95**
I will recommend Langkawi Island to friends (L3)	0.92		
I will recommend Langkawi Island to family members (L4)	0.87		
I will encourage other people to visit Langkawi Island (L5)	0.91		
I will spread positive word of mouth about Langkawi Island (L6)	0.90		
Service Quality (SQ)		**0.79**	**0.89**

Frequency of the transport service (S22)	0.85		
Generality of the transportation system (S23)	0.93		
Destination Attractiveness (DA)		**0.52**	**0.68**
Factor 1:Cultural Attractiveness	0.68	**0.56**	**0.86**
Local Festivals (A7)	0.66		
Learning Local Skills (A9)	0.70		
Traditional Customs (A13)	0.79		
Local Cultural Performances (A14)	0.88		
Langkawi Island Special Souvenirs (A15)	0.68		
Factor 2:Infrastructure	0.76	**0.55**	**0.79**
Convenient Local transportation (A18)	0.71		
Standard Travel Services (A20)	0.80		
Convenient Visitor Information System (A21)	0.72		
Tourist Satisfaction		**0.77**	**0.95**
My overall evaluation of my vacation is satisfactory (T1)	0.82		
My overall evaluation of my vacation is satisfactory when considering my invested time (T3)	0.76		
My overall evaluation of my vacation is positive (T5)	0.93		
My overall evaluation of my vacation is favourable (T6)	0.87		
I am satisfied with my vacation (T7)	0.93		
I am pleased with my vacation (T8)	0.94		
Place Attachment		**0.78**	**0.88**
Factor 1:Place Dependence	0.92	**0.64**	**0.84**
I like visiting Langkawi Island more than any other destination (P5)	0.87		
For me, Langkawi Island cannot be substituted by other Asian destinations (P6)	0.66		
Langkawi Island can meet my needs more than other destinations (P7)	0.85		
Factor 2:Affective Attachment	0.85	**0.74**	**0.92**
Langkawi Island means a lot to me (P9)	0.92		
I am very attached to Langkawi Island (P10)	0.93		
I have a strong sense of belonging to Langkawi Island (P11)	0.89		
I have a special connection with those people who like visiting Langkawi Island (P15)	0.67		

Table 5: Summary of Discriminant Validity

Construct	Tourist Satisfaction	Service Quality	Destination Attractiveness	Place Attachment	Destination Loyalty
Tourist Satisfaction	**0.88**				
Service Quality	0.17	**0.89**			
Destination Attractiveness	0.61	0.61	**0.72**		
Place Attachment	0.45	0.26	0.66	**0.88**	
Destination Loyalty	0.76	0.10	0.59	0.60	**0.90**

Structural Model

The structural model was developed to examine the proposed hypotheses once the measurement model has been validated. Figure 3 illustrates the research model containing the structural paths from two independent constructs, destination attractiveness (DA) and service quality (SQ), to two mediators, place attachment (P) and tourist satisfaction (TS). Both mediators simultaneously effect destination loyalty (DL), the dependent variable. The findings suggest that the structural model achieve an acceptable goodness-of-fit.

The results of path analysis depicted in Table 6 indicate that H1, H2, H3, H5, H6, H7 and H10 were supported. However, there is not enough evidence to support H4. H1 suggests that service quality has significant impact on destination loyalty (β=0.229, Z=2.350, p=0.019). H2 proposes that service quality has significant effects on tourist satisfaction (β=0.289, Z=3.731, p=0.001). H3 illustrates that service quality has a significant effect on place attachment (β=0.304, Z=2.604, p=0.009). H4 signifies that destination attractiveness has no significant impacts on destination loyalty (β=0.331, Z=1.257, p=0.209). Meanwhile, H5 shows that destination attractiveness has a significant effect on tourist satisfaction (β=1.068, Z=7.106, p=0.001). H6 indicates that destination attractiveness has a significant impact on place attachment (β=1.562, Z= 6.705, p=0.001). H7 suggests that tourist satisfaction has a significant impact on destination loyalty (β=0.825, Z=8.799, p=0.001). H10 shows that place attachment has a significant impacts on destination loyalty (β=0.277, Z=3.948, p=0.001).
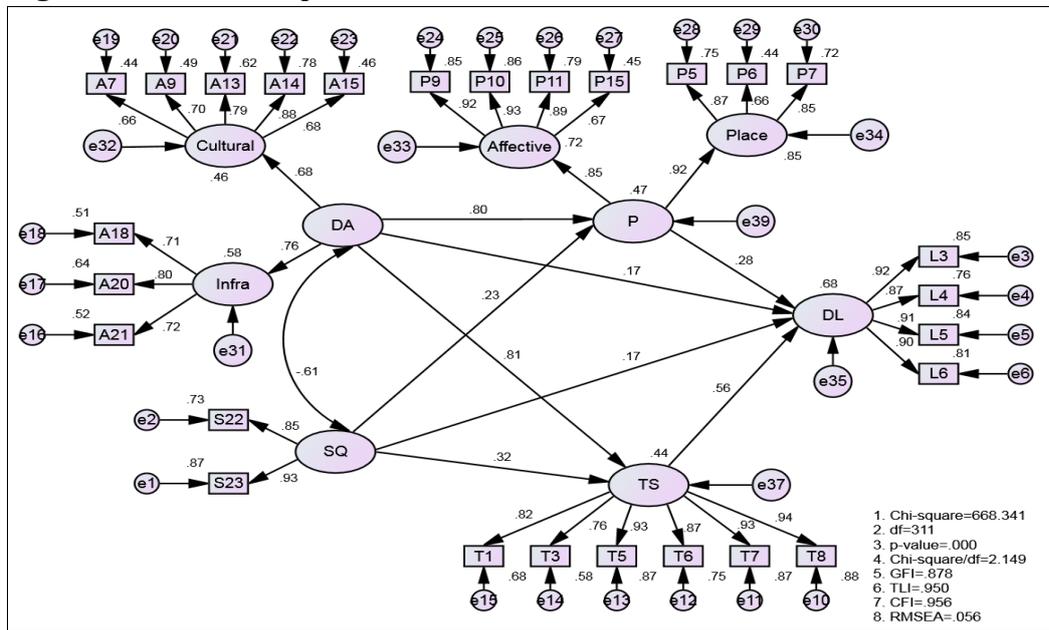
Figure 3. Structural Equation Model

Table 6: The Path Regression analysis

	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P-value	Hypotheses	Result
DL<--SQ	0.229	0.097	2.350	0.019	H1	Significant
TS<--SQ	0.289	0.078	3.731	0.001	H2	Significant
P <-- SQ	0.304	0.117	2.604	0.009	H3	Significant
DL<--DA	0.331	0.263	1.257	0.209	H4	Not Significant
TS<-- DA	1.068	0.150	7.106	0.001	H5	Significant
P <--DA	1.562	0.233	6.705	0.001	H6	Significant
DL<--TS	0.825	0.094	8.799	0.001	H7	Significant
DL <-- P	0.277	0.070	3.948	0.001	H10	Significant

Note: Service Quality, (SQ), Destination Attractiveness (DA) Tourist Satisfaction (TS), Place Attachment (P), Destination Loyalty (DL).

Examining the parallel mediator constructs by Phantom Model Approach

Results from bootstrap maximum likelihood using the conventional procedure to estimate the significance of indirect effects only disclosed the aggregate probability values which limit their usefulness to assess the single effect or specific effect of the parallel mediating constructs. The problem was overcome by using the phantom model approach as proposed by Rindskopf, (1984) and was applied to test H8, H9, H11 and H12. This enables the specific indirect effect in a multiple mediation model to be obtained and thoroughly explicates the

findings with what was hypothesised. Specifically, the phantom model approach tests the parallel mediation roles of place attachment and tourist satisfaction on the destination attractiveness-destination loyalty and service quality-destination loyalty relationships as illustrated in Figure 3.

Generally, the phantom model approach requires extra construct with no residual and manifest variable in the main model. The structural path of the phantom model was fixed corresponding to the main model (Nasir et al. 2020; Perera, 2013). Then, the variance of exogenous phantom model was also fixed in line with the main model. Finally, the results for each indirect effect was shown after performing bootstrap maximum likelihood estimation.

Table 7: The mediating effects of place attachment (P) on destination attractiveness-destination loyalty (DA → DL), service quality-destination loyalty (SQ → DL) relationships

	DA → DL via P	SQ → DL via P
Standardized estimates (Indirect effect)	0.224	0.064
Lower Bound	0.160	0.036
Upper Bound	1.714	1.273
P-value (indirect effect)	0.004	0.024
Results (indirect effect)	Significant	Significant
P-value (direct effect)	0.209	0.019
Result (direct effect)	Not Significant	Significant
Conclusion	Full Mediation.	Partial Mediation

An important result for the indirect effect of place attachment is shown in Table 7. Considering this result, place attachment was found to mediate the relationship between destination attractiveness and destination loyalty, and between service quality and destination loyalty. These consequences were further investigated by comparing the standardised estimate between them. In this case, destination attractiveness (β=0.224) is considered to be more important than service quality (β=0.064) when place attachment was selected as a mediator in these relations. To corroborate the type of mediation, place attachment was a complete mediation for the relationships between destination attractiveness and destination loyalty, whereas place attachment was regarded as partial mediation for the service quality and destination loyalty. Specifically, destination attractiveness was found to have no significant effect on destination loyalty (ρ=0.209). Meanwhile, service quality was found to support the destination loyalty factor (ρ=0.024).

Table 8: The mediating effects of tourist satisfaction (TS) on destination attractiveness-destination loyalty (DA → DL), service quality-destination loyalty (SQ → DL) relationships

	DA→ DL via TS	SQ→DL via TS
Standardised estimates	0.454	0.179
Lower Bound	0.370	0.264
Upper Bound	1.338	1.068
P-value (indirect effect)	0.003	0.001
Results (indirect effect)	Significant	Significant
P-value (direct effect)	0.209	0.019
Result (direct effect)	Not Significant	Significant
Conclusion	Full Mediation	Partial Mediation

The findings illustrated in Table 8 extend the current understanding on two common predictors that destination attractiveness and service quality affected destination loyalty through tourist satisfaction. It also shows the mechanism in how these predictors can stimulate destination loyalty. Both predictors show that they could be mediated by the tourist satisfaction in the relationship between destination attractiveness and destination loyalty, and also in the relation of service quality and destination loyalty. For comparison, the indirect effect was found more important in destination attractiveness (β=0.454) than in service quality (β=0.179). Tourist satisfaction could also be regarded as a major antecedent in tourism due to its large effect.

In the case of type of mediation, tourist satisfaction was found to completely mediate the relation between destination attractiveness and destination loyalty (ρ=0.209), however, tourist satisfaction partially mediates the relationship of destination attractiveness and loyalty (ρ=0.019). Therefore, the four specific indirect effects were entirely supported in accordance with the recent studies that suggest the mediating role of place attachment and tourist satisfaction.

Using the VAF approach, the ratio of the indirect to total effect was calculated for each indirect effect of SQ → DL and DA → DL relationships in which case place attachment and tourist satisfaction are the mediators. The purpose of using this method is to explain the size of mediation effect of each mediator as follow using the following equation:

$$VAF = \frac{indirect\ effect}{total\ effect}$$

Table 9 illustrates the results of VAF. The results show that the effect of tourist satisfaction was higher than place attachment construct in mediating the service quality – destination loyalty relationships. Specifically, tourist satisfaction has more than half of the total effect

(56.85%) compared with place attachment (27.35%). Similarly, tourist satisfaction has more mediation effect (68%) than place attachment (51.73%) in the destination attractiveness and destination loyalty relationship.

Table 9: The mediation effect size of place attachment and tourist satisfaction in SQ → DL and DA → DL relationships.

SQ→ DL	DA→ DL
Place Attachment $= \frac{0.064}{(0.064)+0.17} = 0.2735$ or 27.35%	Place Attachment $= \frac{0.224}{(0.224)+0.209} = 0.5173$ or 51.73%
Tourist Satisfaction $= \frac{0.224}{(0.224)+0.17} = 0.5685$ or 56.85%	Tourist Satisfaction $= \frac{0.454}{(0.454)+0.209} = 0.6848$ or 68.48%

Discussion
Theoretical Contribution

This study proposes destination attractiveness, service quality, tourist satisfaction and place attachment as the predicting factors that could enhance destination loyalty at Langkawi Island. Further to this, it proposes and examines a new research model comprising of the interrelationships among these constructs. The study found that the variation in destination loyalty was 68% explained by the variations in service quality, destination attractiveness, tourist satisfaction and place attachment. The study found that service quality has direct effects on destination loyalty (hypothesis 1) and indirect effects through tourist satisfaction and place attachment (hypothesis 4 and hypothesis 7).

This study also supports Oliver's (1999) Four Stage Loyalty Theory. The theory suggests that customer loyalty is structured based on four stages of loyalty in the progressive sequence of: cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, conative loyalty, and action (behavioural) loyalty. Destination loyalty starts with a person's cognitive loyalty as proven in the study. Destination attractiveness and service quality represent the conative constructs, as they involve tourists' perceptions of qualities and features of a destination. The affective stage of loyalty refers to one's attachment or attitude to the brand or destination based on a pleasant experience consuming or using the brand. The construct place attachment and tourist satisfaction represent the affection loyalty state of Oliver's theory. The third stage is conative loyalty, also known as behavioural intention. Conative loyalty illustrates the tourist's intention in spreading positive word-of-mouth and recommending the destination to friends, family and others. Lastly, action loyalty illustrates the consumer commitment to making repeated visits in the future depicting the actual behaviour of tourists (Han & Hyun, 2012). However, Chuah,

(2015) claim that longitudinal research may be required to observe action loyalty. Even though action loyalty could provide more accurate assessment, undeniably, it is very costly, time consuming and complex (Musa, 2005). Therefore, most scholars preferred to utilise conative or behavioural intention measure as a compromise (Yang & Peterson, 2004).

Practical Contribution

There are several practical insights that could be useful especially to the Langkawi tourism authority in planning strategies to enhance Langkawi destination loyalty. This study suggests that both destination attractiveness and service quality are two important aspects that should become the focus when planning tourism development strategies. Destination attractiveness gains a tourist's personal positive connection (place attachment), where tourists value the experience at the destination and become a competitive advantage to the destination. The favourable ties that a tourist has with the destination occur when the destination is able to fulfil their needs and wants during their visit. In the case of Langkawi Island, the study uncovers that cultural attractiveness and infrastructure within a destination, should be the focus of tourism development.

Langkawi tourism management should take the advantage of its unique culture attractiveness to entice more international tourists and increase destination loyalty. Tour guides should bring tourists to see the traditional Malays houses, expose them to the coexistence of the three main communities (Muslim, Buddhism and Hindu) that practise their respective traditional customs harmoniously and bring them to taste the delicious local dishes served by Malays, Chinese and Indians in the restaurants. These activities provide a unique experience to international tourists. Watching local festivals, cultural performances, visiting water buffalo farms and seeing local plants and herbs in order to understand their medicinal values could be included in the list of activities for tourists to do on the island. Opportunities for the tourists to live with the local community, get involved and experienced in their daily chores - many of whom work as fisherman, could help the development of a tourist's personal connection with the island. Furthermore, it could help the tourists to learn about their local skills. Availability of more souvenirs shops and also local arts and craft shops would support tourists to take special souvenirs back to their country as a pleasant memory of visiting the island and also as a gift for their family and friends. In addition, infrastructure that facilitates tourist travel such as convenient transportation, travel services and the visitor information centre should be made easily accessible.

Apart from destination attractiveness, this study identifies the second predicting factor, service quality, that also plays an important role in enhancing Langkawi destination loyalty. Providing service quality that meets tourist satisfaction is another aspect that should be the focus of the Langkawi Tourism management. In this case, it could be achieved by

concentrating on providing frequent transport service, covering a wide range of transport, from cars and buses to boats, for logistics of transporting passengers. Most importantly, the study uncovers the important key role of tourist satisfaction. In this regard, achieving customer satisfaction could lead to a thriving Langkawi tourism industry as satisfied tourists would be a valuable antecedent in recommending or returning to Langkawi Island. The tourism industry of Langkawi Island should engage in taking actions to understand and satisfy the demands of tourists by establishing regular satisfaction surveys at the airport or popular tourist destination sites. The efforts would lead to the development of various strategies and actions to enhance tourist satisfaction level which ultimately would increase tourist revisits and advocate Langkawi Island as a unique tourist destination.

Moreover, an intense competition amongst tourist destinations especially in the ASEAN region requires tourism management in Langkawi to put more efforts into encouraging tourists' to visit the island; especially as there are no other substitutes with the other Asian destinations by meeting tourists' needs more than other rivalry destinations. The development of place attachment among the tourists especially from the Netherlands, Germany and France occurs when they feel that visiting Langkawi Island is meaningful to them and initiates their strong sense of belongings to this island since they have special connection with those people who also visited this destination. Thus, Langkawi tourism management should be fully utilised through an online platform such as developing a travel blog, review and rating websites (e.g. Trip Advisor) where the tourists can share their interests and experience whilst on the island or after their trip. The outcome of the study also suggests that the tourists who are satisfied with their travel experience and have a strong personal connection to this island would recommend and encourage their friends, families and other people to visit this island.

Conclusion

The structural equation modelling tests the interrelationships among constructs in this study, namely, service quality, destination attractiveness, tourist satisfaction, place attachment and destination loyalty. The majority of the tourists came to Langkawi Island for the first time (80%) which demonstrates a similar situation experienced at the national level. It is noted that not all loyal tourists would make repeat visits but instead engage in disseminating positive word-of-mouth. However, it is worthwhile to improve measures of getting tourist place attachment with Langkawi Island. Building a positive strong bond between tourists and Langkawi Island would encourage tourists to make repeat visits because they would have developed greater interests in the destination. Favourable ties that tourists establish with Langkawi Island occur when they are able to fulfil their needs and wants during their visit. In other words, when they are satisfied with their travel experiences in visiting the island. Thus, the study supports the strong key role of tourist satisfaction in enhancing destination loyalty. Based on the findings, the study concludes that the different stakeholders involved in the

Langkawi tourism industry should create activities and spaces aimed to fulfil the basic needs of tourists pertaining to destination attractiveness and service quality.

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