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THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TOURIST LOYALTY ON PERSONAL MOTIVES, DESTINATION IMAGE, SATISFACTION AND REVISIT INTENTION TO ECOTOURISM DESTINATIONS OF MALAYSIA

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to investigates the mediating effects of loyalty on the relationships between personal motives, destination image, satisfaction and revisit intention to ecotourism destinations of Malaysia. In terms of research methodologies, this study adopted cross-sectional study and quantitative research approach. The data for this study, the survey questionnaires were distributed by using intercept survey method and 400 respondents' samples were collected from the three different national parks and ecotourism sites in Malaysia. By using quantitative research design, there are three hypotheses developed and tested by using Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM: version 4) and SPSS (version 29) for demographic and descriptive analysis. The empirical findings of this study presented that loyalty mediated the relationship between, tourist's satisfaction, destination image, personal motivates and revisit intention to the ecotourism destination of Malaysia. Based on the comprehensive literature and findings, this study attempted to make both academic and industry perspective contribution which engage with ecotourism one of the potential sectors of tourism industry in Malaysia. In theoretical contribution, this study addressed loyalty as mediating factor which has impact of the factors of tourist revisit intention. Mentioning the practical implication, the significant effect of tourist loyalty on the relationships between tourist's satisfaction, destination image, personal motives and tourist revisit intention

expressed the importance of tourist behavioural factors for increasing the revisit intention rate to the national parks. Finally, the study concluded the discussion on findings and implications.

Introduction

Tourism industry has become one of the essential commercial sectors for many developed and developing countries. This industry is one of the fastest growing industry which shows tremendous growth and success in global economic sectors (Nilashi et al., 2019; Scott et al., 2019). It has grown further and become a prevailing industry globally (Hoang et al., 2021). This industry continuously contributing in the development of job sectors, improvements in local people's living standards and supporting the growth of other industries (Gladys et al., 2023). Over the span of years, this industry has been the example of exponential growth and diversification, and become one of the rapidly expanding growing industries (Merli et al., 2019; Stylos et al., 2017). The industry has been contributing significantly to the economic development of most countries and also performing as revenue generating scope for local populations (UNWTO, 2020). However, some of the components of tourism industry has been neglected and does not receive much attention despite the huge potential for income creation like ecotourism sector (Nurgroho et al., 2019; Nurul et al., 2018; Thong et al., 2020).

The tourism sector is still in its infancy and that many nations are depending on both domestic and foreign visitors to return to their destinations in order to sustain growth. As a result, tourism takes on greater significance and importance in these nations, leading to an increase in the number of studies focusing on the growth of tourism. Undoubtedly, a significant number of researchers in the travel and tourism sector have devoted their careers to figuring out whether or not tourists want to return, particularly in the last ten years (Nurul et al., 2018; Thong et al., 2020). Accordingly, revisit intention to a location is one of the most crucial and essential components to ensuring its success (Mai et al., 2019).

The revisit intention is considered as the willingness of consumers to come back to the destination and recommends other consumers to the destination for repeat visit (Chan et al., 2021). It is regarded as a significant factor for the industry growth and survival (Nguyen & Phong, 2020). Researchers considered it as one the contributing factors to the profitability and substantially of the tourism business. Tourists are primary stakeholders for destinations because their decision of revisit will affect the destination success (Chen & Rahman, 2019). It is a cognitive state that reflects a tourist plan to return to a destination during a projected period of time. The concept of revisiting is generated when a tourist visited a destination again being satisfied with different factors and aspects of the destination. Many researchers identified the revisit intention as an important research topic in tourism literature (Nguyen & Phong, 2020, Nurul et al., 2018).

Similarly, tourist loyalty is essential for destinations because it is a strong determinant both tourist retention and profitability. It is crucial in the context of the tourism sector since tourist revisit intentions determine a destination's success by influencing their behavioral intentions and decision-making process (Suhartanto et al., 2020). But it also contributes to income generation because repeat tourists and referrals from devoted customers are more likely to return. As a result, the destinations always strive to earn a tourist's loyalty by living up to expectations and producing favourable results.

Literature Review

Revisit Intention

Due to its enormous potential for a variety of favourable results with varying financial incentives, revisit intention is regarded as one of the crucial subjects in the tourism and hospitality industry (Hoang et al., 2021). Despite the fact that this is not a novel subject and that many studies have been conducted in various contexts by writers (Meng & Choi, 2018), many researchers are attempting to ascertain whether ecotourism destinations have the possibility for revisit intention in recent papers and studies (Nguyen et al., 2020). Therefore, it is imperative that ecotourism locations consider the various facets of revisit intention within the ecotourism industry.

It is generally acknowledged that revisit intention is an important area for tourism study. Most researchers and tourism scholars defined the revisit intention from many different perspectives (Yusni et al., 2023). When tourists are genuinely pleased with the amenities and services offered by the destination, they will be eager to extend their stay, engage in more intensive consumption activities, and promote the location by spreading good word of mouth. It speaks to the probability of going back to the same location, which is a reflection of the tourists' dependability on the location as well (Chan et al., 2021). It is now a crucial subject for destination management in tourism. Scholars have contended that returning tourists are mostly impacted by their prior encounters (Sharma & Nayak, 2018; Yoon and Uysal (2005) stated that a tourist destination can be thought of as a product, and that tourists can return there or suggest it to friends or family who may be considering travelling there. In a similar vein, revisit intention was described by Parasuraman et al. (1985) as the desire to return if a tourist is pleased with the destination's offerings and is inclined to do so. For instance, compared to first-time visitors, satisfied tourists exhibit more commitment to the place, as seen by their repeated visits.

Furthermore, previous research has shown that post-visit assessments and recommendations to others are linked to higher levels of tourists' intention to revisit a destination (Abdullah et al., 2021). In addition, promotional efforts that encourage tourists to revisit the same location based on their recollections are another crucial way that destination management can play a significant role (Abdullah et al., 2018). Additionally, research has shown that the services that travel places offer have an impact on tourists' intention to revisit (Wang & Xiuhong, 2023). It seems that when tourists' demands are effectively satisfied by the location, they are more inclined to spend time and money there, increasing their loyalty and likelihood of returning (Nugroho et al.,2019). In the meantime, these investigations clarified that a tourist behavior attitudes towards the destination determine how revisit intention is measured.

However, since destination management is aware of visitors' needs for repeated visits, returning tourists can assist in reducing costs and resolving concerns (Zhang et al., 2018). According to some research, the ambition of tourists to return is one of the important factors that directly influences how attached they are to their place. To encourage return visits, however, industry participants and destination management organizations put the intention of tourists to revisit as the main objective (Nurul & Rosmilina, 2018). Furthermore, certain research has indicated that the desire to revisit has been extensively employed in ecotourism sites. However, the quantity of studies in the context of Malaysia's national parks is inadequate (Chan et al., 2021). Many researchers have concluded that, compared to first-time visitors, repeat tourists tend to stay longer at a destination, engage in more intensive consumptive activities, are happier, and spread positive word of mouth. They also require significantly less in the way of destination management and marketing (Zhang et al., 2018). Furthermore, some researchers contended that a major goal and important measure for destination managers and management should be to create a memorable experience that draws tourists to return year after year in order to maintain the destination's competitiveness (Wang et al., 2023). Positive tourists' intention to revisit rates will eventually result in favorable outcomes for the locations.

Loyalty as Mediator Variable

The marketing industry is where the notion of customer loyalty first emerged, and it is defined as repeat purchases and recommendation to others (Nguyen et al., 2019). The concept of destination loyalty among tourists is not new to the world of tourism management. Numerous studies have been conducted about tourists' loyalty to their destinations. This is due to the fact that destinations receive various benefits from tourists who are devoted to them, one of which is the purpose of returning tourists. Researchers have a favourable attitude toward it for the development of destination management, and it has been utilized in many roles to analyse the behaviour of tourists (Nugroho et al., 2019). In a similar vein, Wang and Xiuhing (2023) examined the influence of tourist satisfaction, destination image, quality, and perceived value on visitor loyalty within the Chinese domestic traveller population in order to examine the intention of tourist revisiting.

Tourist loyalty can be the direct factor of revisit intention but there is some factor which affects directly to the loyalty and loyalty lead to the tourist revisit intention. The impact of tourist's satisfaction, destination image and motivation on tourist loyalty has been a trendy topic in tourism research (Hoang et al., 2022). If travel destination counts as products and after travelling the destination tourist may revisit or recommend the travel destination to others (Um & Yoon, 2020). As a result, a lot of studies employ diverse approaches to loyalty when it comes to encouraging tourists to return, as well as destination management and marketing (Baloglu, 2001; Sharma & Nayak, 2018). However, researchers consider loyalty as an important goal for destination management to make tourists loyal for the destination (Nugroho et al., 2019). It should be noted that some researchers gauge tourist loyalty by looking at the likelihood of a tourist returning to the same destination (Nguyen et al., 2019). This demonstrates unequivocally the need to prioritize tourist loyalty, which is driven by tourist satisfaction, the destination's image, and personal motivations that enhance the likelihood of return visits (Mafi et al., 2019).

According to research, tourist satisfaction and loyalty have a positive relationship that influences the likelihood of a return visit (Khen, 2020). Furthermore, studies have shown that

tourist loyalty plays a mediating role in revisit intention, with satisfaction eventually leading to loyalty and its repercussions. Similar to this, other studies have looked at the history of tourist loyalty and discovered a substantial correlation between loyalty and destination image (Harrill et al., 2023). The research findings indicate that the image of a destination has a significant impact on tourist loyalty, hence influencing their intention to return and promote the destination to others (Hoang et al., 2021). It suggests that loyalty may operate as a mediator between destination image and satisfaction and the intention of tourists to return. These studies also revealed that destination management organizations should prioritize fostering tourist loyalty by satisfying tourists, enhancing the destination's image, and creating an atmosphere that encourages return visits.

Research endeavours have endeavoured to constrain distinct features concerning loyalty for tourism destinations. Most of the studies focused on tourist satisfaction, destination image, motivation, quality and value to explain loyalty which leads to tourist revisit intention (Nugroho et al., 2021). Research has shown that loyalty plays a significant role in the relationship between these factors and the intention to revisit, with support from the concepts of destination quality, image, satisfaction, and motivation. Nevertheless, there is a dearth of thorough research on these variables in the field of ecotourism studies that currently exist. As such, it is imperative to address the inconsistent results of earlier research in this area of ecotourism.

Understanding tourist behaviour and creating destinations with unique approaches can be achieved by analysing tourist loyalty as a mediator for revisit intention (Meng & Choi, 2018). Though loyalty has been employed extensively in the context of ecotourism, it is not frequently used as a mediator for revisit intention in ecotourism destinations. Loyalty was a significant role in the development of ecotourism destinations in those countries. Hoang et al. (2021) studied ecotourism destinations in Vietnam and discovered that loyalty was a reliable indicator of the destination. Furthermore, loyalty was employed in Korean sports tourism by Kim et al. (2021), and the study discovered that loyalty is a highly influential factor that affects a variety of characteristics related to revisit intention. Furthermore, in order to comprehend the linkages between tourist behavioural response characteristics including satisfaction, destination image, personal motives, and intention to revisit, empirical research on tourist loyalty is required.

Yoon and Uysal (2005) stated that a tourist destination can be viewed as a product that can be returned to and recommended to others, including friends, family, and prospective tourists, within the framework of the notion of tourist loyalty. On the other hand, tourist loyalty to the destinations can be used to measure the intention of re-visitation (Zhang et al., 2020). Zethamal et al., (1988) mentioned that prior research on tourist loyalty has identified a few determinants that are actually taken into consideration. These include: tourist satisfaction, destination image, personal experience or motives, technology, service quality or performance, product superiority, personal fortitude, social bonding, and destination attractiveness. Therefore, it is considered feasible that tourist loyalty will mediate the relationship between tourist satisfaction, destination image, personal motives, and revisit intention. Thus, in order to demonstrate the mediating impact for tourists' intention to revisit Malaysia's national park, this research takes loyalty into consideration as a mediating variable.

Second, loyal tourists for destinations are likely to recommend the destinations to others which actually lead towards the revisit intention. Specifically, they are more likely to serve as unpaid word-of-mouth (WOM) promoters, bringing networks of friends, family, and other prospective customers to the destination informally (Hoang et al., 2021). It suggests that when a tourist is pleased with the features and offerings of the place, they will suggest it to others and may even decide to return in the future to have a similar experience or to learn more about it. It implies that tourist loyalty results in the revisit intention after a period of satisfaction. Accordingly, tourists' personal motivations also contribute to their positive travel experiences and boost their propensity to recommend others (Franco et al., 2019). Tourists may have personal motivations such as enhancing a destination's image and, consequently, increasing its value to others. Thus, these findings revealed that motivation and satisfaction among tourists influenced their loyalty, which in turn influence their revisit intention.

Finally, loyal tourist's primarily form an internal bond with the place that shows the satisfaction with the destination's image. It suggests that loyal tourists are probably going to value their connection to the destination and grow to be good custodians of the land (Lee at al., 2022). Studies have found that loyal tourists to the natural setting exhibit greater environmental concern, advocate for conservation, behave responsibly around the environment, and take better care of the environment (Kim et al., 2020). Khen et al. (2020) found that tourist satisfaction, response, and image of a destination all positively impact loyalty and may even encourage return visits. Additionally, it builds upon and enhances tourists' positive and lasting experiences at the destination, which may encourage them to return (Abbasi et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2022). These studies demonstrated that tourist satisfaction and a favourable image of the destination increase tourist loyalty, particularly among domestic tourist's and have a beneficial impact on their behavioural intention. As a result, it is possible to expect that loyalty will improve satisfaction, the image of the destination, and the motivation to accumulate revisit intentions.

The tourism industry and tourist destinations are highly competitive, so in order to understand what drives tourists' loyalty and why they visit a particular place, destination management authorities must also understand what influences their intention to revisit as well as what drives demand from them (Wang & Xiuhong, 2023). Furthermore, it is less expensive to maintain and attract current tourists than it is to attract new ones. Consequently, a destination's intention to be revisited is greatly influenced by both managing tourist loyalty and growing the number of loyal tourists (Arnold & Keni, 2020). Loyalty is undoubtedly a crucial component of destination success, and as such, numerous studies have been conducted on the subject by tourism researchers (Kim et al., 2020). There is also a clear agreement among researchers studying tourism that the use of this component as a mediator variable in the study can be beneficial (Suhartanto et al., 2019). In light of this, the goal of the current study is to increase our understanding of tourist loyalty by investigating the mediating role of loyalty. Therefore, this study uses this crucial element as a mediator variable for tourist satisfaction, destination image, and personal motivations that may influence the revisit intention. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Loyalty mediates the relationship between tourist satisfaction and revisit intention to Malaysia's national parks

H2: Loyalty mediates the relationship between personal motives and revisit intention to Malaysia's national parks

H3: Loyalty mediates the relationship between destination image and revisit intention to Malaysia's national parks.
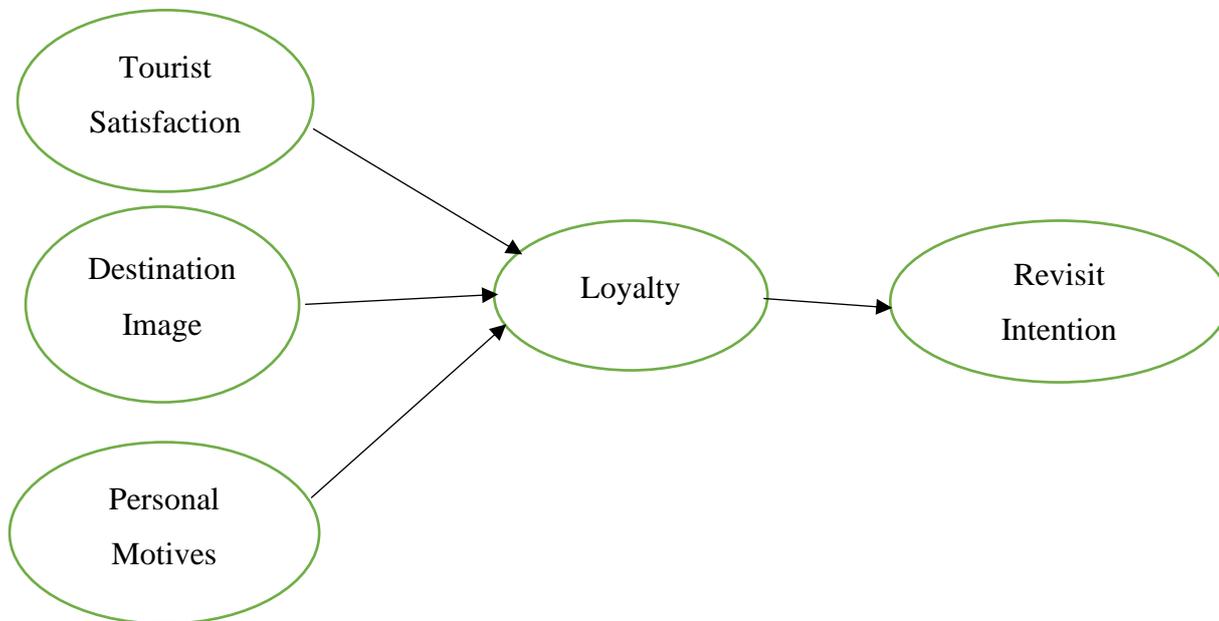

Figure 1: Research Model

Methodology

This study applied the quantitative research design, the main advantage of this method is to be generalised to a whole population or sub-population because it involves the larger sample which randomly selected. Besides sampling, data analysis is less time consuming as it used the statistical software such as SPSS, SmartPLS (Hair et al., 2019). Quantitative research makes use of questionnaires, surveys and experiments to gather data that is revised and tabulated in numbers, which allows the data to be characterised by the use of statistical analysis (Hittleman & Simon, 1997; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). However, to collect the primary data from the tourists the intercept survey method used which has been done systematically and randomly. The tourists those who walked out from the parks were intercepted randomly to distribute the questionnaire for collecting the data. Intercept survey method is one of the proven methods which has been widely used and explained in different management and marketing research to investigate customer behaviour and complete the survey systematically (Shazwani et al., 2018). Intercept sampling is faster and more cost effective than probability sampling because the respondents responded quickly and the survey instrument design as per the convenient for respondents to answer.

The size of the samples was amounted 400 samples, referring (Hair et al., 2019). It is very important part for the research survey method to select specific sample size for the data analysis. According to McMillian and Schumacher (2001), the size of the sample should be sufficient to the study by being adequate to estimate the features of the population suitably and offer reliable outcome. Therefore, according to Saunders et al. (2019) sample determination

table, 384 domestic tourist respondents were selected from the 400 respondents to serve as the sample size intended for this study data collection process.

Moreover, the indicators as the measurement of the variables adapted from the previous research related to tourist satisfaction, destination image, personal motives, loyalty and revisit intention and the constructed validated to the Malaysia context (Meng et al., 2020; Thong et al., 2020; Franco et al., 2019; Nai & Susatyo, 2019; Xiaoshan & Ming, 2020).

In addition, respondents were requested to respond to the statements given on a 5-point Likert scale which ranging from 'Strongly disagree to 'strongly agree'. It was to record the degree of respondent assessment and perception on each item (Xiaoshan & Ming, 2020). Refer to the analysis for this study, a measurement model test used to test the convergent validity, discriminant validity, AVE and reliability. For analysis the hypothesis the study carried out based on the results of the structural model the inner model test.

Results and Findings

The Table no 1 presents that, among the 384 respondents 198 respondents were male which is 51.6%, on the other hand 186 respondents were female which is 48.4%. It indicates that both male and female has almost similar percentage to visit the national parks. Among them 164 (42.7) of the respondents were single which is the majority and 151 (39.3%) were married, the remaining 69 (18%) of the respondents were others category (divorce, widow). Along with that, the composition of age presents that from the 384 respondents 152 (39.6%) respondents were the age between 22-35, which indicates that majority of the respondents of this age frequently visits the national park. Moreover, 99 respondents from the age between 36-60 (25.8%), another 81 respondents fall under 22 years old (21.1%) which shows the positive intention of young generation to the national park visitation. The remaining 52 (13.5%) respondents were in the age group above 60 years old.

In terms of income, majority of the respondents have income range from RM1501-3000 which is 21.4% of the total respondents. The lowest category which is nine (2.3%) of the respondents from the income range 7501-9000. The response for the number of visits to the national park, majority of the respondents were first time visitors which were 189 respondents (49.2%). However, the 82 (21.4%) of the respondents visited second times which were second highest and 62 (16.1%) of the respondents visited more than three times. This indicates the positive approach of respondents to repeat visitation to the national parks. In addition, majority of the respondents were full time employed which is 196 (51.0%), on the other hand 92 (24%) respondents were students that presents the encouraging response from the students to visit the national parks. However, 51 (13.3%) respondents were retired group.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender:		
Male	198	51.6
Female	186	48.4
Total	384	100%

Age:		
Under 22 years	81	21.1
22 - 35 yeas	152	39.6
36 - 60 years	99	25.8
Above 60 years	52	13.5
Total	384	100%
Professional Status:		
Full time employed	196	51.0
Part time employed	45	11.7
Student	92	24.0
Retired	51	13.3
Total	384	100%
Number of visits to this national park:		
First time	189	49.2
Second time	82	21.4
Third time	51	13.3
More than 3 times	62	16.1
Total	384	100%
Marital Status:		
Single	164	42.7
Married	151	39.3
Others	69	18.0
Total	384	100%
Income		
>RM1000	82	21.4
Between RM1501-3000	111	28.9
Between RM3001-4500	54	14.1
Between RM4501-6000	59	15.4
Between RM6001-7500	29	7.6
Between RM7501-9000	23	5.8
RM9000 and above	26	6.8
Total	384	100%

Data Normality

The normality test refers to the distribution of the data for a particular variable. Basically, it is assuming that the data is normally distributed and to check that need to see the normality result by analysing the shape, skewness and kurtosis in SPSS (Hamid, 2019; Hair et al., 2019). However, multivariate analysis and measure the key assumption in regression one of the basic analysis in normality test (Hair et al, 2019). Despite the traditional belief that PLS-SEM analysis is not affected by the normality of the data (Ringle et al., 2009). However, there is an argument for this statement which being questioned by saying that it is very probable for bootstrapping results to be inflated in a highly skewed and kurtotic data. Therefore, for the

estimation of path coefficient this might affect and underestimate the results. Subsequently, researchers suggested to using PLS-SEM for conducting the normality test (Hair et al., 2019).

Based on the above suggestion, this study applied both methods to conduct the normality test, the statistical method of Skewness and Kurtosis and the graphical method. These tests are important to check the data normality because Kolmogorv-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilke test doesn't have enough justification to check the normally distributed data (Hair et al., 2019). Hence, one of the main reasons to conduct normality test by using skewness and Kurtosis to improve the statistical accuracy of the analysis and also for path coefficient estimations.

The findings from Table 2 make it clearly that every item falls inside the acceptable threshold. Skewness and Kurtosis threshold values ought to fall between +/-2. According to Kline (2005) skewness should be +/-3 and kurtosis +/-10. Table 4.9 shows that the variables' values fall between +1.0 and -1.0, with the greatest and least numbers of skewness ranging from -.681 to -.983. In contrast, the kurtosis values vary from maximum 1.021 to minimum -0.182. As a result, the research's data are normally distributed, and PLS path modelling is possible thanks to acceptable and satisfactory normality assumptions.

Therefore, the data of this research are normally distributed and the satisfying and acceptable normality assumptions allows to conduct PLS path modelling.

Table 2: *Result of Normality Test (Skewness and Kurtosis)*

Constructs	Skewness	Kurtosis
MSAT	-.681	1.024
MDI	-.746	-.182
MPM	-.983	.646
MRI	-.917	.211

Measurement Model
The reflective measurement model is the initial stage of evaluating the indicators in PLS-SEM. In reflective measurement model, the three important analysis is internal consistency reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity. For internal consistency the composite reliability (CR) need to evaluate. The threshold value for composite reliability is between 0.70 and 0.95 (Hair et al., 2018; Ringle et al ,2018). Based on the Table 3, the CR for all the variables is above .80 which is excellent.

To analyse the convergent validity the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) need to evaluate (Hair et al., 2018, T. Ramayah et al., 2018). The acceptable value for AVE is that the construct needs to be more of equal of 0.50. However, items that have loading between 0.40 and 0.70 can be retained, and deletion is only done if its removal results in an increase in the AVE and CR (T. Ramayah et al., 2018). Refer to the Table 3, no deletion was done for loading as items above 0.40, also all the values for the constructs are acceptable and ready for further analysis.

Table 3: Measurement Results on Items Loadings, AVE and Composite Reliability

Construct	Item	Loading	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Composite Reliability (CR)
Satisfaction (SAT)	SAT1	0.812	0.699	0.893
	SAT2	0.819		
	SAT3	0.869		
	SAT4	0.863		
	SAT5	0.814		
	SAT6	0.645		
	SAT 7	0.624		
Destination Image (DI)	DI1	0.661	0.621	0.848
	DI2	0.745		
	DI3	0.760		
	DI4	0.806		
	DI5	0.811		
	DI6	0.818		
Personal Motives (PM)	PM1	0.769	0.640	0.860
	PM2	0.713		
	PM3	0.798		
	PM4	0.789		
	PM5	0.850		
	PM6	0.836		
Loyalty (LOY)	LOY1	0.857	0.668	0.875
	LOY2	0.848		
	LOY3	0.832		
	LOY4	0.779		
	LOY4	0.766		
Revisit Intention (RI)	RI1	0.864	0.685	0.908
	RI2	0.816		
	RI3	0.832		
	RI4	0.839		
	RI5	0.775		

RI6	0.836

Discriminant validity indicates the degree where the constructs can differentiate with one another (Ramayah et al., 2018). To estimate discriminant validity there are three important criteria need to evaluate. The cross-loading criterion, Fornell-Larcker criterion, and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) criterion. According to Ramayah et al. (2018), in the cross-loading criterion the designated construct needs to be higher that the loading of other constructs. Therefore, Table 4 shows that the values for each indicator's loadings are accepted.

Table 4: Measurement Model: Discriminant Validity (Cross-loadings)

Item	SAT	DI	PM	LOY	RI
SAT1	**0.754**	0.693	0.542	0.777	0.656
SAT2	**0.741**	0.600	0.492	0.625	0.644
SAT3	**0.809**	0.704	0.556	0.701	0.704
SAT4	**0.761**	0.741	0.558	0.717	0.662
SAT5	**0.838**	0.661	0.592	0.782	0.729
SAT6	**0.628**	0.548	0.342	0.505	0.546
SAT7	**0.570**	0.501	0.388	0.480	0.436
DI1	0.508	**0.661**	0.500	0.516	0.568
DI2	0.619	**0.724**	0.582	0.610	0.621
DI3	0.596	**0.683**	0.442	0.610	0.586
DI4	0.655	**0.680**	0.509	0.644	0.548
DI5	0.718	**0.749**	0.634	0.701	0.643
DI6	0.627	**0.741**	0.565	0.613	0.636
PM1	0.588	0.610	**0.772**	0.557	0.622
PM2	0.553	0.600	**0.778**	0.528	0.627
PM3	0.491	0.547	**0.691**	0.524	0.557
PM4	0.396	0.460	**0.572**	0.547	0.461
PM5	0.439	0.495	**0.692**	0.579	0.558
PM6	0.394	0.471	**0.656**	0.550	0.528
LOY1	0.678	0.630	0.650	**0.766**	0.760
LOY2	0.677	0.636	0.599	**0.738**	0.704
LOY3	0.705	0.665	0.542	**0.742**	0.709
LOY4	0.742	0.679	0.575	**0.786**	0.778
LOY5	0.685	0.718	0.614	**0.779**	0.744
RI1	0.721	0.685	0.669	0.728	**0.798**
RI2	0.708	0.692	0.544	0.740	**0.795**
RI3	0.646	0.645	0.481	0.756	**0.781**
RI4	0.693	0.677	0.549	0.800	**0.813**
RI5	0.647	0.656	0.554	0.654	**0.826**
RI6	0.685	0.655	0.593	0.817	**0.872**

To establish the discriminant validity Fornell-Larcker criterion can also be used in measurement model. According to Fornell-Larcker, the AVE of a latent variable should be higher than the squared correlations between the latent variable and all other variables (Chin et al., 1996; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Hence, in complete value terms, if the square root of AVE which is the top number in any factor column is higher than the numbers below it, there is discriminant validity. It indicates that, the constructs of the variables should be different from other variables constructs and the it shares more variations among the constructs. Based, on the table 5, all the correlations were smaller than the square root of AVE which presents that the Fornell-Larcker criterion values established the discriminant validity. The given latent variable confirming the discriminant validity for further analysis.

However, Henseler et al. (2015), along with other researchers suggested to conduct Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation if there are any issues with Fornell-Larcker criterion for discriminant validity (T. Ramayah et al., 2018).

Table 5: Measurement Model: Discriminant Validity (Fornell- Larcker)

Construct	SAT	DI	PM	LOY	RI
SAT	**0.836**				
DI	0.747	**0.788**			
PM	0.563	0.613	**0.800**		
LOY	0.808	0.755	0.656	**0.817**	
RI	0.787	0.758	0.661	0.777	**0.827**

In a well- fitting model, heterotrait correlations should be smaller than the monotrait correlations, meaning that the HTMT ration should be below 1.0. According to Henseler et al. (2015), advise that if the HTMT value is below 0.90, discriminant validity has been established for further analysis. Likewise, Gold et al. (2001), use the cut off 0.90 whereas Clart and Watson (1995) and Kline (2011) use the cut off 0.85.

Table 6 shows the HTMT values are lower than HTMT .85 value of 0.85 and HTMT .90 value of 0.90 which indicates discriminant validity is established.

Table 6: Measurement Model: Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

Construct	SAT	DI	PM	LOY	RI
SAT					
DI	0.857				
PM	0.633	0.708			
LOY	0.807	0.871	0.779		
RI	0.872	0.862	0.736	0.865	

Structural Model (Mediating Effect):
In structural model, to identify the mediating effects the bootstrapping technique need to follow to evaluate the results of for indirect effects. Refer to the table 7, there are three indirect mediating effects analysed by using the bootstrapping technique. Based on the result as per the table 7, the bootstrapping analysis presented that the three indirect effects are significant as the P values is lower than 0.05. The result also reflected that, t-values for three indirect effects were 5.867, 4.452 and 5.396 respectively which is higher than 1.96. Moreover, the Std. Beta

for all the three indirect effects (β= 0.281, β=0.140 and β= 0.130) present the significant level as it is greater than 0.10.

Moreover, Table 8 presented the upper level and lower level of 95% boot confidence level which indicate that 0 does not overlap in between upper level and lower level. The bias corrected for three indirect relationships (LL= 0.188, UL=0.386; LL=0.075, UL= 0.195; LL=0.083, UL=0.177), it shows that there is the existence of mediation effect.

Therefore, Table 7 establishes the mediating effects of loyalty between satisfaction and revisit intention, destination image and revisit intention, personal motives and revisit intention are supported.

Table 7: Structural Model: Bootstrapping Results for Mediating Relationships

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-value	P Values	Decision
H4	**SAT->LOY->RI**	0.281	0.048	5.867	0.000	Supported
H5	**DI->LOY->RI**	0.140	0.031	4.452	0.000	Supported
H6	**PM->LOY->RI**	0.130	0.024	5.396	0.000	Supported

** P<0.10, *P<0.05

Table 8: Structural Model: Confidence Level Results for Mediating Relationships

Hypothesis	Relationship	Confidence Level UCL	LCL
H1	**SAT->LOY->RI**	0.188	0.386
H2	**DI->LOY->RI**	0.075	0.195
H3	**PM->LOY->RI**	0.083	0.177

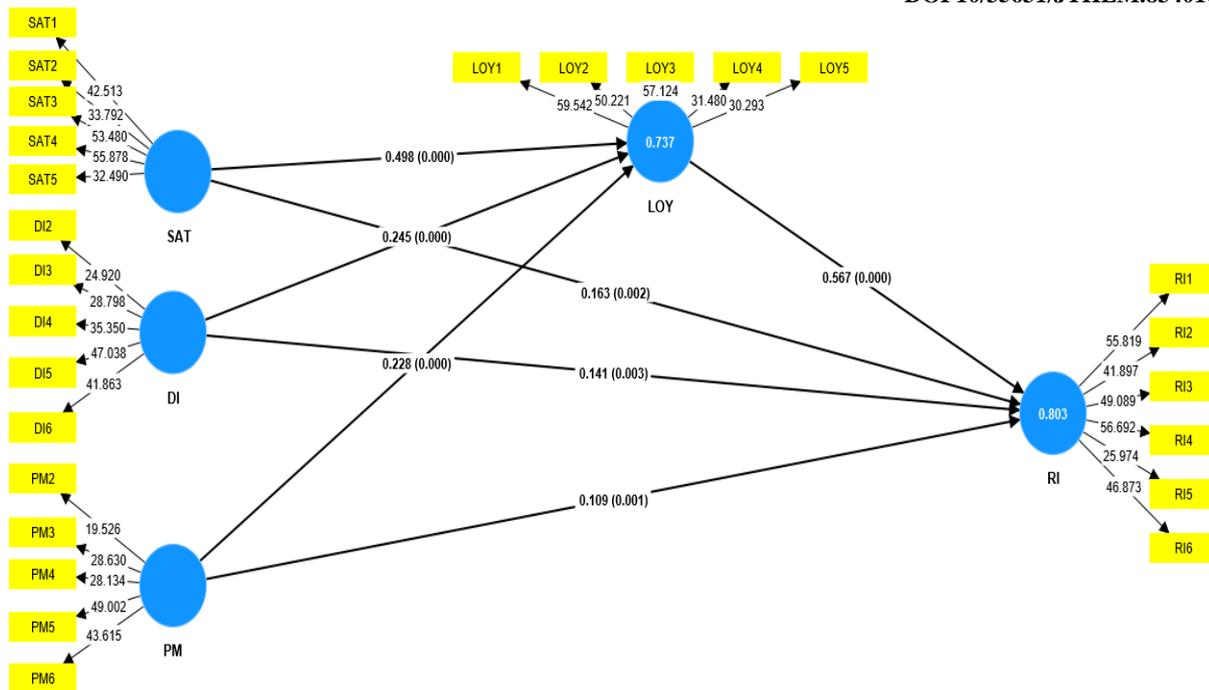** UCL= Upper Confidence Level, LCL= Lower Confidence Level

Figure 2: Structural Model: Test of Significance for Mediating Relationship

Discussion

This study has looked at loyalty as a mediating variable to investigate its effects on the relationship between tourist satisfaction, destination image, tourist personal motives and the tourist intention to revisit Malaysia's national parks. The association between satisfaction and revisit intention, as well as the relationship between destination image and revisit intention and personal motives, was found to be mediated by loyalty. Thus, loyalty was found to have caused tourist satisfaction, destination image and personal motives the significant effect on the tourist intention to revisit. It shows that tourists are satisfied; a tourist's loyalty to a location is a result of both personal motivation and the destination's image, and this loyalty inspires plans for return visits. Satisfaction with national parks leads to favourable intentions among domestic tourists, which in turn fosters park loyalty and eventually leads to repeat visits to the same park. According to Hoang et al. (2021) and Um and Yoon (2020), tourists who are happy with a destination are more likely to promote it to others and return again. Similarly, if national parks are considered products and tourists express their delight with the place by using the product, it demonstrates their commitment to the destination. As a result, the likelihood that domestic tourists would return to the same national park indicates how satisfied they are with the park.

However, the findings also showed that, by encouraging tourists to be loyal to the national parks, personal motivations could have an indirect impact on their intention to revisit. Tourist loyalty and personal motivations are favorably correlated, and thus has a good effect on the intention to return (Khen et al., 2020). Personal motivations improve domestic tourists' behaviour by instilling various motivational facts that heighten their interest in the place. A tourist will always be drawn to return to the same location when they have an intrinsic motivation for it. It amply demonstrates that, when compared to first-time visitors, domestic tourists who are organically motivated are more loyal to their destination. This driven

behaviour on the part of domestic tourists forges a bond with the destination, demonstrating their loyalty, and ultimately encouraging repeat visitation.

Learning about new things, getting in touch with nature, escaping from daily routines, and relieving tension and stress are some of the personal motivations of the tourists. When tourists experience these things in a national park, they are intrinsically motivated to develop a bond with that same place. Therefore, when a tourist is strongly driven by the perception of spiritual demands met by the destination, they will establish an emotional tie with it in the form of loyalty, which helps to encourage them to return there (Buzinde, 2020; Japutra et al., 2019). One of the key ideas raised by Hasan et al. (2020) is that a place's appearance and other characteristics might have a motivating effect, drawing people to it repeatedly. Positive feelings for a place can be derived from personal motivations, and by exhibiting positive behavioural responses, they can encourage destination loyalty. The intention to return and encourage others to visit is indicated by the positive behavioural reaction. Therefore, domestic tourists' personal motivations will provide a more positive response for the destination, reflecting their commitment to it. This clearly illustrates the findings that are correlated with the desire of returning to Malaysia's national parks. The results also show that returning to the same park yields favourable results due to domestic tourists' destination loyalty. The economic benefits accrue to the destination when domestic tourists show loyalty towards it.

Based on the study's findings and the discussion above, loyalty can operate as a mediator in the interaction between satisfaction, destination image, personal motivations, and the intention to revisit Malaysia's national parks.

Conclusion

The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between tourist satisfaction, destination image, personal motives and revisit intention with loyalty as mediator. The study confirmed the relationship between tourist satisfaction, destination image, personal motives, loyalty and revisit intention as demonstrated in the research framework. Hence, the study has further contributed to the body knowledge on the importance of tourist satisfaction, destination image, personal motives, loyalty, as predictors for revisit intention to Malaysia's national parks.

This study has explained and provided the theoretical implication by giving empirical evidence on the aspect of loyalty as a mediator, especially on the relationship between tourist satisfaction, destination image and personal motives on revisit intention. Surprisingly only few researchers used loyalty as mediator in the ecotourism context for tourist revisit intention (Hoang et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2020; Nugroho et al., 2021). It indicates that, loyalty as mediator is still uncommon between relationship of tourist's satisfaction, destination image and personal motives on revisit intention especially in the Malaysia's ecotourism context. Only a handful of studies have been conducted which investigate loyalty as mediator in the Malaysia's ecotourism context, however numerous studies used loyalty as main predictor for tourist revisit intention in different tourism context. Thus, this study demonstrated the role of loyalty as mediator and provided empirical evidence on the mediating role of loyalty among the domestic ecotourist's revisit intention to Malaysia's national parks.

The findings of this study have provided a deeper understanding of tourist satisfaction, destination image, personal motives can enhance the overall domestic tourist revisit intention rate. It is important to increase the domestic tourist revisit intention rate to Malaysia's national parks to make potential and beneficiary growth for ecotourism. Malaysia has huge potential in ecotourism sector as it is really rich with biodiversity. The destination management and national park authorities need to know what are the factors important to increase the domestic tourist revisit intention rate. Based on the findings of this study, tourist satisfaction, destination image and personal motives can be construed as predictors for domestic tourist revisit intention to Malaysia's national parks. Therefore, a domestic tourist with higher level of satisfaction, positive destination image and strong personal motivation tends to increase the rate of revisiting percentage to the national parks of Malaysia.

In addition, the findings of this study can be useful reference for policymaker in Malaysia's tourism industry for improving the ecotourism field. Instead of looking different strategies, the national parks management and policy makers should be focused on tourist's internal behavioural factors to increase the domestic tourist's revisit intention rate. The results of this study proved that, enhancing internal behavioural factors will encourage domestic tourists to revisit the national parks. Moreover, Chan et al. (2021) addressed the national parks management to design the policies based on the tourist's behavioural factors. Hence, this study able to help the policymakers to establish a good guideline to enhance the domestic tourist revisit intention rate to Malaysia's national parks.

Finally, this study answered all the questions which were formulated in this study regardless of the presence of limitations. This study presented inclusive theoretical and practical implications on domestic tourist revisit intention to increase the tourist repeat visitation to the Malaysia's national parks. Along with that, valuable suggestions and recommendations were provided for future studies which can help to amplify the scope of the research to increase the domestic tourist revisit intention rate to the national parks. In conclusion, this study fruitfully contributed and added valuable insights on tourist revisit intention which has both theoretical and practical involvement to enhance the tourist revisit intention to the Malaysia's national parks.

Acknowledgements

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