A Review on Tourist Mall Patronage Determinant in Malaysia

Mozhdeh Asadifard, Azmawani A. Rahman, Yuhanis A. Aziz, and Haslinda Hashim

Abstract-Nowadays, the economic benefits received from the fast growing tourism industry around the globe began to attract serious attention of many countries for the development of tourism sector. Shopping, as one of tourists' favored activities, has become a significant economic contributor to the tourism and retail industries. Therefore, it is inevitable to study the tourist's shopping behavior due to the unique context of tourism setting, which is often different on a day-to-day basis. Although, retail patronage have been extensively examined from a large number of determinants such as product relevant, market relevant and personal factors, there is scarcity in the body of knowledge examining shopping mall patronage which specifically addresses tourists shopping behavior in a developing country such as Malaysia. Hence, through developing a conceptual model, this study aims to expand our understanding of the nature of shopping mall patronage of tourist shopping behavior. More specifically this study aims to established the framework which provides new insights in explaining the relation of tourist shopping behavior and mall patronage by adapting the theory of planned behavior (TPB) through a quantitative method of research.

Index Terms—Mall patronage, planned behavior, tourist, theory of planned behavior.

I. INTRODUCTION

Policy makers are very interested in those industries that enhance economic growth and have traditionally been focused on the industrial sector. However, since the 1960s, many countries have turned their eyes towards tourism activity as a relevant way to achieve their economic objectives. Moreover, tourism is indeed an important industry to promote development in countries with a lowincome rate. Looking through the economic growth of the countries, tourism has become a common development focus for many countries such as Malaysia. Therefore, the Malaysian government encouraged to set tourism as a key industry for stimulating Malaysia's long-term economic growth. Since tourism benefits a wide variety of sectors of the economy, most of the countries around the globe began to give serious attention to the development of tourism industry. In general tourism has a major impact on Malaysia's economic development, benefiting from various related sectors such as hospitality, transportation, shopping, entertainment, recreational and leisure activities [1].

Recently, shopping has been considered as a tourist activity augments [2]. It has been stipulated by many researchers that shopping is a frequently inevitable action that have been done by tourists during their travels [3]. Furthermore, economically shopping has been considered as a significant profitable source for income; more specifically at those places that are famous for their value and special shopping [4]. Tourists who have propensity of allocating a remarkable time of their vacation to shopping are committed to the activity [4]; therefore, an understanding of tourist patronage behavior is a critical issue for retail managers especially in Malaysia because it enables them to identify and target those customers most likely to purchase [5].

Since, there is scarcity in the body of knowledge examining shopping mall patronage, which specifically addresses tourists shopping planned behavior in a developing country such as Malaysia. Therefore, this conceptual study enhances more understanding on tourist's shopping behavior and malls patronage which result in the tourist expenditure growth in this segment.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Shopping Tourism

Since tourism benefits a wide variety of sectors of the economy, most of the countries around the globe began to give serious attention to the development of tourism industry. In general tourism has a major impact on Malaysia's economic development, benefiting from various related sectors such as hospitality, transportation, shopping, entertainment, recreational and leisure activities [1]. Recently, shopping has been considered as a tourist activity augments [2]. It has been stipulated by many researchers that shopping is a frequently inevitable action that have been done by tourists during their travels [3]; hence, shopping is the crucial part of each tourist trip [6]. Furthermore, economically shopping has been considered as a significant profitable source for income; more specifically at those places that are famous for their value and special shopping [4].

Considering the fact that Kuala Lumpur is ranked as the 4th best shopping city in the world and three out of 10 largest malls in the world are located in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia [7], planning to absorb tourists from huge emerging markets of China, India and more specifically Middle East can be a remarkable contribution to the economic growth of Malaysia. Many researches and scholars stipulated that tourism has a significant contribution in the elevation of gross domestic product (GDP) of each and every country [4].

Shopping tourism is becoming an important activity for tourists in Malaysia for at least two reasons; first, it became among the major activities that tourists had engaged after

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the sightseeing [8]. Second, the value spent on accommodation by tourist almost equal to the value spent on shopping [8].Therefore, a study that can enhance more understanding on tourist's shopping behavior and malls patronage which result in the tourist expenditure growth in this segment will be very crucial. Moreover, knowledge of tourist's shopping behavior to patronize the retail center is still lacking [9].

B. Tourist Shopping Planned Behavior

Planned shopping behavior is defined as a buying action undertaken with a problem having been previously recognized or a buying intention formed prior to entering the store [10]. According to [11], a planned purchase is characterized by deliberate, thoughtful search and evaluation that normally results in rational, accurate and better decisions. Contrary to a planned purchase, impulse buying (un planned) is a spontaneous and immediate purchase where the consumer is not actively looking for a product and has no prior plans to purchase [11]. The tourists' shopping behavior can be either planned or unplanned. Planned purchases as decisions to buy or not to buy, which are entirely determined before entering the outlet; hence, Instore pricing and promotions have no effect on planned purchases [12]. Additionally, a tourist who plans to do the shopping is able to resist impulses to buy and implement a higher degree of self-control [13]. In order to better understand the tourist shopping planned behavior, examining three dimensions of planned behavior which are: attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control [14] is inevitable.

According to the theory of planned behavior [14], a consumer's attitude towards certain behavior is predictive of the person's intention to engage in that behavior. Attitude relates to the extent to which the person perceives certain behavior to be favorable or unfavorable. The more favorable a person's attitude is towards some considered behavior, the more likely it is that the person will want to engage in the behavior [15]. In general, favorable attitudes are formed when people associate desirable consequences with those behaviors. Shopping mall attributes may thus, determine the shopper's attitude to malls. Reference [16] defined mall shopping attitude as the shopper's attitude towards a variety of dimensions including location, parking, safety, price, quality (all utilitarian attributes), mall employee behavior, customer service, promotional activities, ambiance, mall amenities, food and refreshments, and variety of stores (all hedonic attributes). Based on the previous literature in tourism, attitude is defined from the product attribute and evaluation of the product attribute, such as; value (range, quality), product display characteristics (color, display, packaging, size), and uniqueness (memory of the trip) [17]. And also, in the study of [18], portability of product is a unique attribute that tourists take it to their consideration when purchasing souvenirs or other goods during travel. In order to understand the importance of tangible and intangible characteristics of a shopping area on tourist attitude, this research attempts to identify tourists' attitude from the utilitarian and hedonic attributes [16]-[19] of the shopping mall.

According to [14], Subjective norms refer to "perceived

pressures on a person to perform a given behavior and the person's motivation to comply with those pressures." Likewise, Subjective norm evaluates the perceived social pressures from referents to perform or not to perform a particular behavior [14]. Thus, subjective norms reflect how the customer is affected by the perception of some significant referents (e.g., family, friends, and colleagues, among others) of his/her behavior [20]. In other words, subjective norm is others' influence on a person's behavior. Numerous studies in psychology have theorized that subjective norms are an important determinant of perceived usefulness and behavioral intention [20]. Subjective norm is based on the individual's normative belief on the likelihood that a certain referent approves or disapproves performing a given behavior and the person's motivation to comply with the referent in question. Additionally, subjective norm is measured as the summation of the products of the normative belief and the motivation to comply across all the salient referents whom are family members and friends. In the context of shopping, additional referents could be media, sales associates, or even other shoppers in the store [10]. In the previous research, the influence of subjective norms examined on tourists' shop/purchase intentions at two types of tourism shopping venues: product and process oriented tourism retail stores and their result suggested that subjective norms significantly influence tourists' attitude toward products and shopping experiences at retail stores, which may ultimately affect their shop/purchase intentions [21]. In this research, subjective norms significantly influence tourists' attitude toward products and shopping experiences at the shopping mall and also subjective norm is explored by influence of other tourists besides parents, friends and siblings.

According to [14], perceived behavioral control is the individual's perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior and it reflects past experience as well as anticipated barriers and obstacles. Perceived behavior control is based on the individual's perceived control belief and the perceived power of the particular belief to facilitate or inhibit performance of the behavior. In the context of shopping, the control beliefs can be related to the availability of resources such as time and money and availability of products [22].

Considerable studies have identified the positive influence of perceived behavioral control in various settings, including innovation adoption [23], coupon usage [24] and use of the Internet for information search [25]. Furthermore, [25] found that perceived behavioral control had a greater influence on purchase intentions than attitude did [19]. Although no prior study has specifically used perceived behavioral control to examine tourists purchase behavior in Malaysian shopping malls, this study postulates the positive influence of perceived behavioral control on tourists purchase intentions.

Theory of planned behavior, as a theory, is applicable whenever there is an attempt to identify the various factors that determine any piece of intention, which itself precedes or underlies the specific action or behavior [26], [27]. Even though, seldom implied in social science research related to international tourists' attitudes and shopping behavioral intentions [10]-[28]. Moreover, empirical use of this model with respect to shopping mall patronage intention and behavior in a shopping behavior setting has not appeared in the literature so far. Therefore, this research tried to investigate the theory of planned behavior (TPB) to understand tourist shopping intention and behavior to patronize the Malaysian shopping mall.

C. Mall Patronage

According to [29], patronage intentions are the Intentions towards a service provider that is equal to the sum of a consumer's evaluations of individual service/product dimensions. Patronage behavior is the repeat purchase behavior at a particular store for either the same products or any other products [30]. Previously, a large number of antecedents of retail patronage have been identified. These antecedents were categorized into three groups: (a) productrelevant factors (factors pertaining to product features and attributes-e.g., product quality, price), (b) market-relevant factors (factors pertaining to the retailer of concern-e.g., service provided by the store), and (c) personal factors (factors pertaining to consumer characteristics-e.g., attitudes, motivations to comply, such demographics as age, gender, income, etc.). The results of a study conducted by reference [5] suggest that various predictors (e.g., service, product selection, quality) are strongly related to shoppers' retail choice, whereas others (e.g., store attitude, store image) are important antecedents of shopping frequency.

In the past literature and in the context of shopping, the study of [31] explained how color perceptions, alone and in combination with store lighting, influence patronage intentions. Moreover, [32] founded that the relative importance of wait expectations and store atmosphere evaluations on patronage intentions. In [33] studies, factors such as design, customer compatibility, and product assortments affect the choice of shopping malls and re patronage decision. Likewise, in [30] made his research more specified by identifying three dimensions of patronage behavior from Hispanic customers' point of views. Those dimensions are Convenience, Physical Atmosphere, and Customer Service. In [34] demonstrated that service quality delivered by self-service kiosks is a direct and an indirect determinant of consumers' retail patronage intentions; service quality delivered by self-service kiosks directly influences consumers' retail patronage intentions and also indirectly influences consumers' retail patronage intentions through three dimensions of retail service quality (i.e. reliability, personal interaction, and problem solving). In the study of [35], the influence of shopping orientation and store image on customer patronage of furniture store in Malaysia is demonstrated. Reference [36] demonstrated the multiple store patronage, which is affected by variables such as customer income, satisfaction, and expenditure that are suggestive of heterogeneous cost-benefit tradeoffs and opportunity costs of time. From the hedonic and utilitarian shopping value, [37] founded that the patronage intention could achieve effectively by mall tenant variety and store ambient dimensions. In the study of [38], only few consumer characteristics have an impact on multi-store grocery patronage pattern for purchases. Those characteristics are gender and shopping activity perception.

In [39] findings, cognitive age has a significant impact on aspects of store patronage. Reference [40] indicated that two components of interactive quality (self-service technology service quality as well as interpersonal service quality) are greatly related to retail patronage intentions. In the study conducted by [41], has been examined the cultural influences that country image has on consumers' hypermarket patronage intention in China and Spain.

Consequently, by reviewing the previous literature in retail industry, we can conclude that although some studies investigate one, two or three categorizes of retail patronage antecedents, which are personal, product and market factors, this study attempts to investigate those three factors by addressing tourists' planned behaviors with exploiting the theory of planned behavior.

III. PROPOSED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PEREPOSITIONS

According to [42], human behavior, including shopping behavior, is the product of both internal needs as well as external stimuli. In the shopping context, consumers follow a planned behavior route to satisfy their internal needs. At the same time, they respond impulsively to external stimuli. Consumers not only shop for the products, but also for the experience of shopping. In other words, consumers may shop for utilitarian attribute, hedonic attribute or both. In the tourism setting, tourists look for a break from daily routine and different experience away from home. Shopping, as part of the tourist activities, provides an opportunity to satisfy the need of products acquisition as well as the need of experience seeking. The multiplicity of shopping motives and purchase behaviors are likely to apply in the context of tourism shopping.

Based on the review and discussion of consumer behavior literature and related tourism research on shopping behavior including tourism and shopping, planned behavior and mall patronage, this study proposes a theoretical framework to systematically examine the nature of tourism shopping behavior and mall patronage (see "Fig. 1"). The authors propose tourism shopping as a mixture of planned and experiential consumption attributes. In this study, tourist patronage intention is a link between tourist consumers' reaction to products and their acquisition of the products, i.e. the actual patronage behavior. It is proposed that Tourists' patronage intention to be determined by the combining influences of planned and experiential consumption attribute. Fig.1 summarizes the specific components of planned behavior (attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control), and experiential attribute (hedonic and utilitarian), as well as the relationships between planned, experiential consumption behaviors and tourists' patronage intention and patronage behavior. Based on the discussion of the planned behavior literature and the related tourism shopping characteristics, the authors propose tourists' behavior has rational, planned shopping behavior components. Consumers will systematically use and evaluate information, both internal and external, to make rational decision with regard to the purchase of products. Specifically, the authors propose attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control, as the three major

determinants of the planned behavior of tourists, influencing their patronage intentions.

P1. In the shopping mall, planned behavior factors influence tourist's patronage intention.

P1a. Tourist's attitude from the utilitarian attribute influences his patronage intention in the shopping mall.

P1b. Tourist's attitude from the hedonic attribute influences his patronage intention in the shopping mall.

P1c. Tourist's subjective norm influences his patronage intention in the shopping mall.

P1d. Tourit's perceived behavioral control influences his patronage intention in the shopping mall.

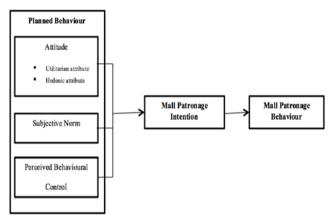


Fig. 1. Proposed theoretical framework.

Literature in consumer behavior has have recourse Ajzen's theory of reasoned action (TRA) to understand the behavioral intention—actual behavior link. According to TRA, a person's performance of behavior is drawn from the person's intention to perform the behavior. However, some of the researchers have suggested that intention may not be a suitable proxy for actual behavior [43], [44]. In particular, it is discussed that intentions to purchase non-durable goods and services may not predict actual purchase behavior [45].

Despite previous arguments; the general consensus among researchers seems to be that behavioral intention leads to actual behavior [40].

P2. Tourist's patronage intention influences his patronage behavior.

IV. CONCLUSION

Tourism industry is a great source of income in Malaysia and by understanding tourists' shopping expenditure patterns; destinations focus their marketing efforts on increasing the economic benefits of the tourist sector [46]-[48]. In order to accomplish this objective, the information regarding variables related to tourist shopping behavior could be very worthwhile [49]. This conceptual paper attempts to integrate the tourist shopping behavior and mall patronage; moreover, this study provides some new findings on the potential influence of tourist planned shopping behavior on mall patronage. The established framework provides new insights to researchers on the potential different views in explaining the relation of tourist planned behavior, patronage intention and patronage behavior, which are rarely used in mall patronage research especially in Malaysia. This research is also hoped to give a better understanding of mall patronage in the context of shopping tourism that will motivate future researchers to examine further study on tourists shopping behaviors and their mall patronage.

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