

Research Article

Satisfaction as the Engine of Loyalty: A PLS-SEM Study of Chinese Tourists in Malaysia

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Abstract: This study examines how Destination Image (DI), Destination Service Quality (DSQ), and Perceived Value (PV) shape Destination Loyalty (DL) among Chinese tourists in Malaysia, with tourist satisfaction (TS) specified as a mediator. A cross-sectional survey yielded 374 usable questionnaires. Measurement quality was established prior to hypothesis testing (reliability and validity checks), and the structural model was estimated using PLS-SEM with bootstrapping. The model explains substantial variance in both TS ($R^2 = 0.648$) and DL ($R^2 = 0.782$), with acceptable global fit (SRMR = 0.056) and strong predictive relevance for DL ($Q^2 = 0.534$). TS is the strongest direct predictor of DL ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < .001$), and it partially mediates the effects of DI, DSQ, and PV on DL, with variance accounted for (VAF) ranging from 39% to 61%. PV also retains a meaningful direct path to DL, highlighting the role of perceived fairness and value communication in driving revisit intentions and recommendations. Overall, the findings clarify satisfaction's role as the primary conduit through which image, service quality, and value convert into loyalty, while showing that value contributes both directly and indirectly. The study contributes empirical evidence from a key Asian source market–destination pairing and offers practical guidance on expectation alignment, frontline service empathy, and transparent value signalling to strengthen loyalty outcomes.

Keywords: Destination loyalty; Tourist satisfaction; Destination image; Destination service quality; Perceived value; Chinese tourists; Malaysia; PLS-SEM.

I. INTRODUCTION

International travel is recovering, and competition for repeat visitors has intensified. Malaysia remains a value-rich, culturally diverse destination for the China outbound market, yet converting first-time trips into durable loyalty is uneven. We examine how three destination attributes - Destination Image (DI), Destination Service Quality (DSQ), and Perceived Value (PV) - work together to produce Destination Loyalty (DL) among Chinese tourists in Malaysia, with Tourist Satisfaction (TS) as the central mechanism linking pre-trip expectations to post-visit intentions (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020; Styliadis et al., 2020).

Early growth drivers - aggressive promotion, low prices, and broad accessibility - are no longer sufficient on their own. In crowded marketplaces, sustainable performance depends on whether destinations consistently deliver what is promised. That delivery spans the full consumption chain: image cues shaping beliefs before departure (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020; Styliadis et al., 2020); on-site encounters that constitute DSQ across transport, hospitality, attractions, and language support (He et al., 2020); and the benefits–costs calculus that forms PV during and after the stay (Hasan et al., 2020). Breakdowns at any point - misaligned imagery, inconsistent frontline service, or opaque pricing - undercut satisfaction and weaken the case for a return visit or recommendation (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

This study treats TS as the engine that converts DI, DSQ, and PV into loyalty. Following expectation-confirmation logic, travellers arrive with beliefs formed by marketing and word-of-mouth; experiences then confirm or disconfirm those beliefs; satisfaction reflects that comparison (Oliver, 1980). In turn, satisfied visitors form intentions to revisit and recommend, consistent with intention-formation mechanisms highlighted in the behavioural literature (Ajzen, 1991; Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

Our objective is twofold: (i) test the direct effects of DI, DSQ, and PV on DL, and (ii) assess the mediating role of TS in these relationships among Chinese visitors to Malaysia. We apply variance-based structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) to the survey data, an approach suitable for prediction-oriented analysis and complex models in tourism research (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2021). The contribution is both theoretical and practical: results clarify satisfaction's mediating role within an integrated image–service–value framework and translate into concrete levers - expectation alignment, service empathy and reliability, and transparent value communication - to strengthen repeat visitation and advocacy in a priority market.



II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

A) Destination Loyalty as a Sustainable Outcome

For destinations competing in mature markets, sustainable performance extends beyond short-term arrivals and receipts to outcomes that stabilise demand over time - repeat visitation, positive word-of-mouth, and advocacy. In tourism scholarship, these behaviours are typically captured under DL, often operationalised as revisit and recommendation intentions (Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). In the China–Malaysia context, cultivating DL requires more than promotion or pricing; it depends on how visitors interpret the overall experience relative to what they expected, and whether that evaluation consolidates into satisfaction and intention (Stylidis et al., 2020; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Meta-analytic evidence also indicates that loyalty is jointly shaped by cognitive assessments (image, value) and affective responses (satisfaction), reinforcing the need to examine these components together (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020).

B) Destination Attributes as Strategic Levers: DI, DSQ, And PV

Three attributes are central to loyalty formation. First, DI frames pre-trip beliefs about a place's attractions, safety, and appeal; favourable image is consistently linked to stronger behavioural intentions (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020; Stylidis et al., 2020). Image commonly blends cognitive (what the place offers) and affective (how it feels) facets that anchor expectations before the trip (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). Second, DSQ - the perceived reliability, responsiveness, courtesy, and recovery across touchpoints - shapes evaluations during the visit and influences post-visit intentions (He et al., 2020; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Third, PV reflects the benefits-costs appraisal of the experience, integrating monetary sacrifice with time/effort and fairness considerations; value perceptions contribute directly to loyalty because they condense the trip's "worth it" judgment (Hasan et al., 2020). Accordingly, we posit direct, positive links from each attribute to DL:

- **H1:** DI positively influences DL.
- **H2:** DSQ positively influences DL.
- **H3:** PV positively influences DL.

C) The Role of Tourist Satisfaction (TS)

TS is treated here as the evaluative state that results from comparing experiences with prior expectations, aligning with expectation-confirmation logic (Oliver, 1980). Satisfied visitors are more likely to intend a return and to recommend the destination, consistent with intention-formation mechanisms in the behavioural literature (Ajzen, 1991; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). DI, DSQ, and PV are expected to foster satisfaction by (i) aligning imagery with reality (DI), (ii) delivering reliable and empathetic encounters (DSQ), and (iii) signalling fairness in the benefits–costs trade-off (PV) (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020; He et al., 2020; Hasan et al., 2020). We therefore hypothesise:

- **H4:** DI positively influences TS.
- **H5:** DSQ positively influences TS.
- **H6:** PV positively influences TS.
- **H7:** TS positively influences DL.

D) The Mediating Role of TS

Expectation–confirmation theory suggests that satisfaction is the conduit through which beliefs and encounters consolidate into loyalty (Oliver, 1980). Empirical work in tourism similarly underscores satisfaction's bridging function between image, service/value perceptions, and intentions (Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020). In this study, we anticipate partial rather than full mediation because attributes - especially PV - can also exert a direct pull on intentions even when satisfaction is accounted for (Hasan et al., 2020). From a behavioural standpoint, attributes may shape attitude and perceived control that feed intentions alongside satisfaction (Ajzen, 1991). Thus:

- **M1:** TS mediates the relationship between DI and DL.
- **M2:** TS mediates the relationship between DSQ and DL.
- **M3:** TS mediates the relationship between PV and DL.

Taken together, the framework positions DI, DSQ, and PV as upstream drivers that shape TS, which in turn drives DL, while allowing for residual direct effects from the attributes to loyalty. The model is suited to prediction-oriented analysis using PLS-SEM in complex settings, consistent with established guidance for variance-based structural modelling in tourism research (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2021).

The proposed conceptual framework summarising these hypothesised relationships is presented in Figure 1. In this model, DI, DSQ, and PV are posited to influence DL both directly and indirectly through TS, with the arrows indicating the retained direct effects alongside the mediating pathways.

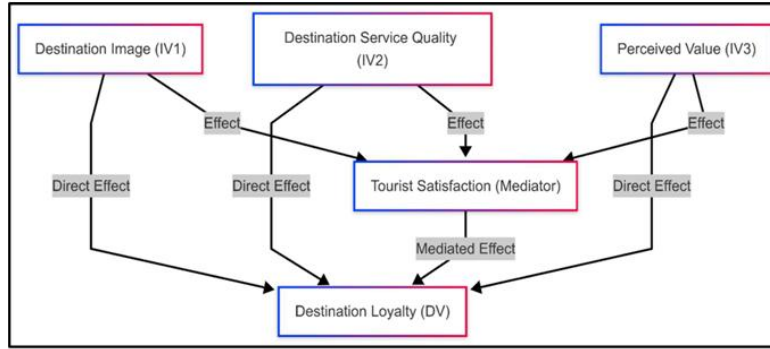


Fig. 1 Conceptual framework

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A) Research Design and Sampling

A quantitative, cross-sectional design was used to test the hypothesised links among DI, DSQ, PV, TS, and DL. Chinese tourist population visiting Malaysia during the data collection period Stratified random sampling was used. The survey successfully represented large population-subgroups of Free Independent Travellers (FITs), package tourists and repeat visitors consistent with its segmentation strategy. After screening (incompletes and straight-lining removed), 374 usable questionnaires were retained, satisfying power guidance for variance-based structural models (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2021).

B) Instrument Development

The questionnaire drew on validated reflective measures for DI, DSQ, PV, TS, and DL adapted from prior tourism and consumer-behaviour research. Also to be examined were (called questions 08-13) the overall attitude towards image, perceived service reliability/responsiveness, value-for-money and fairness perceptions, post-consumption satisfaction, and revisit/recommendation intentions (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020, He et al., Su, & Swanson, 2020; Hasan, Abdullah, Tek, & Islam, 2020; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Survey respondents used a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Demographics and trip characteristics are included for descriptive purposes of the sample. A pilot study with 30 Chinese tourists looked at the clarity and timing of items; minor wording changes were made accordingly without changing the underlying meaning.

C) Procedures and Ethics

Data were collected via a structured and self-administering questionnaire screen Participation in the research was voluntary and anonymous. Respondents gave their informed consent and were assured that the data would be used only in an academic context, as is required by institutional ethics.

D) PLS-SEM Analysis Plan

Cite the prediction focus, model complexity and common processed outputs for latent constructs that we will refer to later in this book, and then work through the partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) workflow (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2021). There were two stages for this process:

- **Measurement model evaluation:** Indicator scale reliability was examined through outer loadings; internal consistency through Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability; and convergent validity via the average extracted variance (AVE). Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell-Larcker criterion (square root of AVE should be greater than any inter-construct correlations) and heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) with conservative cut-offs (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015; Fornell & Larcker, 1981).
- **Structural model evaluation:** Collinearity diagnostics were checked before estimating path coefficients (β). Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples (two-tailed) was used as the method for calculating path coefficients. Explanatory power (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2 via blindfolding), and model fit (SRMR) were reported in line with current PLS-SEM guidance (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2021).

E) Mediation Testing

The mediating role of TS was examined using bootstrapped indirect effects and variance accounted for (VAF), distinguishing partial from full mediation where appropriate (Yoon & Uysal, 2005; Hair et al., 2019). Consistent with expectation-confirmation logic, TS was specified as the mechanism through which DI, DSQ, and PV translate into DL (Oliver, 1980; Ajzen, 1991).

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSES

A) Respondent Profile and Descriptive Statistics

A total of 374 completed questionnaires were received in time for the analysis. Such a sample was in keeping with the intended segmentation of Chinese tourists - independent travellers (FITs), package holiday groups and repeat visitors - and met the diversity requirements for the current study's travel patterns theme. Gender, age brackets, education, income, length of stay, are among the breakdown characteristics of holidaymakers scores in Table 1. Mean values for the scales were above the midpoint of the five-point range and variances were regular sized indicating that, in general, responses now give favorable measures but are also suitably spread and detailed to become a basis for model performance. Scale characteristics satisfied the standard criteria: Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were over 0.70 for each piece of research; AVE (average variance extracted) met or exceeded 0.50 (Hair et al., 2019). Indicator loadings were ≥ 0.792 , indicating that they loaded reliably on their variables; and the global model SHR of 0.056 means that it is consistent with path analysis (Sarstedt et al., 2021).

Table 1: Demographic profile & travel characteristics (N = 374)

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Gender	Male	183	49
	Female	191	51
	Prefer not to say	0	0
Age group	18–30 years	83	22
	31–45 years	150	40
	46–60 years	92	25
	61 years and above	49	13
Educational level	Secondary school or below	48	13
	Diploma / Technical certificate	59	16
	Bachelor's degree	238	63
	Master's degree or higher	29	8
Occupation	Student	76	20
	Self-employed	19	5
	Private sector employee	174	47
	Government employee	69	18
	Retired	36	10
Income (monthly)	Below ¥5,000	81	22
	¥5,001–¥10,000	143	38
	¥10,001–¥15,000	86	23
	Above ¥15,001	26	7
	Prefer not to say	38	10
Region of residence (China)	Eastern (e.g., Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang)	99	27
	Northern (e.g., Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei)	102	27
	Southern (e.g., Guangdong, Fujian)	86	23
	Western (e.g., Sichuan, Chongqing)	87	23
Visited Malaysia before?	Yes	254	68
	No	120	32
If yes, how many times?	Once	121	33
	2–3 times	162	43
	More than 3 times	91	24
Type of travel	Independent (self-planned)	110	29
	Group tour (organised)	264	71
	Mixed (some independent, some organised)	0	0
Purpose of visit	Leisure/Holiday	51	14
	Visiting Friends/Relatives	47	12
	Honeymoon	55	15
	Cultural Experience	112	30
	Shopping	56	15
	Other	53	14

Descriptive Hypothesis is consistent with the predictions of our theoretical expectations. DI and DSQ scores had high means, and relatively small sample sds, this pattern of distributions, therefore, suggests generally favorable impressions and on-premises encounters among respondents. The PV scores also came out more than halfway up the line. This is appropriate for interpretations from Asian tourism, where postantean price sensitivity and fairness judgments can be narrated as if pending for your endorsement. TS was comparable to the predecessors, with means slightly above both DI and PV, though still

marginally lower than DSQ. This pattern is consistent with the notion that satisfaction is a multifaceted conglomerate reflecting image or state as well as the quality of service provided at destination sites and what one feels they got for their investment. DL had high mean scores as well, indicating that people's intentions to revisit or recommend Malaysia were vigorous. Means, SD's, item ranges and scale anchor information, are given detail in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics and reliability

Construct	Mean	SD	α	CR	AVE	Loading range
DI	4.18	0.65	0.883	0.924	0.662	0.792–0.834
DSQ	4.24	0.67	0.874	0.918	0.670	0.803–0.847
PV	4.12	0.66	0.861	0.908	0.679	0.808–0.853
TS	4.20	0.70	0.942	0.952	0.650	0.783–0.829
DL	4.22	0.71	0.958	0.965	0.702	0.807–0.872

B) Measurement Model: Reliability and Discriminant Validity

Measurement adequacy was evaluated prior to structural testing. Item loadings surpassed recommended thresholds, internal consistency was strong (α and CR > .70), and AVE values indicated convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019). Discriminant validity was examined using Fornell–Larcker and HTMT. The square roots of AVE (on the diagonal) exceeded inter-construct correlations, and HTMT values remained below conservative cut-offs, supporting construct distinctiveness (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler et al., 2015). Cross-loading inspection showed each indicator loaded highest on its intended construct. Together, these checks confirm that DI, DSQ, PV, TS, and DL are empirically separable and measured with precision. Full matrices are provided in Table 3.

Table 3 - Discriminant validity — Fornell–Larcker (AVE on diagonal) and HTMT

	DI	DSQ	PV	TS	DL
DI	0.813	0.620	0.580	0.661	0.683
DSQ	0.620	0.819	0.632	0.712	0.692
PV	0.580	0.632	0.825	0.684	0.706
TS	0.661	0.712	0.684	0.806	0.752
DL	0.683	0.692	0.706	0.752	0.837

HTMT: Max HTMT = 0.82 (below 0.85 threshold)

C) Structural Model: Explanatory and Predictive Power

The structural model demonstrated substantial explanatory power: $R^2 = 0.648$ for TS and $R^2 = 0.782$ for DL, indicating that the antecedents and mediator account for large proportions of variance in the endogenous constructs (Hair et al., 2019). Predictive relevance, assessed via blindfolding, was strong for DL ($Q^2 = 0.534$), supporting the model's ability to predict omitted data points (Sarstedt et al., 2021). Global model fit was acceptable (SRMR = 0.056). Effect sizes (f^2) on DL were 0.060 for DI, 0.035 for DSQ, 0.080 for PV, and 0.220 for TS. These results indicate small effects for DI and DSQ, a small-to-moderate effect for PV, and a medium effect for TS - consistent with the theorised centrality of satisfaction in driving destination loyalty.

Direct paths were all positive and statistically significant in the expected directions. Antecedents to satisfaction were substantive (DI $\rightarrow$ TS $\beta = 0.30$; DSQ $\rightarrow$ TS $\beta = 0.40$; PV $\rightarrow$ TS $\beta = 0.28$; all $p < .001$), establishing the upstream influence of image, service quality, and value on the evaluative state. The TS $\rightarrow$ DL link was the strongest ($\beta = 0.45$, $p < .001$), highlighting satisfaction as the principal driver of revisit and recommendation intentions. Antecedents also retained direct effects on DL after accounting for TS, with PV showing the largest of these direct paths (small-to-moderate magnitude), consistent with the notion that value judgements can motivate loyalty even when affective evaluation is held constant.

D) Mediation Analysis: Satisfaction as Conduit

Bootstrapped (5,000 resamples) indirect effects confirmed that TS partially mediates all three attribute-to-loyalty links. The indirect effects and variance accounted for (VAF) were: DI $\rightarrow$ TS $\rightarrow$ DL ($\beta_{\text{indirect}} = 0.135$, VAF = 44%, $p < .001$), DSQ $\rightarrow$ TS $\rightarrow$ DL ($\beta_{\text{indirect}} = 0.180$, VAF = 60%, $p < .001$), and PV $\rightarrow$ TS $\rightarrow$ DL ($\beta_{\text{indirect}} = 0.126$, VAF = 39%, $p < .001$). Following recommended interpretation, VAF values in the ~20–80% range indicate partial mediation rather than full, aligning with expectation-confirmation logic in which attributes shape satisfaction and also retain residual influence on intentions (Hair et al., 2019; Oliver, 1980). The comparatively higher VAF for DSQ underscores the leverage of service encounters in translating experiences into loyalty via satisfaction, while the lower (yet meaningful) VAF for PV reflects its dual role - both mediated through TS and directly associated with DL. These patterns cohere with intention - formation mechanisms emphasising the role of evaluative states and belief-based inputs (Ajzen, 1991; Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

Collectively, the measurement diagnostics (reliability, convergence, discriminant validity), explanatory and predictive metrics (R^2 , Q^2), acceptable fit (SRMR), and mediation evidence support the conclusion that TS is the primary conduit through which DI, DSQ, and PV convert into DL, while PV also preserves a direct pathway. This hierarchy of effects provides a precise empirical basis for the managerial levers discussed subsequently.

Table 4 - Structural and mediation results (PLS-SEM; bootstrap = 5,000; two-tailed)

A. Direct effects				
Path	β	t	p	f²
DI → TS	0.30	5.21	< .001	0.152
DSQ → TS	0.40	6.54	< .001	0.232
PV → TS	0.28	4.98	< .001	0.118
DI → DL	0.17	3.45	.001	0.060
DSQ → DL	0.12	2.25	.025	0.035
PV → DL	0.20	3.90	< .001	0.080
TS → DL	0.45	8.01	< .001	0.220

B. Indirect (mediated) effects via TS				
Indirect path	β_{indirect}	t	p	VAF
DI → TS → DL	0.135	4.10	< .001	44%
DSQ → TS → DL	0.180	4.85	< .001	60%
PV → TS → DL	0.126	3.95	< .001	39%

V. DISCUSSION

A) Direct and Indirect Influences of DI, DSQ, and PV on DL

The results show that DI, DSQ, and PV each contribute to DL, while TS exerts the strongest overall effect. The significant TS → DL path ($\beta = 0.45$) indicates that loyalty is most reliably produced when experiences confirm or exceed expectations, consistent with expectation–confirmation logic in which post-consumption evaluation anchors future intentions (Oliver, 1980; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). At the same time, the persistence of direct antecedent effects - especially PV's small-to-moderate link to DL - suggests that visitors can form revisit and recommendation intentions on the basis of perceived fairness and value even after accounting for satisfaction (Hasan et al., 2020). This pattern aligns with evidence that loyalty in tourism reflects a combination of cognitive appraisals (image, value) and affective responses (satisfaction) (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020; Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

Upstream, DI, DSQ, and PV significantly shape TS ($\beta = 0.30, 0.40, 0.28$, respectively), quantifying the pathway from pre-trip beliefs and on-site encounters to evaluative judgments. The relatively stronger DSQ → TS effect is consistent with research emphasising the weight of frontline reliability, responsiveness, and recovery in shaping post-visit evaluation (He et al., 2020). Overall explanatory power is high ($R^2_{\text{TS}} = 0.648$; $R^2_{\text{DL}} = 0.782$), indicating that image, service, and value - channelled through satisfaction - capture much of the variance in loyalty intentions in this context (Sarstedt et al., 2021; Hair et al., 2019).

B) Satisfaction as the Central Conversion Mechanism

Mediation tests confirm partial mediation by TS for all three antecedents. The VAF values - DI (44%), DSQ (60%), PV (39%) - indicate that satisfaction is the principal conduit translating image, service quality, and value into loyalty, while leaving room for direct pathways (Hair et al., 2019). The comparatively higher VAF for DSQ highlights how consistent, empathetic, and reliable encounters are converted into loyalty primarily by elevating satisfaction (He et al., 2020; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). By contrast, PV retains more direct influence on DL, consistent with the notion that fairness and “worth-it” judgments can motivate intentions alongside affect (Hasan et al., 2020). Conceptually, this pattern accords with an integrated view in which expectation confirmation produces satisfaction (Oliver, 1980), and satisfaction feeds intention formation together with belief-based inputs (Ajzen, 1991; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Meta-analytic evidence that favourable image strengthens behavioural intentions also aligns with the observed DI effects, both through and beyond satisfaction (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020; Styliadis, Woosnam, Ivkov, & Kim, 2020).

C) Managerial Implications for the China-Malaysia Context

Three practical levers flow directly from the hierarchy of effects observed:

1. **Align expectations with delivered experience (DI → TS/DL).** Ensure that destination imagery and claims match on-the-ground reality. Truthful visual narratives, clear information on crowding/queueing, and accurate depictions of key

attractions help prevent disconfirmation that depresses satisfaction and weakens loyalty (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020; Styliadis et al., 2020).

2. **Lift frontline reliability and recovery (DSQ → TS → DL).** Because DSQ shows the strongest mediated pathway (VAF = 60%), invest in service reliability, language support where feasible, queue management, and prompt recovery protocols. These elements raise satisfaction and, through it, loyalty (He et al., 2020; Yoon & Uysal, 2005).
3. **Make value transparent (PV → TS/DL).** Given PV's combined direct and indirect effects, communicate inclusions and prices clearly, minimise hidden charges, and design bundles that feel fair. Transparent value propositions support satisfaction and also sustain loyalty directly (Hasan et al., 2020).

Collectively, these actions operationalise the finding that satisfaction is the engine of loyalty: image sets expectations, service quality confirms them, and transparent value strengthens both the evaluation and the intention that follows. Managers who prioritise expectation alignment, empathetic service, and value clarity are best placed to convert first-time Chinese visitors into repeat guests and advocates (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

VI. CONCLUSION

This study assessed how DI, DSQ, and PV shape DL among Chinese tourists in Malaysia, with TS specified as the mediator. Using PLS-SEM, the model explained substantial variance in both TS ($R^2 = 0.648$) and DL ($R^2 = 0.782$) with acceptable fit (SRMR = 0.056). TS emerged as the strongest direct predictor of DL ($\beta = 0.45$), while mediation tests showed that TS partially transmits the effects of DI, DSQ, and PV to loyalty (VAF ≈ 39 –61%). These findings clarify that loyalty is not the product of good attributes by themselves. Rather, attributes get their impact mainly by confirming expectations and adding satisfaction later on (Oliver, 1980; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Are you saying that?.

Conceptually, the discoveries I get strongly confirm what is called an evidence (expectation-confirmation) model of satisfaction and intention formation: beliefs and experiences (image, service, value) affect satisfaction, and satisfaction determines plans to visit again and talk up the place to others (Ajzen, 1991; Oliver, 1980). The retention of a direct PV→DL link as well as mediation may well indicate that even when handling affect nearby fairness and worthiness judgements can implement intentions. The very strong DSQ→TS line again underlines the important role of dependable and friendly heart-to-heart really first-line friends for both sides of interaction in achieving success (He et al., 2020). The result is consistent with both meta-analysis findings and existing research literature on destination images: behaviour is influenced by both cognitive appraisals and emotions (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020; Styliadis et al., 2020).

Managerially, the study proposed three measures point to: align pre-trip imagery with reality on site (DI); increase deployable service reliability and recovery capabilities (DSQ); and make your worth public instead of hidden inside a cocoon (PV). These actions signify accepting the first insight that satisfaction breeds loyalty as expectations turn into long-term plans - and in doing so shift the argument back to one of values. (Yesterday's comments were not clear-cut (Yoon & Uysal, 2005).)

There are limitations to be noted. One cross-sectional design captures perception at one point in time; but loyalty is a dynamic development (Hair et al., 2019). A single destination-traveller nationality focus (Chinese tourists in Malaysia) puts restrictions on generalization; Comparative studies among the ASEAN countries would be more illustrative of a global pattern. Self-reported intentions were used in this paper, instead of tabulating actual revisits or bookings; Future studies might test survey data against observed acts. Building on the present model, one might test alternative or extra mediators (e.g., attachment or trust); Or analyze within group variation (Sarstedt et al., 2021; Henseler et al., 2015) differences between different types of tourists (FITs vs package tourists vs repeaters (Sarstedt et al.))

In total, the piece measures how image, service quality, and value come together through satisfaction to produce devotion in an important source-destination channel. It is the compromise between satisfaction and delivering value, while recognizing that value still has a residual force (Afshardoost & Eshaghi, 2020; Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

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