UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

DETERMINANTS OF GUEST EXPERIENCE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON RESORT GUEST LOYALTY

NOR DIYANA BINTI MOHAMMED SHOBRI

Thesis submitted in fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Business and Management

February 2020

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the results of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

Name of Student	:	Nor Diyana binti Mohammed Shobri
Student I.D. No.	:	2014488752
Programme	:	Doctor of Philosophy – BM950
Faculty	:	Business and Management
Thesis Title	:	Determinants of Guest Experience and Its Influence on Resort Guest Loyalty

Signature of Student	:	………………………………….
Date	:	February 2020

ABSTRACT

The premise of this study is that in a consumer purchase decision process, there must be some phenomena that trigger the consumer's mind about their future consumption experience. In other words, consumers tend to develop perception and expectation towards their consumption experience. However, the consumer's perception and expectation will only develop if they are activated by certain events. Customer-based brand equity and eWOM communication are constructs that explain possible key factors towards the development of consumer's perception and expectation, and subsequently their consumption experience. By applying Experience Economy concept, supported by functional experience and emotional experience concepts as well as recommendations from the literatures, this study sets out to investigate the determinants of guest experience in the Malaysian resort settings. A survey approach using questionnaire was applied to collect responses from 500 tourists staying for at least one night at the beach and island resorts in Malaysia. A structural equation modeling (Partial Least Square or PLS-SEM) approach was subsequently applied to examine the direct effects of guest experience. Findings from this study revealed that the hypothesized relationships between brand awareness and guest experience (service environment, service employee, esthetic experience and escapism experience) were not supported. However, brand association and perceived service quality were found interrelated with guest experience (service environment, service employee, esthetic experience and escapism experience). In relation to the eWOM, the findings indicated that the hypothesized relationship between eWOM and four dimensions of guest experience (service environment, service employee and esthetic experience escapism experience) was supported. Findings also confirmed that guest experience is related with guest loyalty. This study makes several theoretical contributions. Towards the end managerial contributions and several potential opportunities for future research are delineated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

'When you go in search of honey you must expect to be stung by bees.'

-Kenneth Kaunda

TABLE OF CONTENTS