

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**MODELLING THE PREDICTORS
OF TOURIST DESTINATION
IMAGE AND MEDIATING EFFECT
OF INNOVATION PRACTICES IN
THE CONTEXT OF MALAYSIAN
FOOD TOURISM**

**MOHD SYAIFUDDIN
MOHD ALIAS**

PhD

May 2026

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**MOHD SYAIFUDDIN
MOHD ALIAS**

Thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
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(Hotel and Tourism Management)

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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.

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ABSTRACT

Food tourism represents a strategic sector within Malaysia's tourism industry, offering significant opportunities to strengthen the country's destination image and long-term competitiveness. This study examines the relationships between human capital (HC), perceived value (PV), innovation practices (IP), and tourist destination image (TDI) within the Malaysian food tourism context. Specifically, it investigates the mediating role of innovation practices in the relationships between human capital and tourist destination image, and between perceived value and tourist destination image. Using a structured questionnaire and convenience sampling, data were collected from 653 domestic and international tourists based on their food-related experiences in Malaysia. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was employed to validate both measurement and structural models. The findings confirmed twelve dimensions across four constructs: skills and cultural competence (HC); social value, emotional value, functional value, and monetary value (PV); product innovation, service innovation, process innovation, marketing innovation, and organisational innovation (IP); and intention to travel and revisit intention (TDI). Initially, five dimensions of IP were measured. After a thorough analysis in model specification, the analysis confirmed three dimensions for IP, namely service, process, and organizational innovation. The results reveal that perceived value significantly influences both innovation practices and tourist destination image, while innovation practices partially mediate the relationship between perceived value and tourist destination image. In contrast, human capital was found to have no significant effect on innovation practices and significant negative on tourist destination image, and innovation practices did not mediate the relationship between human capital and tourist destination image. These findings suggest that value-driven mechanisms play a more critical role than internal competencies in enhancing destination image through innovation. Theoretically, this study contributes by validating a multidimensional innovation framework and positioning innovation practices as a strategic mediating capability within the resource-based view perspective in Malaysia food tourism context. Practically, the findings provide insights for policymakers and tourism stakeholders to prioritize value-driven innovation strategies in strengthening Malaysia's food tourism competitiveness. Limitations and future research directions are also discussed.

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Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah,
peace and blessings be upon him, said:

*“When the human being dies, his deeds end except for three: ongoing charity,
beneficial knowledge, or a righteous child who prays for him.”*

Source: Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 1631, Grade: Sahih

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS	ii
AUTHOR’S DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xv
LIST OF SYMBOLS	xvii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xviii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Preamble	1
1.2 Research Background	1
1.3 Problem Statement	4
1.4 Research Objectives	7
1.5 Research Question	8
1.6 Hypotheses	9
1.7 Scope of the Study	11
1.8 Significance of the Study	12
1.8.1 Theoretical Contribution	12
1.8.2 Practical Contribution	14
1.7 Summary of the Chapter	15
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	16
2.1 Preamble	16
2.2 Travel and Tourism Industry Development	16
2.2.1 Travel and Tourism Industry in Malaysia	17
2.3 The Insights of Food Tourism	18

2.3.1	Food Tourism in Malaysia	19
2.3.2	Malaysian Food Tourism Influence on the Tourism Industry in Malaysia	20
2.4	Human Capital Definition	21
2.4.1	Human Capital in Tourism and Food Tourism	23
2.4.2	Human Capital Dimension	25
2.4.2.1	<i>Skills</i>	25
2.4.2.2	<i>Cultural Competence</i>	26
2.5	Perceived Value: The Definition, Types, and Impact	28
2.5.1	Perceived Value in the Tourism Industry in the Context of Food Tourism	29
2.5.2	Perceived Value Dimensions	31
2.5.2.1	<i>Social Value</i>	31
2.5.2.2	<i>Emotional Value</i>	31
2.5.2.3	<i>Functional Value</i>	32
2.5.2.4	<i>Economic Value</i>	34
2.6	Innovation Practices in the Tourism Industry	35
2.7	Radical Innovation and Incremental Innovation	36
2.7.1	Innovation Practices Dimensions	38
2.7.1.1	<i>Product Innovation</i>	38
2.7.1.2	<i>Process Innovation</i>	39
2.7.1.3	<i>Service Innovation</i>	40
2.7.1.4	<i>Marketing Innovation</i>	41
2.7.1.5	<i>Organisational Innovation</i>	42
2.8	General Understanding of Tourist Motivation	43
2.8.1	The Concept of Tourism Destination Image	44
2.8.2	Tourist Destination Image Dimensions	46
2.8.2.1	<i>Intention to Travel</i>	46
2.8.2.2	<i>Revisit Intention</i>	47
2.9	Hypotheses Development	49
2.9.1	Relationship Between Human Capital and Innovation Practices	49
2.9.2	Relationship Between Perceived Value and Innovation Practices	50
2.9.3	Relationship Between Innovation Practices and Tourist Destination Image	52

2.9.4 Relationship Between Human Capital and Tourist Destination Image	55
2.9.5 Relationship Between Perceived Value and Tourist Destination Image	57
2.9.6 Innovation Practices as a Mediator	58
2.10 Theory Related to the Study	60
2.10.1 Resource-Based View Theory (RBV)	60
2.10.2 Innovation Theory and Its Expansion	65
2.10.3 Human Capital Theory and Endogenous Growth Theory	66
2.10.4 Motivation Theory	69
2.10.4.1 <i>Tourist Destination Image</i>	71
2.10.5 Customer-Perceived Value Theory	72
2.11 The Conceptual Framework of the Study	75
2.12 Summary of the Chapter	81
 CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	 82
3.1 Preamble	82
3.2 Research Design	82
3.3 Population and Sample	86
3.3.1 Sampling	86
3.3.1.1 <i>Sampling Method</i>	87
3.3.1.2 <i>Sampling Size</i>	88
3.4 Research Instrument	90
3.4.1 Instrument Development	90
3.5 Scaling of Measurement	95
3.5.1 Questionnaire Structure and Sequencing	96
3.6 Translation	97
3.7 Expert Review	98
3.8 Content Validity and Face Validity	99
3.9 Pre-Testing	102
3.10 Pilot Test	103
3.11 Plans for Data Collection	105
3.12 Research Ethics	106
3.13 Response Rate	107

3.14	Data Screening and Checking Data	108
3.15	Detection of Missing Values	109
3.16	Detection of Outliers	109
3.17	Introduction to Validity and Reliability	110
3.18	Validity	110
3.18.1	Construct Validity	111
3.18.1.1	<i>Methods of Assessing Construct Validity</i>	111
3.18.1.2	<i>Factor Analysis</i>	111
3.18.1.3	<i>Exploratory Factor Analysis</i>	112
3.18.1.4	<i>Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Structural Equation Modelling</i>	119
3.18.2	Convergent Validity	122
3.18.2.1	<i>Results of Convergent Validity: First Order of Confirmatory Factor Analysis</i>	124
3.18.2.2	<i>Results of Convergent Validity: Second Order of Confirmatory Factor Analysis</i>	134
3.18.3	Results of Discriminant Validity	142
3.18.4	Criterion Validity	147
3.19	Reliability	148
3.19.1	Internal Consistency Reliability Tests: Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha	149
3.19.2	Reliability Test: Using Structural Equation Modelling	150
3.20	Analysis Technique	152
3.21	Summary of The Chapter	155
CHAPTER 4	RESEARCH RESULTS	156
4.1	Preamble	156
4.2	Profile of the Respondents	156
4.3	Statistical Analysis of Propositions and Hypotheses	157
4.3.1	Multiple Regression Analyses	158
4.3.2	Assumptions of Multivariate Analysis	158
4.3.3	Linearity, Homoscedasticity, and Normality	158
4.3.4	Multicollinearity	159
4.3.5	Outliers	161

4.4	Distributions of the Study Variables	161
4.4.1	Skewness and Kurtosis	162
4.5	Structural Equation Modelling	163
4.5.1	Stages of Structural Equation Modelling	165
4.5.2	Model Specification	165
4.5.3	Assessment of Model Fit	166
4.5.4	Model Re-Specification and Modification	166
4.6	Structural Equation on Hypothesised and Re-Specified Model	166
4.7	Descriptive Statistics, Discriminant Validity, and Average Variance Extracted of Re-Specified Model	174
4.7.1	Descriptive Statistics of Variables	174
4.7.2	Discriminant Validity	175
4.7.3	Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted	175
4.8	Results of Hypotheses Testing	177
4.8.1	Hypothesis 1: HC has a Significant Positive Relationship with IP	178
4.8.2	Hypothesis 2: PV has a Significant Positive Relationship with IP	178
4.8.3	Hypothesis 3: IP has a Significant Positive Relationship with TDI	179
4.8.4	Hypothesis 4: HC has a Significant Positive Relationship with TDI	179
4.8.5	Hypothesis 5: PV has a Significant Positive Relationship with TDI	179
4.8.6	Hypothesis 6(a): IP Mediates the Relationship Between HC and TDI	180
4.8.7	Hypothesis 6(b): IP Mediates the Relationship Between PV and TDI	180
4.8.8	Summarisation of Hypotheses Results	181
4.8.9	Hypothesis 7: Skills and Cultural Competence are the Dimension of HC	182
4.8.9.1	<i>Hypothesis 7(a): Skills is a Dimension of HC</i>	182
4.8.9.2	<i>Hypothesis 7(b): Cultural Competence is a Dimension of HC</i>	183
4.8.10	Hypothesis 8: Social Value, Emotional Value, Functional Value, and Monetary Value are the Dimensions of PV	183
4.8.10.1	<i>Hypothesis 8(a): Social Value s is a Dimension of PV</i>	183
4.8.10.2	<i>Hypothesis 8(b): Emotional Value is a Dimension of PV</i>	184
4.8.10.3	<i>Hypothesis 8(c): Functional Value is a Dimension of PV</i>	184

4.8.10.4 Hypothesis 8(d): Monetary Value is a Dimension of PV	185
4.8.11 Hypothesis 9: Product Innovation, Service Innovation, Process Innovation, Organisational Innovation, and Marketing Innovation are the Dimensions of IP	185
4.8.11.1 Hypothesis 9(a): Service Innovation is a Dimension of IP	185
4.8.11.2 Hypothesis 9(b): Process Innovation is a Dimension of IP	186
4.8.11.3 Hypothesis 9(c): Organisational Innovation is a Dimension of IP	186
4.8.12 Hypothesis 10: Intention to Travel and Revisit Intention are the Dimensions of TDI	186
4.8.12.1 Hypothesis 10(a): Intention to Travel is a Dimension of TDI	186
4.8.12.2 Hypothesis 10(b): Revisit Intention is a Dimension of TDI	187
4.9 Chapter Summary	187
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION	189
5.1 Preamble	189
5.2 Discussions and Findings	189
5.2.1 Research Objective 1: To Investigate the Relationship Between HC and IP	190
5.2.2 Research Objective 2: To Investigate the Relationship Between PV and IP	191
5.2.3 Research Objective 3: To Investigate the Relationship Between IP and TDI	191
5.2.4 Research Objective 4: To Investigate the Relationship Between HC and TDI	192
5.2.5 Research Objective 5: To Investigate the Relationship Between PV and TDI	193
5.2.6 Research Objective 6(a): To Test the Mediating Effect of IP on HC and TDI	194
5.2.7 Research Objective 6(b): To Test the Mediating Effect of IP on PV and TDI	194

5.2.8	Research Objective 7: To Identify the Dimension of HC in the Context of Food Tourism in Malaysia	195
5.2.9	Research Objective 8: To Identify the Dimension of PV in the Context of Food Tourism in Malaysia	195
5.2.10	Research Objective 9: To Identify the Dimension of IP in the Context of Food Tourism in Malaysia	196
5.2.11	Research Objective 10: To Identify the Dimension of TDI in the Context of Food Tourism in Malaysia	197
5.3	Contributions of the Study	198
5.3.1	Theoretical Contributions	198
	5.3.1.1 <i>Expansion of Food Tourism Literature</i>	199
	5.3.1.2 <i>Validation of Multidimensional Construct</i>	200
5.3.2	Practical Contributions	202
	5.3.2.1 <i>Targeted Policy and Training Recommendations</i>	202
	5.3.2.2 <i>Focused on Value-Based Innovation</i>	203
	5.3.2.3 <i>Framework for Future Destination Branding</i>	204
5.4	Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research	205
5.4.1	Key Findings	205
5.4.2	Study Limitations	207
5.4.3	Future Research Directions	208
5.5	Conclusion	209
	REFERENCES	210
	APPENDICES	272
	AUTHOR'S PROFILE	289

LIST OF TABLES

Tables	Title	Page
Table 2.1	The Study of CPV, Insights, and Conceptualisation 73	
Table 2.2	Summary of Hypothesis and Theory Used	77
Table 3.1	Measures of the Study	91
Table 3.2	Expert Review of the Items Used	99
Table 3.3	Reliability Test	104
Table 3.4	Response Rate	108
Table 3.5	Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Constructs	114
Table 3.6	The Summaries of Fit Indices	121
Table 3.7	Measurement Model Fit	122
Table 3.8	Results of First-Order of CFA on the Constructs of the Study	124
Table 3.9	The Magnitude, Direction, and Statistical Significance of the Estimated Parameters Between Latent Variables and Indicators	132
Table 3.10	Goodness of Model Fit of HC (After MI)	136
Table 3.11	Goodness of Model Fit of PV (After MI)	138
Table 3.12	Goodness of Model Fit of IP (After MI)	139
Table 3.13	Goodness of Model Fit of TDI (After MI)	141
Table 3.14	The Pearson Correlation Matrix	148
Table 3.15	Internal Consistency Reliability of HC, PV, IP, and TDI	149
Table 3.16	Variance Extracted and Construct Reliability of HC, PV, IP, and TDI	151
Table 3.17	Internal Consistency and Construct Reliability of HC, PV, IP, and TDI	151
Table 4.1	Respondents' Profiles	156
Table 4.2	Multicollinearity Diagnostics	160
Table 4.3	Skewness and Kurtosis Results of the Variables	163
Table 4.4	Goodness-of-fit Statistics of Re-Specified Model	171

Table 4.5	Results of Exogenous Variables	171
Table 4.6	Results of Endogenous Variables	172
Table 4.7	Squared Multiple Correlation (SMC)	172
Table 4.8	Summary of Goodness-of-fit or Re-Specified Model for HC, PV, IP, and TDI	173
Table 4.9	Summary of the Goodness-of-fit of the Structural Model	174
Table 4.10	Mean of Variables	175
Table 4.11	Summary of Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted	176
Table 4.12	Results of Calculated of Variables Correlation Squared	176
Table 4.13	Average Variance Extracted	177
Table 4.14	HC has a Significant Positive Relationship on IP	178
Table 4.15	PV has a Significant Positive Relationship on IP	178
Table 4.16	IP has a Significant Relationship on TDI	179
Table 4.17	HC has a Significant Relationship on TDI	179
Table 4.18	PV has a Significant Relationship on TDI	180
Table 4.19	IP Mediates the Relationship Between HC and TDI	180
Table 4.20	IP Mediates the Relationship Between PV and TDI	181
Table 4.21	Summarisation of Hypotheses Results	181
Table 4.22	Skills is a Dimension of HC	183
Table 4.23	Cultural Competence is a Dimension of HC	183
Table 4.24	Social Value is a Dimension of PV	184
Table 4.25	Emotional Value is a Dimension of PV	184
Table 4.26	Functional Value is a Dimension of PV	184
Table 4.27	Monetary Value is a Dimension of PV	185
Table 4.28	Service Innovation is a Dimension of IP	185
Table 4.29	Process Innovation is a Dimension of IP	186
Table 4.30	Organisational Innovation is a Dimension of IP	186
Table 4.31	Intention to Travel is a Dimension of TDI	187
Table 4.32	Revisit Intention is a Dimension of TDI	187

LIST OF FIGURES

Figures	Title	Page
Figure 2.1	Structure of Approaches to Understanding the Human Capital	23
Figure 2.2	Conceptual Framework of the Study	80
Figure 3.1	Research Design	85
Figure 3.2	First Order of CFA for Skills	125
Figure 3.3	First Order of CFA for Cultural Competence	125
Figure 3.4	First Order of CFA for Social Value	126
Figure 3.5	First Order of CFA for Emotional Value	126
Figure 3.6	First Order of CFA for Functional Value	127
Figure 3.7	First Order of CFA for Monetary Value	127
Figure 3.8	First Order of CFA for Product Innovation	128
Figure 3.9	First Order of CFA for Service Innovation	128
Figure 3.10	First Order of CFA for Process Innovation	129
Figure 3.11	First Order of CFA for Organisational Innovation	129
Figure 3.12	First Order of CFA for Marketing Innovation	130
Figure 3.13	First Order of CFA for Intention to Travel	130
Figure 3.14	First Order of CFA for Revisit Intention	131
Figure 3.15	Second Order of CFA for HC	136
Figure 3.16	Second Order of CFA for PV	137
Figure 3.17	Second Order of CFA for IP	139
Figure 3.18	Second Order of CFA for TDI	141
Figure 3.19	Measurement Model of HC	143
Figure 3.20	Measurement Model of PV	144
Figure 3.21	Measurement Model of IP	145
Figure 3.22	Measurement Model of TDI	146
Figure 3.23	Reflective and Formative Measurement	153
Figure 4.1	Direct and Indirect Effect	164
Figure 4.2	Generated Full Model of the Mediating Effect of IP in the Relationship Between HC and PV to TDI in the Context of	167

Figure 4.3	Re-Specified Model of the Mediating Effect of IP in the Relationship Between HC and PV to TDI in the Context of Food Tourism in Malaysia	168
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LIST OF SYMBOLS

Symbols

β	Beta Coefficient
χ^2	Chi-Square
$(\chi^2)/df$	Normal Chi-Square
P	P-Value
P-P	Probability Plot
R^2	Regression Squares
β	Beta Coefficient

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations

AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CB-SEM	Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modelling
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CR	Critical Ratio
DF	Degrees of Freedom
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
GFI	Goodness of Fit
M	Mean
NFI	Normal Fit Index
REC	Research Ethics Committee
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SD	Standard Deviation
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SMC	Squared Multiple Correlations
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science
TLI	Tucker Lewis Index
VIF	Variance of Inflation

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

This chapter provides an overview of the study that includes the background of the study, research problems, research objectives and research questions, scope of the study, and contribution of the study. In terms of organisational, it exhibits the structure of the chapters.

1.2 Research Background

The tourism and hospitality industry is one of the main sectors that contributes to global GDP (Rasool et al., 2021). According to the previous study (Rasool et al., 2021), more than one billion tourists travelling across the globe every year have reflected on the growth of global GDP, which represents 7% of the world's total exports. These data are showing a potential of the tourism industry. Based on the newest trend of technology usage, tourism activities have rapidly changed (Kumar & Shekhar, 2020). The changes are significantly relevant to the demand of the current trend in order to seek sustainability performance. With the current trend followed by the organisation and management of tourism activities, however, in terms of relation, a subsector of the tourism and hospitality industry has a major role to play. Tourists are the carriers of the demand to the destination and are largely influenced by their mobility and flexibility of their interest, which, therefore, may influence their behaviour on choosing their own destination (Pilis et al., 2022). The relationship in terms of flexibility of tourist movement in choosing their destination, tourist needs and attitudes toward experience, and the influence of image branding to tourism management has been discussed thoroughly by Pilis et al. (2022).

The rapid changes in technology have shaped food tourism in providing better quality to the visitors. Business owners maximise the usage of technology to gain trust of their customers and to be marketable as well as maximise their profit (Gheribi & Bonadonna, 2019). Food tourism can effectively work as a local economy generator and increase the level of competitiveness in local areas. As reported by Gheribi and

Bonadonna (2019), in the context of food tourism, the food industry has contributed as a job creator to the locals in Europe. Most of the restaurants in Europe are equipped with knowledgeable thinkers which supported by technological enhancement. As stated by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA, 2025), there are a few strategies in food industry sustainability which namely vibrant food cultures, sustainable and resilient supply, good growth, and healthier and more affordable food. These are the important parts in the sustainability of the food industry in the United Kingdom (UK) as it went deeply into concluding on consumer behaviour. The implementation of new technology in the food service industry has mainly opened up a new opportunity to business organisation as it influences human capital for strengthening their business performance through perceived quality (Cinnirella & Streb, 2017).

The concept of perceived value particularly mentioned in tourism sector refers to the individual or group who have their own acceptance on what they are received including experience, quality, and authenticity versus what they are spending which concluded the terms with money, time, and effort (Zainuddin & Gordon, 2020; Zainuddin et al., 2021). To remain competitive in the global tourism market, Malaysia has to embrace food tourism as the core subject to represent Malaysia as a whole. The failure from getting such recognition through food tourism has been overshadowed by the quality of perceived value that have been applied by neighbouring countries such as Thailand and Indonesia (Ehsan et al., 2016; Abdullah et al., 2023; Jeaheng et al., 2023). The attributes that these countries have are a similar approach to gain profitable economic growth while focusing on their innovation practices as a bridge to gain sustainable effort in destination image.

Barney (1991) has formulated a knowledgeable insight mentioning that competitive advantages are among the biggest factors for a business organisation to run. It supplies a set of advantages which derive from human capital. The stimulation that human capital offered for business development is widely discussed by previous studies (Sima et al., 2020; Lenihan et al., 2019; Yasin et al., 2019). Furthermore, human capital has been recognised in providing skills, experience and knowledge for business development and sustainability (Barney, 1991). Based on the data reported by Global Economic Data, Indicators, Charts, and Forecasts (CEIC), Malaysia's food services gross domestic product (GDP) has constantly increased in the year of 2010 to 2017. The trend has been observed throughout seven years, and the data shows the food service

industry has been claimed as one of the biggest contributors to Malaysia's GDP. According to Malaysia Productivity Corporation (MPC) reported that, the subsector productivity report for retail and food and beverages sector showed growth in value from 2018 to 2019. However, the onset of COVID-19 in 2020 to 2021 has reversed this trend with declines in value. Beginning in 2022, the sector's value added rebounded and supported by broader tourism recovery and increased in consumer activity and has continued to grow through 2023 (The Sun Malaysia, 2025). The trend is probably caused by successful strategies and marketing tactics (Nahar et al, 2018). Besides, Global Data (2021) has revealed that the possibility for the Malaysian foodservice industry to grow profit in the upcoming five years.

By referring to the Malaysian Budget 2025, the Malaysian government has accumulated RM550 million for the improvement and development of tourism destinations, and the focus is on Visit Malaysia Year 2026 (New Straits Times, 2024). In addition, RM110 million has been allocated to enhance tourism areas. This funding is very important for the development of the tourism destination in order to get more competitive with the neighbouring countries such as Thailand and Indonesia. Furthermore, the growth from the data can be explained by looking at the sustainability and development of new technology and innovation (Hassan et al., 2019). Aside from technology management, the relationship between human capital and the application of innovation in the business organisation is able to sustain business performance as knowledge, skills, experience, and human capital are the factors that influence the trend (Nafukho et al., 2004). It is prominent evidence which theoretically justifies the importance of human capital and innovation practices as well as perceived value for image branding. Various constructs and dimensions of innovation practices applied in the context of food tourism in Malaysia have been discussed (Alias et al., 2021; Mohammad et al., 2019; Tan et al., 2019).

Innovation practices can be seen as an important tool for business development, which provides all the necessary improvements (Lee et al., 2016; Hjalager, 2010). In addition, the unpredictable knowledge era through technology, internet, computing, augmented reality, and artificial intelligence has caused the development of an innovation strategy which can help business organisation, especially in the food service industry, to grow (Yilmaz & Comez, 2020). These are the factors that triggered the enhancement of innovation practices in the business organisation. On top of that, the involvement of human capital and tourism activities also creates a necessary influence

on the food tourism image. Although previous study has examined service innovation and destination image in Malaysia (Cheng et al., 2020) and recognized the importance of human capital in smart tourism development (Lombardi et al., 2021), there remains a lack of empirical studies that simultaneously connect human capital, perceived value, innovation practices, and tourist destination image in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. In addition, while value co-creation literature in tourism highlights innovation as a mechanism for creating value (John & Supramaniam, 2024), it rarely explores how innovation practices mediate the relationship between human capital and perceived value. Moreover, research on food destination image shows the influence of local food consumption and cultural value (Ibrahim et al., 2025) but omits human capital and innovation practices as antecedents. Hence, the present study fills this gap by proposing and testing a model that integrates these critical constructs in the context of Malaysian food tourism. This current research is structured as follows: first, it will review the structure of human capital (HC), followed by the perceived value (PV), innovation practices (IP) as the mediator, and tourist destination image (TDI). Then the relationship will be constructed based on the conceptual framework, allowing the process for data collection and data analysis.

1.3 Problem Statement

The study mainly focuses on the interaction of food tourism that enables tourist destination image through various predictors, including innovation practices, perceived value, and human capital. Previous studies have indicated that innovation practices implementation in business organisation would provide a better solution for structure development, process, organisation efficiency and business growth, as well as in the tourism and hospitality industry (Alias et al., 2021; Aksoy, 2017; Lee et al., 2016). Therefore, this study aims to indicate how tourist destination image will react towards other predictors, namely human capital, perceived value, and innovation practices. During the pandemic, food tourism has rapidly changed its nature with technology implementation which uses various impactful systems. Yang et al. (2020) have picturised their study into an elaboration of the demand and changes of the food industry during the virus outbreak has reached another dimension. This is related to the implementation of various technological tools and innovation practices within the business (Alias et al., 2021; Abdullah et al., 2017). In terms of tourism specification,

the food is closely related to tourism activities, which depend on how tourist arrivals into the destination (Tan et al., 2017; Dhora & Dionizi, 2014).

Tourism has impacted food tourism as a whole in Malaysia directly through its various opportunities in terms of development and growth performance. In terms of development and growth performance, Verma and Shukla (2019) indicated that tourism plays a very influential part in the development of the food industry. It comes with the opportunity of sustainability and profitability in local communities. However, there are a few problems that need to be emphasised. The main problems in maintaining sustainability are service quality, lack of training and development, knowledge deficits on food, and struggle to adopt an innovation strategy have been discussed thoroughly on human capital sustainability in the development of tourist destination image (Adros & Wee, 2019). The researchers then highlighted the strategy that needs to be applied in sustaining the business for sustaining the destination, and in the current study context, the destination image on long-term success is influenced by evolving consumer demands and service quality sustainability. Almasoodi et al. (2023) explained that human capital needs to be sharpened on the key role, and they argued how it could assist the destination's brand and image. In addition, Zumrah (2015) stated that 60% of organisations in Malaysia emphasised that inadequate training becomes the biggest issue and affects the work profile. Prior research highlights service quality deficiencies and inadequate professional development among food tourism operators. However, these issues are often treated as shortcomings rather than strategic capability. This shows human capital is assumed as a strategic role in transforming resources into tourism experiences. It is dynamic capability that determines whether innovation can be effectively generated or implemented.

Furthermore, while food tourism is important in Malaysia and has attracted many domestic and international tourists to visit, there are some problems regarding perceived quality that have been discussed. The main issue from tourist's overall assessment, including both monetary and experiential, where the comparison has been discussed as when the perceived value is low, then it will reflect on the destination image (Lu et al., 2023). The report from Tourism Malaysia highlights a concerning decline in tourist arrivals, signalling potential challenges for the country's tourism sector. International tourist arrivals in Malaysia have steadily increased from approximately 10 million in 2022 to 20 million in 2023, reaching around 25 million in 2024. To remain competitive, businesses must focus on building destination loyalty,

with food tourism serving as a major factor in drawing tourists. Furthermore, the perceived quality in the tourism businesses is risk-averse and is difficult to attain a cost (Mohammad et al., 2019). Other scholars also highlighted the different issues in the context of food tourism, as food tourism is claimed to be one of the factors in gaining tourist arrival, which adds the quality problem and authenticity of the food offerings, which come from mass tourism, and diminishes the authenticity of the experience (Hosany et al., 2021). The inconsistency of the food offerings has been a major dissatisfaction towards the local food experience and may leave a bad claiming on the tourist's assessment. From the quality perspective in perceiving the rational value of a particular destination, food tourism experience needs to involve value communication and reality expectation. These have been discussed openly as clear communication is needed for marketing strategy and experience can be met (Sthapit et al., 2021; Sthapit et al., 2020). However, in the Malaysian context, there is lack of research evidence that links tourism economic impacts such as perceived value with destination image (Ismail et al., 2025). While perceived value has been studied in relation to loyalty and satisfaction in Malaysia (Abdul Wahab et al., 2022), the relationship is frequently modelled as direct and linear. Such modelling assumes that value perceptions automatically improve destination image (Leow et al., 2024). However, this assumption overlooks the operational mechanisms through which value is created and delivered. Thus, if perceived value declines due to inconsistencies in authenticity, communication gaps, or quality factor, the issue may reflect to both consumer and innovation and service adaptation.

Other than that, the core issue of innovation practices has been seen as relatively impacting tourist destination image and food tourism negatively in Malaysia as business organisation is not taking a risky approach (Nor et al., 2016). Innovation practices act as a crucial mediator because they allow tourism stakeholders to leverage human capital and perceived value to improve tourist destination image. In order to integrate new technologies, application, and value concentration to enhance competitiveness, it has been mentioned by scholars that a systematic approach to technology integration will effectively profit from local experience and serve as a sustainable improvement (Cardoso & Fraga, 2024). Abdullah et al. (2023) revealed that only 47.5% of food tourism professionals in Malaysia continue to maintain product or services innovations that are in the market, highlighting a significant gap in leveraging human capital and perceived value. This underscores the urgent need for innovation practices as the key

mechanism to transform expertise and resources into enhanced tourist experiences. Meanwhile, another study highlighted on the issue that many food businesses are struggling to maintain the identity of the food and also the concept of improvement due to the contradiction of food knowledge in terms of ingredients and other factors (Abdullah et al., 2024). However, in concentrating on the value, it unfolds the perspective on how tourists will experience the potential within the actual cultural and food experiences (Cardoso & Fraga, 2024). Existing studies mentioned technology adoption (Zhu et al., 2024), product modification, and service improvement, however, these are often discussed separately. In a regional landscape where competitors actively influenced by gastronomic branding and experiential innovation, such assumption may be insufficient. The issue more towards whether innovation practices can enhance experiential differences and market positioning.

The core problem is a structural inconsistency where high potential in food tourism is undermined by a lack of innovation practices to bridge the gap between human skills and tourist value expectations. Prior studies on human capital, perceived value, innovation practices and destination image remain conceptually fragmented. They are frequently examined separately or through direct relationships without investigating mediating mechanism that explains how internal capabilities transformed into destination image. The variables mentioned would be sufficient to fill in the gap in the study of tourist destination image as; human capital is directly influenced destination image in terms of training and knowledge enhancement (Mustafa et al., 2021; Adros & Wee, 2019), perceived value assessing monetary and experiential experience for overall satisfaction (Nergui et al., 2023), and this study will explore innovation practices as the mediating role in overcoming the challenges for sustainable improvements. Therefore, a systematic examination of the mediating role of innovation practices between human capital, perceived value, and tourist destination image is necessary to provide mechanism explanation of food tourism competitiveness in Malaysia.

1.4 Research Objectives

The main objectives of this research are to study Malaysian food tourism destination image through its relationship with tourism activities, human capital and innovation practices as the mediating factor. Below are the main points that have been taken into consideration:

1. To investigate the relationship between human capital and innovation practices in the context of Malaysian food tourism.
2. To investigate the relationship between perceived value and innovation practices in the context of Malaysian food tourism.
3. To investigate the relationship between innovation practices and tourist destination image in the context of Malaysian food tourism.
4. To investigate the relationship between human capital and tourist destination image in the context of Malaysian food tourism.
5. To investigate the relationship between perceived value and tourist destination image in the context of Malaysian food tourism.
6. To test the mediating effect of innovation practices:
 - a. To examine the mediating effect of innovation practices on human capital and destination image in the context of Malaysian food tourism.
 - b. To examine the mediating effect of innovation practices on perceived value and destination image in the context of Malaysian food tourism.
7. To identify the dimensions of human capital in the context of the Malaysian food tourism industry.
8. To identify the dimensions of perceived value in the context of the Malaysian food tourism industry.
9. To identify the dimensions of innovation practices in the context of the Malaysian food tourism industry.
10. To identify the dimensions of destination image in the context of the Malaysian food tourism industry.

1.5 Research Questions

To underpin the research objectives of this study, the following research questions have been constructed:

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Research Question 1 | What is the relationship between human capital and innovation practices in the context of Malaysian food tourism? |
| Research Question 2 | What is the relationship between perceived value and innovation practices in the context of Malaysian food |

	tourism?
Research Question 3	What is the relationship between innovation practices and tourist destination image in the context of Malaysian food tourism?
Research Question 4	What is the relationship between human capital and tourist destination image in the context of Malaysian food tourism?
Research Question 5	What is the relationship between perceived value and tourist destination image in the context of Malaysian food tourism?
Research Question 6	Is there any significant mediating effect on tourist destination image?
Research Question 6(a)	To what extent does innovation practices mediate the relationship between human capital and tourist destination image in the context of Malaysian food tourism?
Research Question 6(b)	To what extent does innovation practices mediate the relationship between perceived value and tourist destination image in the context of Malaysian food tourism?
Research Question 7	What constitutes the human capital dimensions in the context of food tourism in Malaysia?
Research Question 8	What constitutes the perceived value dimensions in the context of food tourism in Malaysia?
Research Question 9	What constitutes the innovation practices dimensions in the context of food tourism in Malaysia?
Research Question 10	What constitutes the destination image dimensions in the context of food tourism in Malaysia?

1.6 Hypotheses

The implementation of the theoretical framework adopted from a previous study has developed an empirical study on tourist destination image and the relation between human capital, perceived value, and innovation practices. The comparison can be found with predictors of human capital, perceived value, and innovation practices need to be

studied to analyse how tourist destination image would react. However, the hypotheses can be examined and analysed through tourist, human capital, perceived value, innovation practices and destination image. In this study, innovation practices will be proposed as a mediating construct and tourist destination image as the dependent variable for the determinants to be processed. The hypotheses are formulated as follows:

H1: There is a significant relationship between human capital and innovation practices.

H2: There is a significant relationship between perceived value and innovation practices.

H3: There is a significant relationship between innovation practices and tourist destination image.

H4: There is a significant relationship between human capital and tourist destination image.

H5: There is a significant relationship between perceived value and tourist destination image.

H6: Innovation practices as a mediator

H6(a): Innovation practices mediate the relationship between human capital and tourist destination image.

H6(b): Innovation practices mediate the relationship between perceived value and tourist destination image.

H7: Confirming the human capital dimensions:

H7(a): Skill is confirmed as human capital dimension.

H7(b): Cultural Competence is confirmed as human capital dimension.

H8: Confirming the perceived value dimensions:

H8(a): Social value is confirmed as perceived value dimension.

H8(b): Emotional value is confirmed as perceived value dimension.

H8(c): Functional value is confirmed as perceived value dimension.

H8(d): Monetary value is confirmed as perceived value dimension.

H9: Confirming the innovation practices dimensions:

H9(a): Product is confirmed as innovation practices dimension.

H9(b): Service is confirmed as innovation practices dimension.

H9(c): Process is confirmed as innovation practices dimension.

H9(d): Organisational is confirmed as innovation practices dimension.

H9(e): Marketing is confirmed as innovation practices dimension.

H10: Confirming the destination image dimension:

H10(a): Intention to travel is confirmed as destination image dimension.

H10(b): Revisit intention is confirmed as destination image dimension.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The current study focuses on four different constructs consisting of HC, PV, IP, and TDI in the context of the food tourism industry, whereas tourists to the destination, particularly in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, will be engaged as the respondents. This study helps in visualising the effect on the destination image perceived by the tourists in the context of food tourism and in confirming the dimensions of HC, PV, IP, and TDI. In addition, this study will help to see the interaction and its correlation between variables namely, HC, PV, IP, and TDI. Furthermore, its target population encompasses domestic and international tourists in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, Malaysia. This has been reported by Tourism Malaysia, whereby in 2023, the total number of tourist arrivals in Malaysia was slightly decreased compared to in 2019. The total number of tourist arrivals in Malaysia in 2023 was 20.14 million, with total receipts received were RM71.3 million. This has been recorded according to the points of entry in Malaysia, which are by air, land, and sea. In accordance with the bigger number reported in total, a specific scope for tourist arrival in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor is highlighted. In 2023, Tourism Selangor reported that the total number of tourist arrivals to Selangor was about 6.54 million. From the statistics, 4.4 million were domestic tourists and 2.08 million were international tourists. Meanwhile, tourists to Kuala Lumpur have been recorded by using the total number of hotel guests according to the report that has been presented by Tourism Malaysia. Approximately 9.7 million domestic tourists visited Kuala Lumpur in 2023, and 8.7 million international tourists initiated their move to visit Kuala Lumpur in 2023. These states are chosen because past studies have mentioned the importance of food tourism in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor are diverse in terms of meals, distinctive gastronomic culture, and rich in ethnic food traditions (Omar et al., 2022; Abdullah & Isa, 2020). This has been emphasised to be more clinical to measure the significance before the current study.

Previous evidence on food tourism or food tourism in Malaysia has made a

significant contribution to the literature. The evidence has revealed that the motivation and destination loyalty have impacted economic growth in a way for local profitability (Nasir et al., 2021). Before the study, it was also suggested that a bigger scope of destination loyalty will represent a better perspective on tourist experience and destination image. However, in terms of human capital, perceived value, and innovation practices, there is a need to examine the relationship between tourist destination image and these variables. In the context of food tourism in Malaysia, there are limited studies on such areas. Thus, this study focuses on Malaysian food tourism, examining how human capital, perceived value, and innovation practices influence the tourist destination image. It is limited to the perspectives of tourism professionals and tourists within Malaysia and employs a quantitative survey design. Despite these limitations, the study contributes meaningfully to knowledge by validating innovation practices as a mediator and providing practical insights for destination managers and policymakers to strengthen Malaysia's food tourism appeal.

1.8 Significance of the Study

1.8.1 Theoretical Contribution

The sole purpose of this study in terms of contribution to the research study is to provide a theoretical understanding that covers the relation between variables. The study is intended to discuss on theoretical underpinnings, which uses previous researchers' information and knowledge regarding the particular topic in the study. At the construct level, this study extends the conceptualization of human capital and perceived value within the food tourism context. By examining skills, knowledge, and cultural competence of tourism professionals, and how tourists perceive value in food experiences, the study refines existing definitions and measurement scales, providing a more nuanced understanding relevant to tourism destinations. It is essential to help the study achieve its objective to assess the variables proposed.

Based on the highlighted construct in the study, there are several points that can be discussed. At the model level, the study introduces innovation practices as a mediating mechanism connecting human capital and perceived value to tourist destination image. This integration advances theory by demonstrating how innovation operationalizes human and perceived value resources, providing a theoretically

grounded pathway that has not been fully explored in food tourism research. Human capital has several indicators that represent the construct, which can contribute to the human capital assessment. The skills and knowledge that are useful in sustainability can maximise its usage, and it will influence local food producers and service providers to enhance their food tourism experience. It is clearly stated by O'Connor and Murphy (2022) which discussed on the importance of food experiences will benefit food tourism and the destination image. This shows how essential human capital is as a resource in tourism development and sustainability. Based on the study of perceived value, Kim and Lee (2023) mentioned that perceived value theory can be enhanced to the extent that it can identify specific attributes of food tourism and its influence on the tourists' value assessments.

This statement represents how perceived value in destination image will benefit food tourism, which includes the emotion, sensory, and cultural uniqueness of food experience. In order to find the best quality of experience, innovation practices are the best tool to represent the business development. The innovation theory that is discussed in this study will provide a better perspective on food tourism by exploring the sustainable sourcing in handling the food and beverage industry, and also experiential dining (Garcia & Matute, 2024). This can clearly enhance a destination's competitiveness to compete with other competitors. By looking at the innovation practices, it will assist not just on the business side, but the food tourism and destination image. At the contextual level, the study applies these theoretical constructs to Malaysia, addressing a gap in Western-centric tourism models. By investigating Malaysian food tourism, the study highlights how local cultural, operational, and market-specific factors influence the dynamics of human capital, perceived value, and innovation practices, thereby enhancing the contextual validity and applicability of the theory.

Furthermore, this study will contribute to the destination image theory by analysing how food tourism can influence destination image, particularly through value offerings such as a unique image of the place and food offerings (ambience, environment, food quality, serving, and taste) (Chan & Badhuri, 2021). By looking at the contribution, this study can provide a comprehensive framework that connects human capital, perceived value, innovation practices, and tourist destination image in the context of food tourism. This approach will enrich the academic literature and practical insights for stakeholders in the tourism industry.

1.8.2 Practical Contribution

Apparently, in this study, practical contributions can be highlighted in several key aspects which contribute highly to the area of specification. In the context of practicality, policymakers should take ahead of insights on the targeted strategies that enhance human capital in the food tourism sector. By referring to the statement, policymakers should be aware that stakeholders will need to go through various assessments and trainings for the development of skills and to improve service quality and overall tourist experiences (Nguyen et al., 2022). In addition to the discussion on the tourist experience and service quality, innovation practices and perceived value have been mentioned as factors to expand the tourist destination image (Khan et al., 2021). As the importance of innovation practices and perceived value are highlighted, it will help destination marketing organisations to mould a concept for attracting tourists to revisit, as well as an effective tool for branding strategies to resonate with potential customers. By improving destination branding, this will help food tourism market to have a stronger competitive advantage (Khan, et al., 2021). Furthermore, the insights in this study will assist training programme to enhance human capital capability in the food tourism. This programme will equip local businesses with the necessary skills to innovate and provide a high level of indication for food experiences (Bhat et al., 2020). In accordance with the linking of food tourism, the local economy will benefit in the process. New job opportunities can be achieved, foster entrepreneurship in the minds of local people, and stimulate the economic capabilities for local development (Hsu et al., 2024). Thus, it is necessary for these predictors to be studied to see whether tourist destination image in the context of food tourism can be prospered and to gain a sustainable indicator for local economic growth.

The findings of the current study will contribute significantly to the role of food tourism in Malaysia in shaping tourists' perceptions of a destination. The organisation of the findings will provide an added value for cultural authenticity and innovative practices. Local business and tourism boards can leverage these insights to develop sustainable food experiences and form marketing campaigns that highlight the multicultural and diverse food in Malaysia. By looking at the possibility of fostering creative initiatives such as Malaysian food festivals, collaborations with local chefs and tourism providers, or a digital platform showcasing the uniqueness of Malaysian food tourism. Furthermore, the current study is important in investing in training

programmes to enhance the cultural competence of human capital in the food tourism sector and ensuring the quality and authenticity to preserve the perceived value. These practical contributions demonstrate how the findings can directly support the sustainability of food tourism in Malaysia and enhance the overall tourist destination image.

1.9 Summary of the Chapter

The background of the study in this chapter is an essential course for the understanding of the whole writing structure. It helps the reader to understand the reasons for the study to be conducted. Problem statements in this study have indicated that the issues and factors affecting by referring to the research indicators. After all, this chapter explains the problem, issues, objective, and hypotheses that will be discussed further in the next chapter. In particular, this chapter provides an insight for the reader to analyse the significance and contribution of the study. Besides, there are a few discussions on how the study on tourist destination image can contribute to the predictors, although there are limited studies on the subject. Therefore, this chapter brings the reader to understand the study purposes and serves as an eye-opener for different kinds of perspectives. The next chapter will be a continuation of this chapter, which provides a detailed explanation of the literature. Theories and hypotheses development will be essential in providing further explanation on how the study will be conducted. The framework of the study will be figured out and the overall organisation of the study will prevail.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Preamble

This chapter provides an overview of the tourism industry, tourist intention on the perceived quality, Malaysian food tourist destination image and issues related to the management that were faced by the restaurants. It also includes the theories related to the study, attributes of innovation practices, the attributes of human capital, attributes of tourist motivation and the attributes of restaurant performance. Other than that, it also covers the whole framework that has been discussed in Chapter One, including the variables used in the framework.

2.2 Travel and Tourism Industry Development

Sofronov (2018) has claimed that the development of the travel and tourism industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the world. It reaches a high involvement in terms of tourism workers and tourists. According to ICAO (2018), an estimated 118 million in total employment worldwide was reported in 2017. It involves other sub-sectors that are employed under the tourism industry, such as car rental services, hotel and resorts, cruises, and other types of tourism activities. During COVID-19, the tourism industry was in deep despair and was affected the industry physically and economically all over the world (Richter, 2021). It leaves an unbearable burden on the structure of the sector, and it has to rebuild it from scratch. In the recovery phase, Babii and Nadeem (2021) reported that most governments in Asia Pacific countries are providing financial support to assist the travel and tour companies. Looking at the trend, during the post-pandemic period, there is a new continuing trend which focuses on eco-tourism, including health and wellness tourism. One of the popular destinations, Seoul, has been reported will become a demanded destination for international tourists (Lee, 2023). It has been confirmed by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) CEO during the TravMedia Summit Asia, which was held at the Swissotel the Stamford in Singapore. Seoul would be a powerhouse in the tourism industry in the Asia Pacific

region and a main attraction for domestic and international tourists.

In the case of the Southeast Asia region, the tourism industry has an uneven recovery. This is said to be imbalanced progress towards the progressive arrival within the industry (Chen et al., 2022). Looking at Singapore and the Philippines, these two countries have been reported to have some upticks in bookings. This is according to their governments; they are the first to cut the red line between pandemic and the tourism business. While Chinese tourist is expected to flood the region with their arrival, Southeast Asia countries such as Malaysia have been informed to strengthen their strategy to secure their arrivals (Mahavera, 2023).

2.2.1 Travel and Tourism Industry in Malaysia

The evolving sector, following the current trend and newly discovered technology, has been seen in the tourism industry development in Malaysia. There are several sub-sectors that are connected with the travel and tourism industry in Malaysia, namely hotel and resorts, tour operating and travel businesses, food and beverages and rental services (MIDA, 2020). These are the sectors which contributed to the GDP of Malaysia. In accordance with the development of tourism activities in Malaysia, Tourism Malaysia, under the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia (MoTAC), has provided a blueprint which can be used for the strategic planning to stimulate the progress of tourism activities in Malaysia. Based on the strategic planning (Tourism Malaysia, 2021), the ministry had planned various types of eco-friendly activities which involve eco-packages and nature-based activities. Using this framework, Tourism Malaysia is actually strategised for six focusing unit which evolves within boost domestic promotion (create niche segments and special interest market), forge smart partnership (reinvent tourism product, collaborate with government and non-government agencies and strengthen cooperation with industry players), enhance tourism promotion via online and offline, optimize strategic communication and media engagement, implement travel bubble (collaborate with neighbouring countries to promote niche tourism products), and undertake strategic transformation. This strategic plan had to be planned to focus on the development of travel and tourism activities in Malaysia during post-Covid period.

Travel and tourism development in Malaysia can be seen succeeded to be one of the popular destinations for food and beverages (food tourism) (Som et al., 2020). This has been reported by Tourism Malaysia (2020), whereby the report was in accordance with the receipts received from the tourists. The trend can be seen as the distinguishing of the food and beverages industry in Malaysia is dependent on to travel and tourism industry.

2.3 The Insights of Food Tourism

In the travel and tourism industry, food can be seen as being as important as the destination's impactful image of the destination, which provides attraction value for tourists to choose that particular destination. Hence, the intersection of tourism and food artistry, which specifically highlights food value, is known as food tourism (Thio et al., 2024). From the start, food tourism has become an essential element in destination marketing and cultural development, which represents the unique value of the place. It has been stated that authenticity, local and unique value of food experiences can be portrayed from the food quality that has been served for cultural appropriation (Chang, et al., 2022). Based on the statement made by a previous study on food tourism, other scholars have reached a better explanation of food tourism, which local food can be served as a gateway to understand the culture that is being promoted, the local tradition, and the values in the destination involved (Hjalager & Richards, 2021). Most of the scholars mentioned about experiential value portrayed by food quality and its cultural value. This leads to the discussion on the food tourism being an important part in destination image.

Furthermore, in Asia, food tourism plays a different part in marketing development. It plays with more pivotal role due to the region's rich food diversity and historical ties to food culture (Okumus & Koseoglu, 2021). There are countries in Asia which have emerged as major food tourism destinations in the world, global tourism destinations that examine the variety of both traditional and contemporary food scenes (Kim & Iwashita, 2020). Commonly, the Asian food tourism trail is marked by its uniqueness and dynamic interplay between street food, high-end food, and food-related events (Durmaz et al., 2020). Based on studies on food tourism in Asia indicate a reflection on broader societal trends and the integration of technology (Park et al., 2022;

Cohen & Avieli, 2020).

However, in Southeast Asia, the diversity of food tourism heritage has been spotted as a prime destination and attraction. The reason has mainly attracted domestic and international tourists to choose Southeast Asia as their next destination. Countries such as Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia have strong movement and offering of unique food tourism experiences and tied to the cultural history, identity and local traditions (Durmaz, et al., 2020). In Thailand, food tourism is synonymous with its street food. They offered a variety of delicious ingredients, which can be classified as top-tier in the Southeast Asia region. Thai food tourism thrives on its uniqueness, value, quality, authenticity, and food experience that would not be copied by any other country (Wattanacharoensil & Schukert, 2021). The country has also leveraged on organising food festivals, cooking classes, and food tours to enhance the quality of experience, where its main agenda is to make food its central role in travel planning (Cheng & Jiang, 2024).

The popularity of *pho* and *banh mi* in Vietnam can be described as one of the astonishing dishes which contribute to the growth of Vietnam as one of the gastronomic hubs in Southeast Asia (Hansen et al., 2024). Food tours in cities have offered an immersive experience for tourist to enjoy the city tour and nature tour as well as their insight into food experiences (Kinh & Sim, 2019). Meanwhile, Indonesia provides various types of food tourism food trails that reflect the country's ethnic diversity and cultural landscape (Park & Widyanta, 2022). The food tourism in Indonesia is one of the examples which provides food storytelling, offering travellers a deeper connection with the local communities and their traditions (Ardika et al., 2021). While Thailand and Indonesia have successfully leveraged street food as a key value-driver in tourism, Malaysia's multicultural food heritage presents a unique opportunity to enhance perceived value and shape a distinct tourist destination image. This highlights the need to examine how Malaysian food tourism integrates human capital, innovation practices, and perceived value to strengthen the country's competitive positioning.

2.3.1 Food Tourism in Malaysia

The concept of food tourism in Malaysia comes from the unique food tourism

landscape, characterised by its multicultural cuisine that symbolises the consolidation of various cultures that blend Malay, Chinese, and Indian. The influence of this culture is also centred on street food diversity, such as *nasi lemak*, *char kuey teow*, and *roti canai*. The pivotal roles of these street foods have become valuable in organising the development of food tourism in Malaysia. Furthermore, food markets and night bazaars are one of the major attractions in Malaysia, offering a wide variety of flavourful and affordable dishes (Kokkranikal et al., 2021). In addition, the effort to make food tourism in Malaysia one of the attractions that needs to be explored is the influence of halal food tourism, which provides a trail for the Muslim market (Yusoff et al., 2020). The understanding of its diversity cannot be found in any other region or continent in the world. The unique taste and values development of food tourism in Southeast Asia exemplify the need for food in the tourism industry. The food journey becomes a major part of the experience of travel. The destination's ability to provide a better quality, uniqueness and values on the plate has provided the region as a leading destination for food enthusiasts globally (Naruetharadhol & Gebombut, 2022). Thus, food tourism is an important influence on the image of the destination and to attract tourists domestically and internationally to come to the particular destination.

2.3.2 Malaysian Food Tourism Influence on the Tourism Industry in Malaysia

Food tourism in Malaysia has emerged to become one of the sub-sectors that contribute to the economic growth and development. It is also run as a country's appealing industry, which is needed in the daily working environment as well as the national growth. As stated by Mohamad et al. (2021), Malaysia is rich with its diversity of culture and heritage. These diversities have shaped the entire environment of multi-ethnic society, and it also shaped the scene of food tourism. The uniqueness of the taste and the flavour come from diverse cultures, which blend with Malay, Chinese, Indian, and indigenous food traditions, and have shaped the culture to be an exciting destination to visit by travellers (Yusoff et al., 2020). In recent years, food tourism has developed well to be a marketable subject to promote cultural exchange and understanding, while it works as an agent for sustainable tourism practices. Previous studies have suggested that food tourism in Malaysia not only enhances the tourist experience but also plays an

essential role in preserving local food producers and supporting the traditions (Cheah et al., 2023). This exceptional promotion has admittable created a better demand for gastronomic experiences as well as sustainability of heritage and culture in Malaysia (Kamarulbaid & Mustapha, 2021).

In addition, food festivals and related events are essential to create awareness for food tourism in engaging domestic and international arrivals. For instance, the Penang International Food Festival and the Malaysian International Gastronomy Festival have drawn a branding image for the food industry in Malaysia and attracted both domestic and international tourists (Ramli & Aziz, 2022). The growing interest in food in Malaysia has provided an underscore to be studied to enhance a better quality of food and travel experiences. It is highly considered as one of the impactful influences to set an image for the tourist to come to Malaysia with their personal interest as well as their experience to be enhanced (Salleh & Mat, 2023). Therefore, it can be concluded that food tourism in Malaysia is one of the biggest influences for the destination to expand and grow economically. Building on the previous work by various scholars, food tourism in Malaysia has been shown to enhance tourist experience and preserve the heritage that residual in the local customs. While it has been stated in the development context, limited studies are focusing on the specific value or uniqueness following the human capital factors, such as cultural competence, that could enhance the value of food tourism, tourist experience, and strengthen Malaysia's image as one of the top destinations for food tourism in Southeast Asia. Further study is needed to address how the human capital construct, including the dimensions of skills and cultural competence, as well as perceived value and innovation practices, contributes to the sustainability in the context of food tourism in Malaysia.

2.4 Human Capital Definition

Human capital is referred to as the movement of the business. The quality of human capital development in a business should be emphasised for its effectiveness in the economic structure (Ouedraogo et al., 2022). A study in Africa by Ouedraogo et al. (2022) stated that human capital development will benefit the entire system of equitable, inclusive, and lifelong learning opportunities, which can be measured through the cruciality of human capital formation. In fact, Jahanger et al. (2022) mentioned that

human capital development has driven the prospect for 73 developing countries for 26 years from 1990 until 2016. The technological advancement, as well as the knowledge, has enhanced their ability to pursue another perspective in human capital development. However, the definition of human capital needs to be highlighted to conduct a thorough study of the development of its attributes. Becker (1996) has made an interesting discovery about where the human capital is rooted. The truest meaning of human capital can be illustrated as a simplification of the specific roles in knowledge, skills, creativity, and health of the individual (Becker, 2002).

By looking at the definition, Becker believes there are different meanings in human capital, financial capital and physical capital. The differences make it easier to understand which capital can be effectively used in argumentation on a different set of knowledge. Becker added that these aspects cannot be separated from their skill, health and value but can be separated from assets and properties. Therefore, the focus area in these aspects is human capital, which involves the whole sustainability of capital. According to Schultz (1961), in order to have an excellent foundation in human capital, formal education and training are the tools to be considered in the development of human capital. These tools could bring genuine empowerment in the success of human capital from the beginning. Nonetheless, Pasban and Nojedeheh (2016) argued that human capital has various definitions that can be fused, which could lead to different characteristics of human capital. On the other hand, Kucharčíková (2011) explained that there is a structure that can make it easier to predict the movement of human capital, and what the approaches are that human capital uses for a better understanding.

The approaches are as below, where Figure 2.1 had a similar perspective on perceived quality that knowledge offered in management approach, whereby a study of mediating contribution of knowledge management that involves human capital as the construct has a finding that contributed to the knowledge quality (Al-Tit et al., 2022). An evident that has been published in the study shows knowledge management is strongly related to the development of human capital in the management approach. In addition, Siam et al. (2023) have the same contribution for their argumentative statement where they stated that knowledge can be a foundation for human capital development as it will result in a productive output in work performance through knowledge, skills, education and experience.

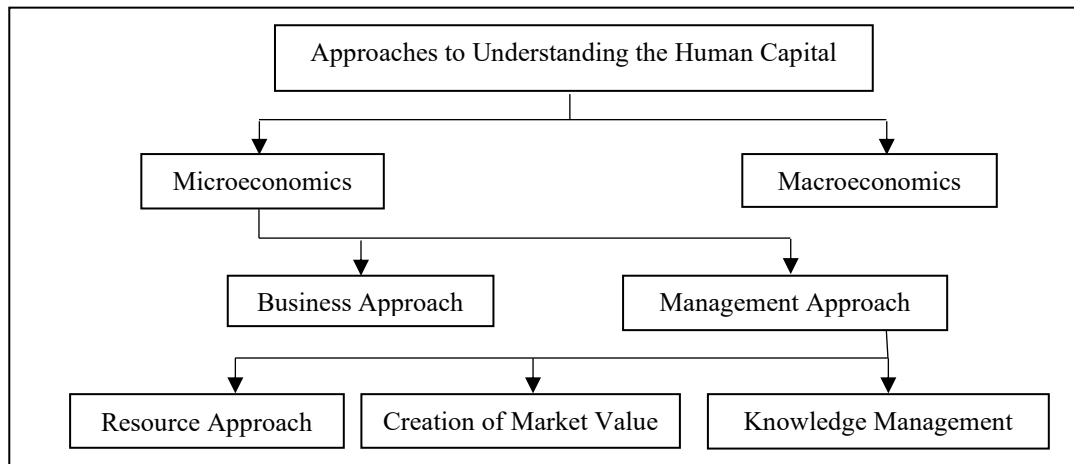


Figure 2.1 Structure of Approaches to Understanding the Human Capital
(Kucharčíková, 2011)

2.4.1 Human Capital in Tourism and Food Tourism

Entrepreneurship becomes a structural motivation for businesses to bloom. In order to take on the business world, human capital must be involved in the process, which covers the aspects of knowledge, skills, education and experience. Previous studies have discovered that an innovative approach to human capital has a better result in the business (Perez & de Pablos, 2003; Lee et al., 2016b; Banmairuoy et al., 2022). Based on the studies, they agreed that an approach such as an innovative system in maintaining the human capital must come through the various aspects. However, they specified that the ultimate development comes from knowledge-oriented management and leadership. Sustainability in competitive advantage in human capital will lead to the betterment of the business structure (Banmairuoy et al., 2022). The effectiveness of human capital from a business perspective is closely related to the tourism and restaurant industry, as it works as a business module.

The form of quality in human capital possesses has made tourism (Thrane, 2008) and the restaurant industry (Lee et al., 2016a) bloom through various aspects of human capital development. It is believed that the tourism industry has its own progress in absorbing the human capital aspects in managing the resources. Thrane (2008) mentioned that knowledge and experience in the field have brought tourism industry

players to become dynamic in their management roles. Yirong (2021) argued that human capital in the tourism industry is not just involved in knowledge, but it involves a lifelong educational system. It can be seen through various evidence which demonstrated innovative human capital had influenced the employees to be productive (Esu, 2012; Hajiyeve & Teymurova, 2019; Aman-Ullah et al., 2022). This evidence is essential to view the aspects of human capital involved in the process of preparing the quality in the tourism industry. It can be an essential model for competitive advantage as it needs an actual result in relation to the restaurant industry.

The food industry is highly related to the tourism industry as it is seen as one of the motivations for tourists to travel (Karim & Chi, 2013). An empirical study on how the restaurant industry, specifically in food tourism, has a holistic meaning to the tourist is somehow needs to be mentioned. Many tourists have their intention on food that they have tasted and revisit the host country for that specific interest. From a business perspective, this factor comes from the knowledge and skills that have been moulded into the human capital quality (Park et al., 2017). From the viewpoint of human resource practices, a business's investment in human capital will become the strategy to compete with other competitors. Depending on how the management would maximise their understanding and knowledge on the usage of human capital, the restaurant investment in human capital will generate (1) job satisfaction, (2) employee loyalty to the organisation, and (3) prevention of employees' unfavourable behaviour. Lee et al. (2016b) argued that restaurant owners should emphasise increasing the quality of human capital by investing, and it will therefore increase the profitability, cognitive abilities and enhanced restaurant performance. The human capital, however, needs to be studied as it requires superior attention to rebuild and re-strengthen the system from the root (Asoba & Patricia, 2021). Despite the studies that have been reported relating to the successful stories of human capital in business, there is scarce evidence for human capital in the intervening relation with successful restaurant businesses (Jogaratham, 2017; Asoba & Patricia, 2021).

The involvement of skills and cultural competence is the aspects that need to be studied in the theory of human capital, which explains how these are the basic formulation for the growth of human capital (Nafukho et al., 2004) in the tourism industry perspective, specifically in food tourism. From the view of the tourism industry,

human capital theory will play an essential role to be added to the cubical of dimensions. As the theory would have a definite explanation on how the owners would invest in education and energy to gain knowledge and experience, in order for them to get a better opportunity. Schultz (1961) prepared a written review on the human capital investment would benefit the organisation and also the individual. Hanushek et al. (2021) supported the argument that the effectiveness of human capital can be attributed to the adequate dimensions of knowledge, skills, experience and education (Maran et al., 2009). However, in the current study, skills are necessary to be measured for the tourist as previous studies were limited to the managerial measurement (Kamal & Begum, 2019; Assaker et al., 2018; Rejeb et al., 2023). The perspective of tourists should be measured to get a reliable response from the analysis that will be conducted. While based on previous studies mentioned, the primary exploration focused on managerial perspectives in measuring human capital dimensions. Furthermore, there are limited studies exploring tourists' perspectives on the skills and cultural competence dimensions of human capital in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. Further research is needed to eventually measure how tourists perceive the skills and cultural competence of local tourism providers. In the meantime, it will contribute to the destination image of the destination. Their perspectives could provide valuable insights into enhancing human capital's impact on food tourism destinations. Hence, skills will be a sole dimension for human capital in the current study to measure the perspective of tourists on human capital in the destination.

2.4.2 Human Capital Dimension

2.4.2.1 Skills

The competency effectiveness depends on the necessary skills learnt through education, knowledge and experience. According to Genc and Kozak (2020), managers should equip themselves with social awareness skills, relationship management skills and empathy. These are the soft skills that relate to the hospitality and tourism industry. Fischer and Nijkamp (2021) stated that education is after the skills. Theoretically, education will be a root of every knowledge, and to get the skills, one must go through a variety of experiences, as it will change the thinking and working order. Lise and

Postel-Viney (2020) argued that skills will improve if employees use them regularly and lose some of those if they do not use them. Therefore, to exploit skills to maximum capacity, one needs to constantly use the skills. Tfaily (2018) on her statement highlighted that skills in the tourism industry are very important. The study predicted that skills will be one of the factors that is needed in the industry development, and it involves interpersonal skills, communication skills, the pleasure of service provided, the ability to meet the needs of the customers, teamwork skills, and the understanding of tourists' expectations. These skillsets are crucial in tourism and hospitality as they come forward and align with the process. In terms of operation, tourists will be the first to get to experience the skills of these employees, and it will be necessary to have a thought of their showing.

The literacy skills in hospitality and tourism management are an important asset in the industry (Adeyinka-Ojo et al., 2020). It is critical to have such skills in the industry, as the industry remains demanding of the skilled and knowledgeable employee. To establish the skill gap in the industry, the researcher has suggested that the main aim for the industry to develop is to have useful training and education to assist the industry's needs and wants. In the study of gaps between competence and importance of employability skills in Malaysia, the researcher has gathered a solid result, which states that employability skills are the most fundamental in order to have competency (Kenayathulla et al., 2019). The study has found that education and knowledge are the vital points in skill development. In order to produce highly competent employees and skilful, factors such as a competitive workforce that implements innovation, creativity and knowledge will help the industry to run.

While the study on the relationship of human capital and destination image is not widely discussed, as it focuses more on the managerial part and organisational process, it is necessary to use this perspective to measure the tourist opinion on the human capital. Therefore, the human capital construct and its dimension, namely skills, are the predictors that provide a better perspective for tourists in the current study.

2.4.2.2 Cultural Competence

Cultural competency is within the context of human capital, which focuses on

the cross-cultural interaction between individuals or groups of people. In human capital studies, cultural competence can be described as one of the important factors in human capital interaction, especially in organisational interaction. Shaffer (1998) provided an understanding of cultural competence in the context of business performance, where he highlighted the importance of social relations to understand different skills, knowledge, and other necessary influences on human capital factors. The development of cultural competency is studied within the context of health and medicine in the early phase of the term to be mentioned (Shaffer, 1998). The term was studied to understand different social levels' attributes, common barriers, and to develop an understanding and problem-solving of the problems that occur. However, it has developed to be effective for the business organisation as it has been mentioned as one of the tools in gaining competitive advantage and perceived value (Noerchoidah & Eliyana, 2015). There are many implications that have been mentioned by mastering cultural competency involving social and emotional measures (Emmerling & Boyatzis, 2012). Based on the previous study on the literature, social and emotional cultural competency are manifestation of the intention and behaviour situation. It is according to their ability to receive the differences and to apply them to their behaviour. Mouboua et al. (2024) added that human capital could be operated effectively by giving cultural competence spaces through the business process. It will encourage multilingualism, utilising cross-cultural communication, and meaningful employee interaction.

Empirical evidence on cultural competence in business practices has gathered a few results from the perspectives. From the result, cultural competence has been seen as a perfect resemblance of an effective strategy for interaction and communication (Wang et al., 2014). Yamazaki and Toyama (2021) have different results where the study of cultural competence within the context of human capital has developed an understanding that the goal of management and adaptability to the culture will eventually be crucial to work settings. In the context of the tourism industry, the diversity within the market has evolved the time and eras. Previous scholars have emphasised on that cultural competence is important to gain the trust of international customers by pinpointing the service quality as significant for loyalty (Kwortnik & Thompson, 2008). The involvement of human capital in terms of tourist intention to visit and experience has constrained the factors of perceived value and also cultural

competence in the study of revisit intention (Huang & Hsu, 2009). It has been a very good interpretation of the tourist experience that includes intercultural interaction while they are travelling. Furthermore, by focusing on food tourism, the food quality and the attributes that every food resembles will provide a spectacular result on how cultural competence will react to the factors. The expansion of the term culture has opened up more opportunities for the sector to regain more recognition and acknowledgement by the domestic and international tourists (Richards, 2018). The scholar has mentioned that cultural tourism, can be used in tourism activities and cultural competence is one of the factors of human capital involved in the development. Particularly, cultural competence is important in the context of food tourism by influencing tourism providers to engage with the diverse cultures socially and emotionally. Developing cultural competence in the destination, especially in the food tourism context, will help the sector to grow and can lead to the improvement of customer satisfaction and better tourism outputs. However, there are limited studies on cultural competence in relation to other constructs. By focusing on the dimension, it will help to understand the relation towards the destination image in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. Therefore, the dimensions that are currently being studied could provide a better insight into the impact of human capital's dimensions on the food tourism industry in Malaysia.

2.5 Perceived Value: The Definition, Types, and Impact

The study of perceived value can be traced back based on the conceptualisation that has been formalised for service value developed by Zeithaml (1988). The perspective has been identified based on the perception of what it received and what was given. Within the definition, Zeithaml (1988) discovered that perceived value for service value has different meanings of value which involved; (1) value is low price, (2) value is what consumer want in the products, (3) value is what consumer received based on the price paid by the consumers, and (4) value is what the consumer gets for what they give. Based on these values that have been highlighted, the majority of past studies on perceived value focus on the fourth definition (Bojanic, 1996; Zeithaml, 1985). However, the fundamental basis to understand perceived value is developed fully by Zeithaml (1988), where the study had to conceptualise in-depth consumer acceptance of the relationships between consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value. The focus

group had been concluded to determine the attributes and variables related to the perceived value. From the study, both intrinsic and extrinsic attributes were measured, where the feelings or experience of the product purchased and the reputation of the product and service were positively related to each other. Overall measurement has been finalised where monetary and non-monetary attributes were reacted to the emotional value and then became one of the dimensions of perceived value.

On the other hand, Kantamneni and Coulson (1996) had to focus on the development of a multi-dimensional measure of perceived value. From the study that has been conducted, they utilised their students' undergraduate project to identify potential measurable dimensions for perceived value, which they concluded that societal value, experiential value, functional value, and market value. However, in a different study, emotional value needs to be involved in the dimension where it can suitably react to the customer's feelings and experience of purchasing the product based on Zeithaml (1988) (Sweeney et al., 1998). Based on the experiential value, other study has been stated that tourist's motivation involved where emotions and memorable food experience will be the case (Sthapit, et al., 2020). However, from a different perspective on the experiential, in the study of tourism destination image, referring to the results has been concluded that the relationship between destination image and perceived value based on the structural equation model shows that there is a positive relationship between tourism destination image and perceived value (Zhang & Niyomsilp, 2020). Thus, these results are strong evidence and indicators for the perceived value to have an impactful meaning in the food tourism context by looking at the other constructs.

2.5.1 Perceived Value in the Tourism Industry in the Context of Food Tourism

The concept of perceived value has been impacting valuably in terms of tourism perspectives. It has been studied that perceived value consistently gives an excellent reputation in the context of its application in the tourism industry. Previous study mentioned that perceived value provides a better solution for the country to maintain their strategy in tourist arrival (Mohamad, et al., 2019). The study indicated that the monetary value is one of the factors that contributed to the perceived value, whereby it is understandable that the relationship between perceived value and tourism satisfaction

is positively significant. Based on the other studies on similar research, empirical research disclosed that perceived value has a positive relationship with the intentions and behaviours to travel (Chen & Tsai, 2007; Mechinda et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2016). Therefore, based on the studies found that perceived value has an influence on tourist loyalty in every aspect of travel intention and motivation to travel to the particular destination. Sthapit et al. (2021) claimed that perceived value has motivated domestic and international tourists through three (3) factors, namely motivations, positive emotions, and savouring processes. To determine whether these three factors are reliable, the study mentioned about that savouring processes are included to give an intention for the tourist to recall their recent local food experiences, and this is strongly related to the psychological concept. Furthermore, savouring processes are positively influenced by other factors mentioned, as it is related to one another. This is aligned with previous scholarly statements that highlighted the local food consumption in the food tourism industry is based on overall experience during travel (Kline et al., 2018). The study also emphasised the pull factors that represent the perceived value, which it considered as an essential form in any value discussed. As stated by the scholars, motivational factors are an important foundation to attract tourists to come; however, fewer studies have been reported to specifically examine domestic tourists (Williamson & Hassanli, 2020).

Rousta and Jamshidi (2019) elaborated more on food tourism value which they indicate that there are factors that influenced tourists to revisit, including environmental beliefs and behaviours. However, the overall assessment is basically referred to the Zeithaml (1988) statement, which the offerings indicate that “what they give and what they receive”. In another study, perceived value has been strongly referred to the authenticity and how to sustain the behavioural intention based on the value practised (Chen et al., 2020). In the study of food tourism in Thailand, Jeaheng and Han (2020) concluded that perceived value made a big impact on the tourism industry in Thailand. The country is practically focusing on street food in its tourism industry, and it remains one of the images of the country. However, the tourist’s perceived value is affected by the quality of food, service quality, and also the facility. This has become an indicator for Thai street food as it is perceived for all the quality given, and also tourist have expressed their satisfaction with their experience assessment. By looking at the previous

study in the indication of the theory of perceived values, four (4) dimensions have been used in this study, which are affiliated with Zeithaml (1988), Bojanic (1996), and Rohman et al. (2023). The dimensions discussed are as follows:

2.5.2 Perceived Value Dimensions

2.5.2.1 Social Value

Empirical studies have highlighted that one of the dimensions of perceived value is social value, which comprises products and services (Mäntymäki & Salo, 2015; Choe & Kim, 2018). The social value mentioned by the previous studies explained that the social value that has been portrayed conveys the social image that includes the projection of any image that reflects their norms and associations (Elliot et al., 2011). In the study of perceived value in the tourism industry, Williams and Soutar (2009) mentioned that the travel experience gained from previous travel activities may lead to a social of oneself. By these statements that have been made by previous scholars, which indicated social value as one of the dimensions of perceived value, it is understandable that the experience plays a big role in developing social perspectives during travel. However, Choe and Kim (2018) argued that the statement widens the scope of understanding which they stating that interpersonal interactions are one of the biggest contributions by looking at the togetherness value in food tourism. In a different note, social value has been recognised to give a positive effect on tourists' attitudes and behaviours as well as to keep them approving of image branding (Gonçalves et al., 2016; Sweeny & Soutar, 2001). Therefore, social value is closely related to the self-concept in social life obtained from social acceptance by consumers. In addition, consumer groups have their own capabilities in rearranging social acceptance based on the products they consume and how the image of the products affects social norms and social circle (Rohman et al., 2023).

2.5.2.2 Emotional Value

The tourism industry accommodated many opportunities for the destination to grow and to develop by increasing the value of the destination and also enhancing the

quality. By looking at the previous study on perceived value, emotional value is mainly involved in the process, as it takes travel activities as the main contributors to the local economy (Rousta & Jamshidi, 2019). In the research of perceived value on tourism products, emotional value is very important in the process to influence tourists to gain their satisfaction and to explore and have a new experience at the destination (Sanchez et al., 2006). The emotion involved when the tourist gets to experience the enjoyment, relaxation, and other factors, including the food trail, to get the satisfaction desired. In another study on emotional value, the nature of the value could create positive or negative affective states, which come from consumption of hedonic products such as tourism (Caber et al., 2020). In their findings, they have concluded that emotional value is the most important dimension in tourism activities, including food tourism. Phau et al. (2014) made a clear statement that the study on tourist activities involving young Australian tourist's perceived value has resulted to the emotional value impacting the revisit intention on the destination and perceived destination image. A study on food tourism indicated the results in emotional value in the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) towards destination image, which stated that emotional value is the most significant contributor to the destination image (Choe & Kim, 2018). Therefore, emotional value plays a pivotal role in terms of tourist experience and satisfaction. It could make another distinguished effort on other determinants, namely human capital and innovation practices, in the context of food tourism, as it has limited studies on these constructs. However, it can be useful to know that the predictors for tourist destination image will have an impactful perspective on the food tourism overall assessment. Thus, from the study, the emotional value dimension gives a crucial point in the study of perceived value towards the customer perspectives.

2.5.2.3 Functional Value

A comparative study of the values on corporate brand preferences has discovered that functional value and emotional value are interrelated (Kato, 2021). The evidence from the study has achieved a significant discovery where emotional value is more valuable than functional value. However, in terms of essentiality, functional value could not be separated in both the business and tourism industries. Functional value can be

said as one of the reasons why a product can perform and how durable it is to consumer satisfaction and adaptability (Adams, 2012; Noble & Kumar, 2008). Empirical evidence suggested that functional value is a utility derived from an alternative capacity, performance, and practicality of the brand to be more valuable in the mind of consumers (Sheth et al., 1991). The concept was mentioned by a previous scholar as similar to emotional value, but more technical in functionality, rather than using experience and solely from emotion. Kato (2021) emphasised that the factors that can make functional value less practical and attractive come from consumer perspectives. In terms of practicality, the product with more optimism about the technology changes and new enhancements would not influence consumer behaviour (Dhar, 1997; Iyengar, 2011; Kato & Tsuda, 2020). The statement has resulted in another argument, which states that it is not necessarily the improvement that the consumer needs, but how the improvement can show the value of appealing to the consumers' sensibilities (Kato, 2021). Based on these arguments, another statement has impacted the whole agenda of perceived value, which will develop business and tourism activities. However, in terms of increasing tourists' satisfaction, functional value and its utilities are shown as an integral part to achieve the successful sustainability (Cempena et al., 2021).

As a service-experiences sector, such as the tourism and travel industry, the impact on the tourism image can be described based on how the tourist destination image goes through the process. In the study, Cempena et al. (2021) described that only functional value and emotional value have a significant contribution to the tourist destination image, specifically in tourists' satisfaction with the destination. Meanwhile, the result stated that social value also has its own contribution to the tourists' intention to revisit the destination. The analysis of the study has been mentioned by the researchers that the value that customers received from the whole travel experience basically comes from their expectation of the destination, which the image of the destination managed to attract the value in their behavioural senses. Other than that, education is also one of the factors that can contribute to the functional value, as stated by Kim et al. (2018). As a previous study indicated, that prestigious is one of the ways in participation and absorption of any functionality, and it will lead to other positive values (Baek et al., 2010).

2.5.2.4 Economic Value

A study on sustainable tourism has been conducted to see whether economic value has an impact towards certain progress in the tourism destination. In the study, economic value has been seen as a conductor for the tourist preference to revisit the destination and illustrate a better phenomenon on sustainability (Purwoko et al., 2022). Furthermore, the study argued that the development of tourism activities would bring economic benefits, and it resulted in the value that can be received from such activities in the sector can be profitable to the local economic growth and sustainability. The concept of perceived value, explained by previous scholars (Kohli & Grover, 2008), has made a concrete relation to economic value in tourism activities. The economic values have been studied to measure the costs and products and services that are worth investment. This has been explained as an input from the destination image that can contribute to the local economic growth and the sustainability as a whole structure in the value involvement (Cranmer et al., 2020).

Another finding from the study is that online marketing is really useful for economic value, and it placed the greatest importance on an organisational structure. By looking at the statement, it would create a better understanding of the business profitability in terms of human capital interference in the tourism destination. Wijijayanti et al. (2020) suggested that the destination should be aware and can benefit from the development of tourism. The destination should anticipate the economic growth and take advantage of the tourist arrivals. Kim, et al. (2018) argued that experience is one of the factors that serve as a progression in the economic value. They illustrated that experiences have their own stages that create a new source of value. In addition, the study informed that economic value is related to the functional value, which can be separated, and it is important to have functional quality of products and services to get economic value. Based on the evidence discussed, economic value can be one of the biggest dimensions of the benefactor values mentioned. Thus, the interaction between these dimensions has been discussed widely in the general study of perceived value on tourism destination image. However, there are limited studies on the discussion of perceived value on tourism destination image in the context of food tourism in Malaysia.

2.6 Innovation Practices in the Tourism Industry

Innovation has been an integral part of the development of business progressiveness. In terms of effective process, innovation has created a different environment in business projection to be a part of the marketable solution. The tourism industry has a unique proportion in terms of development. Marasco et al. (2018) stated that, tourism industry has benefited largely from innovation resources. Innovative ideas in seeking complex problem solving, ideas, and competencies in the tourism industry can be transferable to the development of the innovative tourism industry.

However, based on the statement made by Williams and Shaw (2011), innovativeness in the business is influenced by various factors, including experience, international travel, education level, global network, and knowledge of certain information. Understandably, the tourism innovation idea is included in tourist decision-making to travel. This is before the statement, which can be highlighted in the concepts of tourist destination image by Tassiello and Tillotson (2020). Elzek et al. (2020) mentioned that there is a lack of evidence to define innovation in the tourism industry or known as tourism innovation. The terms, however, can be referred to the father of the innovation concept, Schumpeter, which can be attributed to the benefit of the tourism innovation concept.

Assessing the innovation practices in developing countries, Islam et al. (2019) have made their point that competitiveness in using innovation in the tourism industry should be widely adopted as it could trigger technological advancement in different tourism services. The implications for the sustainability of the socio-economy need to be tightened, where it would help the development of the destination provider. An evident from previous studies in Indonesia reported that the creative industry supporting tourism activities in Indonesia has attracted tourists from all over the world to come to Indonesia (Lita et al., 2020). Their policy in making it creative has succeeded in making the country one of the most promising countries in Southeast Asia to be promoted as one of the top destinations in global tourism. On the other hand, Malaysia is utilised the usage of technological advancement and the adoption of technology in the tourism firms (Ahmad & Scott, 2019). Based on the study, the technology adoption is important to business efficiency, which they made an investment towards information, computer systems, and technology, including in the restaurant industry.

A qualitative study has been conducted to see whether the restaurant industry is capable to maximise the application of innovation practices. From the study, the participants have vocal on their perception towards their competitor's innovative development, where the menu or the environment can be copied and adjusted; however, it should be made easier for the ambience of the specific theme of the restaurant (Lee et al., 2016a). In another study of innovation in the restaurant industry, Lee et al. (2016b) suggested that innovation practices, including product, process, service, marketing and management innovation, could be the factor for cost effectiveness, increase quality, reputation, and increase sales and profits. The implementation of new ideas in terms of deriving economic benefit is closely related to Schumpeter's (1952), The Entrepreneurship Theory of Innovation. The role of innovation in Malaysian food tourism is essential to meet specific criteria and perception on the food quality (Bee et al., 2019).

In relation to the theory of innovation, innovation was concluded as an integral part on the Malaysian food tourism. It brings numerous impacts in terms of creation that could improve the quality of the food served. Previous research stated that attention needs to be measured for the tourist and customer to revisit the restaurant, and quality measurement with innovation has to be included (Phang et al., 2019; Chowdhury et al., 2020). Thus, it is important for innovation practices being deployed in restaurant performance sustainability that refer to the particular innovation factors.

2.7 Radical Innovation and Incremental Innovation

Schumpeterian theory has a significant contribution to the innovation theory. Through the movement and its development, the theory has impacted innovation in the manufacturing industry in the initial contribution before the expansion has covered a large part of industries in the world (Lee, et al., 2016b). This study significantly discusses innovation practices as it is a vital part in the variable working as the pivot between human capital, perceived value, and tourist destination image. It has been widely discussed that innovation expansion throughout the era contributes to the business environment. Previous scholars mentioned the influence of innovation practices, namely radical and incremental, in the business strategic planning for the

growth of the business (de Oliveira Macedo et al., 2024). Lennerts et al. (2020) discussed radical innovation under the innovation expansion as the development of new products or processes for new customers. Meanwhile, incremental innovation is said to be related to the changes of products and processes adaptively. It means that the changes are minimal for something that exists and is ready to be enhanced. Sheng and Chien (2016) first suggested that radical and incremental innovation have two different meanings, with radical innovation being more towards new technology applications and incremental innovation being more towards new uses of technologies or knowledge that already exists in the business entity. Based on the statement made by the scholars on radical and incremental innovation, they have highlighted the product, process, service, marketing and organisational innovation under the use of radical and incremental innovation that can be used and can be enhanced.

Christensen (1997) has argued that radical innovation is riskier with the new fund and investment needs to be made, but focusing on the significant competitive advantage can be achieved if the funding is sufficient. However, Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) mentioned that the investment would provide a better novelty in terms of technology used and competitiveness. In relation to the tourism industry, it has been suggested that the introduction of new technologies and the creation of experience-based tourist motivation could create new market segments in Malaysian food tourism (Abdullah et al., 2023). Incremental innovation has been said by previous studies have said that it would give a better explanation of why small businesses commonly use this approach to apply in their business, as it is way cheaper and its practicality in adjusting to the existing practices (Henderson & Clark, 1990). The difference between the capabilities of businesses in applying different sets of innovations has been a major influence on their adaptability and competitive advantage. By looking at the context of food tourism, new studies to improve food tourism have been made by various scholars (Hjalager, 2022; Souto, 2015). The value creation from the studies and how human capital was constructed for such applications is important to the development of Malaysian food tourism. Based on the study of radical and incremental innovation that highlighted the product, service, process, marketing and organisational innovation, the dimensions of the innovation practices are as follows:

2.7.1 Innovation Practices Dimensions

2.7.1.1 Product Innovation

In restaurant development, product innovation is one of the important aspects of restaurant sustainability. Hussain et al. (2020) described that product innovation can be measured in a radical way, which involves the changes to follow the competitor's capability in transforming their similar changes. Product innovation is mentioned as one of the components in innovation practices that would help small and medium-sized restaurants (Najib et al., 2020). In the context of restaurant performance, product innovation could influence the restaurant performance led by entrepreneurial self-efficacy, which comes from the management of the restaurant. According to Sigala (2018), the values in network dynamism have supported the internal and external operations to be more innovative. Based on the statement made, product innovation has been mentioned as an effective tool to boost engagement and create value in the market. In a study of the influence of product innovation by Wahyuni (2019), it can be concluded that product innovation brings in physical evidence towards purchasing decisions in the food and beverage industry. The essence of product innovation would create a new system and a new product recognition, as it is needed in product placement and branding.

Economically, it helps the food and beverages industry, such as restaurants, to survive, but using a different method and perspective to capture a better image from the consumer's perspective. Based on the argument made by Lee et al. (2019), product innovation has a few attributes to be demonstrated, namely (1) new menu items, (2) dining atmosphere and ambience, and (3) a new service process and delivery. These attributes should be used for development progress and sustainability progress. On the other hand, Kurnia et al. (2019) claimed that a different product innovation should represent the business image and operational system. However, Romero and Tejada (2019) referred to the product innovation that is widely used in the tourism industry as a significant contribution to achieving performance in the tourism and restaurant industry. In relation to the business, tourism and restaurant industry, an innovative product is the key to sustainable growth performance (Kitsios & Grigoroudis, 2020). The rapid changes in the tourism and restaurant industry have made a significant impact

on the usage of innovative practices. Therefore, product innovation is one of the innovation practices in terms of tourism and restaurant industry sustainability and development.

2.7.1.2 Process Innovation

An argument from Ettlie and Reza (1992) defined process innovation as a technological change that results in a new set of outputs or results in the business sector. It can be confirmed that, based on the study, innovation has been an integral part of the past, which relates to the business and organisational performance. In a different statement, investment has been demonstrated as an important part of applying process innovation in a business entity (Awan et al., 2020). Knowledge and resources are two factors that have been highlighted as components for process innovation to be applied in an organisation. One of the reasons why process innovation can benefit the organisation is that a thorough inspection of a common task will be easily conducted, as a new idea in organisation, the process has innovative implementation. In a study of innovation application, process innovation was used in the measurement by looking at the significant relationship which it has with the innovative idea in organisational process (Madrid-Guijarro et al., 2020). The study showed the effectiveness of process innovation in organisational structure has created an easy understanding of organisational process and contributes to the new technology adaptation.

However, some studies have mentioned that process innovation is a main concern for significant improvement with the aim of creating better productivity and efficiency (Elmo et al., 2020; Hoang et al., 2020). The company's performance depends on the competitive advantage that is being used, and it becomes an important factor in the performance contribution. In the tourism industry, the application of process innovation has made an appropriate approach to the marketing involvement in promotional campaigns (Foris et al., 2020). On the other hand, Blocher and Alt (2020) stated that process innovation is intended to be a cost-effective system by enhancing productivity and effective revenue. They argued that process innovation must be applied in an existing organisational process and digital technology would be the best tool to support the transition. In the restaurant industry, process innovation may be a good

example to be used in enhancing the uniqueness of the restaurant, refining the menu, and adding different cooking equipment (Markowska & Wiklund, 2020). It can be said that process innovation will be an easy platform for business owner to achieve their objectives in terms of giving the business beneficial and effective ways of servicing.

2.7.1.3 Service Innovation

The broad definition of service innovation makes it vague and hard to distinguish (Witell et al., 2016). The service innovation concept needs to be explored further to gain a certain understanding. However, it has been indicated that service innovation is derived from technological advancement and perspective to be applied in business organisations (Witell et al., 2016). Salunke et al. (2018) have a different view on service innovation, where they stated that the integration process of service innovation would create a better competitive advantage in business progress; hence, it can be defined as an important innovation to be part of sustainability performance. It has been further discussed on service innovation that the growth and profitability of the business entity will make a good example for firms to sustain their business. The service industry has undergone a few changes in terms of management. The technology's unprecedented impact on the service industry, including the restaurant industry, has given a breathable consequence to the whole system.

These factors include technological awareness and its advancement to be used in the business platform (Buhalis et al., 2019). However, they stated again that experience and knowledge in service management would also create a better perception of customer perspectives. Tajeddini et al. (2020) argued that there are a few factors that influence the relationship between service innovation and performance, which can be extracted from technology, information, and finance. These resources referred to the strong human capital application to the specific changes in the business organisation. Market turbulence has become unpredictable and harsh. Management organisations need to think of innovative ideas to help the business survive and to maintain customer perceptions (Senbeto & Hon, 2020). Employees in the tourism and hospitality industry should be equipped with considerable values in their effort to become more unique and stimulate new processes. It has been stated that service in the tourism and hospitality

industry must be the main image to be portrayed by the potential consumers; thus, it portrays the service system at the particular destination. Su (2011) indicated that service innovation has a significant impact on behavioural intention and customer experience (Ogunmokun et al., 2020; Ozturkoglu et al., 2019). This statement was made after the results of his survey had been concluded, as it refers to the impact on the business organisational performance and its relation with the innovative component, namely service innovation. In terms of business performance, human capital also plays an integral part in creating the environment in an organisation, as it was built from the understanding of human capital and innovation practices towards a better objective in terms of the tourism and hospitality industry in the context of food tourism. It is understandable that, therefore, service innovation is one of the integral parts in developing a new unique environment in the tourism and hospitality industry and to create a new dimension in the context of food tourism.

2.7.1.4 Marketing Innovation

Marketing innovation is considered flexible in the business firm's strategy (Chen, 2006). It has different forms according to the business environment and nature. However, it has another approach that referred to giving benefits to the consumers but not to the firm because of the response of the competitors. Sanchez-Gutierrez et al. (2018) argued that in creating value from a customer perspective, subsequent impact should be achieved when marketing innovation can be implemented by managerial relationship capabilities. The value that the managerial relationship has would prepare the business organisation to have a competitive development along with its competitors. SME's always get the attention from various studies which appointed marketing innovation as the initiative for SME to grow (Widjojo et al., 2019; Quaye & Mensah, 2018; Musawa & Ahmad, 2019). Unique performance from marketing innovation is highly needed by the firm as it will assist the marketing management to develop (Adams et al., 2019). In the study of marketing innovation, it works as a strategy for business organisations in promotional strategies, pricing, and creating new relationships with customers (Lee et al., 2019). The study has reported that the majority of marketing innovation development is based on the usage of the internet as the trendsetter for the

component to reach a unique target market. The study then claimed that marketing innovation is the most innovative aspect used in the organisation, and the competitiveness can reach its potential when it can be maximised.

In the restaurant industry, marketing innovation is said as one of the tools that is crucial to create new menu items and new service systems (Cho et al., 2019). Customer preferences can differ over time, and the possible changes in marketing innovation can change their views and their acceptance of the preferred restaurant. The customer value perspective could spark the initiative to be more positive on new services (Yrjola et al., 2019). The restaurant industry will have a better understanding of marketing strategy, whereby the implementation of marketing innovation will benefit their profitability (Wikhamn, 2019). The implementation will look into the changes of product design, menu design, packaging, significant promotion and pricing in the restaurant industry. Therefore, marketing innovation has a significant impact on business development and the ability to change the competitiveness into a competitive advantage for the business and the restaurant industry.

2.7.1.5 Organisational Innovation

Previous studies mentioned about organisational innovation as the invention of new ideas and implementation of structure and technique to achieve the organisational objectives (Birkinshaw et al., 2008; Volberda et al., 2013). The structure has been claimed by Volberda et al. (2013) whereby organisational innovation consists of the process and the changing form of organisational structure and the development of technological knowledge. The stimulation of management innovation in the business structure, especially in the restaurant industry, will help the restaurant gain a particular strength in business performance. In a different study, management innovation has been reported that the majority of studies of innovation have included organisational innovation and management innovation as their purpose to develop (Keupp et al., 2012; Mol & Birkinshaw, 2009). The concept of management innovation is said to a complex and ambiguous to measure (Damanpour, 2014). The role of organisational innovation could provide a better understanding of the outcome of the use of management innovation in business performance.

The creative nature of tourism and hospitality has changed the environment of the industry. The application of management innovation has sought to find a strategy to develop an understanding of improving the capabilities of the industry (Jawabreh, 2020). The introduction of innovation in the tourism and hospitality industry has benefited the industry in terms of procedure, structure and technique. The argument from Birkinshaw and Mol (2006) stated that the process of organisational innovation is important to the economy and social progress (Zhang et al., 2019). Innovation sustainability is involved in every part of business. It could be a struggle for a business owner to perform a particular key performance when the competitors are ahead with advancements in innovation. In the restaurant industry, the key performance for restaurant industry is include management innovation (Najib et al., 2020). Subsequently, the innovation structure in the practices may differ through different components of innovation, including organisational innovation. The ideas and their uniqueness must come from the manager's perspective, and the contribution can be referred to as non-technological, as it uses novel ideas from the business owner or manager (Karatepe et al., 2020). In the study of competitive advantage, Guzman and Espejo (2018) highlighted the importance of management innovation as the main tool in constituting the sustainability in the organisation. Therefore, it can be concluded that innovation practices, including their aspect, namely organisational innovation, would have a better opinion on the business perspective and performance sustainability in tourism and hospitality and restaurant industry.

2.8 General Understanding of Travel Motivation

The tourism industry has a vast concept of how tourists decide to travel and what is the best destination to travel. The concept is not a mythical as it has been studied that psychological needs are one of the main influences to go to travel (van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011). Travel motivation has been an integral part in motivating people to travel. It has been discovered by previous researchers that demonstrated travel motivation as a psychological need and wants (van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011; Hasan et al., 2018; Pereira et al., 2019). According to the study by Kassean and Gassita (2013), travel motivations can be influenced by push and pull motivations, which allow the concept of travel motivations to be comprehended. Based on the statement made by

Pektas (2022), push and pull have two different characteristics which justify the significance of their factors to travel motivation. According to the previous studies, push factor in travel motivation is essentially towards people's desire to travel, while pull factor is focusing on destination characteristics (Kassean & Gassita, 2013; Pektas, 2022). These factors are important to have the travel motivation measured and explained constantly, with the current trend and development.

In travel motivation understanding, Myers (1968) has had an important justification for the decision to travel, which proposed the "theory of image". Based on the theory, it is said that the psychological needs and wants are a graphical illustration in a mental state which represents the objective of an individual to go to travel (Lin & Nawjin, 2020). Significant research has been conducted to find the connection between travel motivation and travel destination image, where Pereira, Gupta, and Hussain (2019) mentioned that there is a relation between travel motivation and travel destination image. It is supported by the previous study on how the influence of travel motivation could benefit travel destination image (Dagustani et al., 2018). However, Kani et al. (2017) stated that one of the most important factors that influences people to travel is destination image. The reason is that travel motivation has an important role in stimulating the paramount importance of destination image. Therefore, the relation can be described to understand the travel motivation which related to tourist destination image and the influence of destination image to create a perspective on the destination.

2.8.1 The Concept of Tourism Destination Image

Based on the previous finding, the concept of tourism destination image seems vague as it had to be referred to the psychological aspect, which involved ambiguity in the human mind to express the term (Lai & Li, 2015). It has been studied by several scholars, who use different methods (quantitative and qualitative) to examine the definition and concept of tourist destination image (Gallarza et al., 2002; Pike, 2007). The empirical study on tourist destination image has brought a different perspective on how the destination image would change by using the quantitative and qualitative analysis from different respondents. Hunt (1975) mentioned that tourism destination image is an important aspect in tourism development. The advocacy of an image that

can be used in settling the tourist intention should be a benchmark to measure the concept. In particular, Jenkins (1999) has contributed to the development of the tourism destination image concept, which implies that it is the expression of cognitive identity, psychological view on specific destination, imagination and prejudice, and emotional feelings from individuals and groups that are attached to the destination.

In order to simplify the concept of tourism destination image, an example from The Nation (2023) reported that Thailand is in the top four destinations for tourists around the world. The most attractive destinations in Thailand are Bangkok, Chiang Mai and Phuket. Many factors can be listed that made Thailand, top destination in the world, (1) rich culture heritage, (2) delightful cuisines, (3) affordable prices and friendly locals, (4), nightlife and entertainment, (5) historical monument, (6) shopping and markets, and (7) festival and events (Hetzel, 2023). These factors come from the government initiatives to make Thailand a prospect in Southeast Asia. As a result, it leaves a big impact on tourism destination image and has made Thailand one of the top countries in global tourism. Rasoolimanesh et al. (2021) implied that tourism destination image generally improves with the experience and behaviour of the tourist. Previous scholars have mentioned that destination image needs to be measured by using cognitive and affective components (Tan & Wu, 2015; Karl et al., 2020). However, Nazir et al. (2021) conceptualized intention to travel as a behavioural outcome influenced by destination image. Their findings suggest that a favourable destination image significantly enhances tourists' intention to visit and revisit. Drawing from this perspective, the present study positions intention to travel and revisit intention as behavioural consequences associated with tourist destination image. It reflects on the affective control on the tourist to decide based on their behaviour control. Destination image is widely conceptualized as a multidimensional construct consisting of cognitive, affective, and conative components (Jenkins, 1999; Tan & Wu, 2015; Karl et al., 2020).

While the cognitive component reflects tourists' beliefs about a destination and the affective component captures emotional responses, the conative dimension represents behavioural tendencies such as intention to visit and revisit intention (Gartner, 1993). Early destination image studies conceptualized image as comprising cognitive, affective, and conative components, more recent research has increasingly treated the conative component as a behavioural outcome rather than an inherent

dimension of image. Scholars such as Baloglu and McCleary (1999) and Beerli and Martín (2004b) argue that destination image, formed through cognitive evaluations and affective responses, subsequently influences tourists' behavioural intentions, including intention to visit and revisit. Following this contemporary perspective and consistent with Tapia et al. (2017) and Yang and Pesonen (2026), the later and present study conceptualized destination image as a multi-dimensional construct consisting of cognitive and affective components, while intention to travel and revisit intention are modelled as outcome variables. This separation ensures clearer causal interpretation and stronger theoretical alignment within structural modelling.

2.8.2 Tourist Destination Image Dimensions

2.8.2.1 Intention to Travel

Tourist destination image has been influenced by the concept of travel motivation. Destination and one's tastes to choose between places could be more complex when there is limited access to knowledge and experience. Tassiello and Tillotson (2020) have made it clear that the cognitive and affective abilities are involved in the process, which comes from "objective knowledge". The information needs to be captured in terms of one's previous visit and experience to be spread by using different tools and platforms. In the study of the relation between subjective knowledge and intention to travel, Tassiello and Tillotson (2020) prepared a finding which involved the cues. It is known as a prerequisite for the knowledge to be equipped in the search for intention to travel, hence, cues are important to show the first interest for an individual or group to be able to find the intention. In a different study on intention to travel, reported that tourist demographic and psychographic are also the factors that contributed to the intention to travel (Stepchenkova et al., 2018; Yu, 2010; Regan et al., 2012). Specifically, tourist come to the destination because of their preferred factors that attract their motive and behaviour. Previous study on the impact of intention to travel has particularly mentioned that the country and destination image of any destination could bring interest for the tourist to travel (Chaulagain et al., 2019). In relation to the tourism activity, Zhang et al. (2020) argued that the concept of intention can be narrowed down to the product and product-country image (PCI). The indication on PCI is based on the

customer's perception and desire for the quality of the tourism product that has been offered.

Image is seen as a significant element for growth and development in the tourism industry. However, based on the findings in previous literatures indicated that destination image has a relation with destination food image which signify the element for tourists' loyalty and intention to travel (Hashemi et al., 2021; Ting et al., 2019; Noor et al., 2018; Hasan, et al., 2018; Nazir et al., 2021). The food consumption while traveling is depending on the type of foods and it is prepared. Ting et al. (2019) focused on the opportunities in explaining the authenticity, quality, ingredients, and preparation are the unique antecedents to influence tourist to revisit the destination. The understanding of the uniqueness of traditional cuisines has always become a pinpoint for potential tourist to have their intention to the chosen destination. Furthermore, Noor, et al. (2018) indicated that the experience from individuals or groups to the destination will assist tourists in putting the intention up front. According to the study that used a case study in Malaysia, some factors lead to the decision to travel, namely, (1) novelty, (2) relaxation, (3) food safety, and (4) accessibility. These are the factors that developed the interest and influenced the intention it includes the evaluations and behavioural process. According to Chi et al. (2013), the relationship between overall satisfaction depends on the experience while enjoying the food. Hasan et al. (2018) have a similar opinion on the statement, which they conclude from their overall assessment of their analysis, whereby the motivation is related to satisfaction, intention to travel and intention to revisit. Therefore, the connection between the construct and the dimensions mentioned in the literature is based on the understanding from previous literatures.

2.8.2.2 Revisit Intention

Tourists can be classified by two different objectives, which represent first-timers and repeaters. This has been reported to Um et al. (2006) that first-timers are the ones who are influenced by the destination attractions. However, there is a significant difference between repeaters who come to the destination again because of the innovation, promotional effort and positive memory from the last visit. For the record, many destinations and attractions depend on repeat tourists since they are valuable and

quality visitors. Zhang et al. (2017) stated that their intention to revisit is generally influenced by their perception of their experience. Based on the study that has been recorded, the researchers made it easier to understand their behaviour to revisit the destination as they look into the country image and destination image. There are a few numbers of previous studies that demonstrates the significant perception on revisit intention which conclude the studies whereby the actual impact on the destination is based on tourists' revisit intention (Um et al., 2006; Zhang et al., 2017; Hasan et al., 2017; Huang & Hsu, 2009; Kim & Lee, 2015; Quintal & Polczynski, 2010; Viet et al., 2020). The similarities with these studies are that the perception and attitude of the destination by the tourist were highlighted.

In correspondence with the perspective, there are several motives and objectives of revisit intention which come from the destination image. According to Leong et al. (2010), the empirical research has resulted in the conclusion that the food experiences while visiting a particular destination have a more positive effect on the revisit intention and recommend it to relatives and friends. The result shows the exact alignment in the definition of the term by previous researchers on revisit intention, which depends on the impact that the destination has to offer. Furthermore, Hwang et al. (2018) argued that the biggest factor influencing tourists to revisit the destination is ethnic food, alongside other factors such as the ambience at the ethnic restaurant and the ethnic restaurant's performance. These factors have been said that Korean culture evolved because of its uniqueness of their ethnic food and restaurants. Omar and Karim (2013) pointed out that the intention to revisit was mainly concerned with satisfaction and experience. It has been proven by the study on the behavioural case on revisit intention by Phung and Khoi (2018), where the behavioural determinant is unpredictable, but it can be measured throughout the process of the destination image to persuade potential visitors to revisit the destination. The focus is also can be predicted based on the quality that the restaurant offered, ambience, uniqueness, service quality, destination attractiveness, location, tourism facilities, and satisfaction of the customers (Shariff et al., 2015; Khairi & Darmawan, 2021; Safian et al., 2021). In the context of food tourism, it is crucial for the assessment that the tourism industry is built on the perception of food and beverages (Khairi & Darmawan, 2021). Based on the previous studies, further study needs to be conducted as the relation between the dimension of tourist destination image and other

constructs has limited exploration in the context of the food tourism industry in Malaysia. It would provide a better understanding of the relation between all constructs proposed in the entire study foundation of food tourism in Malaysia. Therefore, the study on tourist destination image is important as it needs both dimensions to be justified and used in this study to see the relation between all constructs and the overall assessment of the model linking.

2.9 Hypotheses Development

2.9.1 Relationship Between Human Capital and Innovation Practices

Human capital is the stronghold of any business organisation. It could bring more insight and force to the foundation of the business development and maximise the usage of the human capital means it would aid in getting a better result and performance (Bradley et al., 2017). Human capital is an integral part of the business entity. As mentioned by Zhou et al. (2019), human capital participation in organisational innovative ideas will help the organisation to achieve the objectives needed. The investigation on human capital interaction with the organisation performance has brought findings which it reacting to the business performance. However, Sun et al. (2020) argued that the most important determinant in innovation practices is human capital. It plays a large-scale role in terms of organisational development in the innovation implementation. A broader literature has been mentioned about the contribution and relation between human capital and innovation practices in business organisations is crucial in the competitiveness of organisations (Kianto et al., 2017; Snell & Dean Jr, 1992; Subramaniam & Youndt, 2005). However, based on the studies that have been highlighted, the studies mainly focus on the function and skills of human capital and ignore the role of human capital and innovation practices in competitiveness.

Based on the empirical study, they concluded that the source of human capital development on innovation practices was a challenge to distinguish, as the nature of both needs adjustment in terms of time-consuming and financial aid (Montalvo, 2006). Human capital can be a motivational factor in the improvement of practical value and innovative understanding (Lenihan et al., 2019). The relation between human capital and innovation practices can be said as one of the essential arguments in terms of values.

Fonseca et al. (2018) have a different perspective on the human capital and innovation practices that lead to their statement, which states that human capital and innovation are inseparable. However, the study argued that the education level alone will only help the knowledge and new ideas to be enforced. To strengthen the skills mentioned, it needs to have another set of dimensions, which have been clearly stated, namely training, education, and skills. Xu and Li (2019) have a similar opinion on the human capital needs all these characteristics in the business organisation for the continuous development of the business organisation. Above all, human capital and innovation practices have been seen as a relatable construct, as it connects to the justification. Thus, the study on the relationship between these constructs needs to be justified in the context of this study.

H1: There is a significant relationship between human capital and innovation practices.

2.9.2 Relationship Between Perceived Value and Innovation Practices

The concept of perceived value has been studied thoroughly in the context of the tourism industry. However, the development of the tourist industry must come from another intermediary, which can be used as a tool to sustain and develop the concept to be more useful and attainable. The interactive solution from the application of new technologies, devices, and the recent usage of artificial intelligence (AI) would be sufficient for the new age of development within the industry. By doing so, it is more towards becoming reliable for the tourist experience and to demonstrate a creative side to serve tourists in the purpose of giving the best image portrayed by the destination. In the recent study, the quality provided by suppliers is related to the perceived value in order to give them a strong experience during their visit (Li et al., 2021). The intention of the customers basically comes from their behaviour, and the behaviour can become more intrinsic to a high value of purchase. Based on the statement by the scholars, innovation plays a pivotal role due to its significant contribution to consumer intention and willingness to purchase a product or to go to the destination in the tourism context (Li et al., 2021). After a thorough study, they have found that innovation practices have a significant positive relation to aid the destination economically, as innovative ideas

would create various opportunities. Yaşlıoğlu et al. (2013) in their study on innovation and perceived value have identified that these constructs are reliable to performance perceptions. In the context of the food tourism industry, every restaurant should be aware of applying innovative ideas to attract more tourist to come, and they should engrave their view on the destination for the behaviour and intention to travel to the destination. This perspective is considered by past researchers related to service quality within their business progress, but needs to highlight the position of five key points: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles (Zeithaml et al., 1990; Bloemer et al., 1998). As a result, they predicted that innovation practices will have a bigger impact on perceived value in tourist destination image and in the context of food tourism, the quality will be an added value for the destination to flourish.

In different studies of revisit intention from the perspective of the travel and tourism industry, service innovation was emphasised more on its quality to be equipped in the hospitality line (Khuong & Giang, 2014; Yeh, 2016). The resolution on the particularity of the quality needs to be polished in terms of values. A competitive environment in the tourism industry should prepare the destination to be more adaptable and gain more profit impact on the practices. Tourist will have their own perspectives to go down with their decision on the revisit intention and intention to travel by looking at the perceived value of the destination and how well the innovation practices are equipped by the destination providers or suppliers (Coutelle-Brillet et al., 2014; Kim et al., 2014). In the context of food tourism, Tsai and Wang (2017) highlighted that the experience would perceive the image of the destination by following the concept of innovation practices. This assumption is based on the past arguments, which (1) innovation can occur in a cognitive or sensory manner and (2) the high sense of innovativeness will directly respond to the products affectively and emotionally (Venkatraman & Price, 1990; Goldsmith et al., 2005). Recent evidence showed that the perception can be more useful to increase perceived value and consolidate the tourists' trust in returning to the destination and to go to the destination (Ruan et al., 2020). However, Paulose and Shakeel (2021) argued that the values must come from the experience and their satisfaction. The destination provider in the context of food tourism, such as a restaurant, should have aimed to organise their innovative idea into the minds of tourists. The evidence emphasised how perceived value influenced tourists

to return to the destination, as it will affect the local economic growth.

The influence of service quality will set a high value in the tourist's perceived value. Other than that, it will boost their satisfaction with the destination and behavioural intention (Slack et al., 2020). The innovation within the food providers should have an impactful influence on the mind of tourist behaviour (Ferraris et al., 2020) and the culture of the food has been discussed earlier. Innovation in the tourism and hospitality industry is not a new subject as it has been studied by various scholars (Gomezelj, 2016). However, in food tourism, innovation will supply a greater number of experiences to the tourists' minds (Rachão et al., 2020). They revealed that food-related activities, with the right behaviour, perceived value quality, and significant food experiences within the tourism activities and innovative ideas will co-create a better solution for brand image and value co-creation. It was a finding which can be used to define how perceived value and innovation practices in the context of food tourism will have a significant impact on overall destination image. In short, the relationship between perceived value and innovation practices needs to be testing in this current study as its setting and the emergence of the significant effect in the context of food tourism in Malaysia.

H2: There is a significant relationship between perceived value and innovation practices.

2.9.3 Relationship Between Innovation Practices and Tourist Destination Image

The development of innovation practices has been essential in organisational development. It has been highlighted as one of the factors that leads the competitiveness in terms of profitability, growth, and sustainability in correspondence with the technology development. As stated by the theory of innovation, a set of new ideas and perspectives is the truth for the expansion (Schumpeter, 1952). The theory was then developed according to the generation and widened for the current business perspectives (Hjalager, 2010). According to Barras (1986) and Sundbo (1998), the evolution of innovation has gone through various applications, which have seen the process applied in the tourism and hospitality industry. Innovation can be technological and has its significant role in sustainability performance (Khan, 2020). The difference between

industries can be seen in the tourism and hospitality industry, where Khan (2020) stated that there are a few components that other industries cannot imitate, namely intangibility, heterogeneity, simultaneous production and service, and perishability. The changes in this industry depend on customer acceptance and other factors involved.

Based on the previous study, the application of innovation in economic performance has shown the competencies of the decision (Leiponen, 2000). The complementarity of innovation provided an intention for sustainability in terms of knowledge development and the relationship with firm performance. The diversity in business organisations for profitable indication has made the industry implement new strategies and technologies, such as innovation (Douglas & Prentice, 2019). The integration of entrepreneurship allows profit motivation in the firm by using innovation. Wang et al. (2021) argued that the development of traditional and modern innovations has become steadier and aids the sustainability of business performance. The essence of innovation can be referred as the optimisation of knowledge and ideas for application and how it would benefit the business performance. In a different study of innovation, it was mentioned that the innovation affects the profitability of business organisation directly (Agustia et al., 2019).

The tourism industry has a dependable connectivity with the innovation process. Visitors come to the destination to seek experience, information, knowledge, leisure and satisfaction. Cheng et al. (2020) stated that, in terms of visitor experience and satisfaction, the industry itself needs to apply innovative ideas. The study mentioned that service innovation is one of the factors that will develop a positive destination image for the destination. Cheng et al. (2020) acknowledged further on the contribution that service innovation provides to the surrounding area. In order to nurture visitor satisfaction and retention, innovation has to be the biggest tool for the development of the business progression. The perspective that the end customer gained from the experience of travelling to the desired destination will help them to spread the positive words and revisit intention (Gardiner & Scott, 2018). It helps the destination to have a good review among visitors and could gain favouritism throughout the process. The study on revisit intention has somehow estimated the probability that the tourism destination will be occupied by the visitors because of destination image (Setiawan & Shiratina, 2023). The study shows that innovation application in the tourism destination

has brought in more tourists who revisit, and the indirect effect of innovation has arguably a positive effect on the sustainability of destination image.

Previous studies mentioned the empirical evidence about the application of innovation in business strategy to maximise the growth chances (Bouncken et al., 2019; Latifi et al., 2021). Technological advancement and digitalisation have paved the way for the development of business in modern days. It has been mentioned as a part of the business organisation to sustain their business and to add value in their product. Value creation, value propositions, and value captured by the application of innovation have enabled growth in the business strategy (Bouncken et al., 2019). It requires a set of knowledge on the particular usage, and in order to exchange knowledge with other collaborators, skilful employees are required. Latifi et al. (2021) argued that innovation capability is dominant to the business performance as it stands with the decision of management. The evidence found in the study of innovation in European countries suggested that innovation has prepared a better environment and created a positive behaviour on the job creation (Lukes, Longo, & Zouhar, 2018). In radical innovation, high technological consumption is used to replace the old usage of technology with minimal impact. In modern strategy, Nunes and Pereira (2012) prepared an effective way for business growth by using Business Model Innovation (BMI) that created new offerings in value propositions.

By looking at the positive development of the tourism industry, Pikkemaat et al. (2019) have their view on innovation development in order to sustain tourism performance. The researchers used a common theory that can be dismantled by using Schumpeterian innovation theory. However, they argued that the customers are playing a significant role in tourism development, and it cannot be one-sided. Tourism activities are also a major contributor to the restaurant industry to flourish. Cho, et al. (2019) stated that the exploitation of innovation strategy and its implications on the food tourism specific growth should be a milestone for the business owner in attracting customers. With competitors with similar business products, the added value can be achieved by strategising a new impactful technology and innovation. Khan (2020) made a useful statement which emphasised on the skilful employees and knowledgeable managers who can assist the tourism development. It is important to have strong leadership on both sides in terms of human capital to sustain the tourism activities.

The same approach has been seen as in innovation is assumed as a smart progression in further development of business organisations (Trinchini et al., 2019). The relation with the destination image is seen as one of the fundamental attractiveness for bigger opportunities in attracting visitors and a profitable outcome. While destination image was argued to be a major influence for revisit intention, the impact of innovation, specifically in service, needs to be maintained (Boon et al., 2021). In other study, destination image is mentioned as the unique process in collaboration with strategic alliances with stakeholders (Labanauskaite et al., 2020). However, the study stated that innovation is crucial in providing a competitive advantage among business organisation, specifically in the travel industry. The competitiveness is also mentioned by Streimikiene et al. (2021) as a relevant business operation to compete with other potential competitors. In order to compete, innovation practices need to be applied to help with tourism businesses and presumptions of the company. As the dimensions of innovation practices are essential to the quality of destination image, thus, it can be concluded that the construct between innovation practices and tourist destination image can be seen as the essential factors in terms of development in tourism destinations in the context of food tourism.

H3: There is a significant relationship between innovation practices and tourist destination image.

2.9.4 Relationship Between Human Capital and Tourist Destination Image

A recent study on the relationship between human capital and tourism development has mentioned that the development of tourism activities should not depend on the single resource but should take necessary measures to apply human capital as their subject to sustainability (Lombardi et al., 2021). In the study, the researchers aimed to have an overview of how human capital is involved in tourist development. They suggested that human capital is one of the resources that need to be attained to get a positive impact on the economic growth for a local and, specifically to the destination. This shows how important human capital is in the context of the study to utilise the use of it in fostering knowledge, innovation, and development of the

destination (Dakhli & De Clercq, 2004). In the context of destination image, the knowledge can be used by the tourism suppliers or even restaurant owners to shape their process and execute the perfect planning to attract tourist and to provide a good quality service in the destination. This will be an initiative for the tourist experience and to capture a positive image towards the destination, as everyone involved gives their best quality of service. Based on the past study on human capital, the scholars have pinpointed a few suggestions on competencies in the context of destination image; (1) know-how, (2) education, (3) vocational qualification, (4) work related knowledge, (5) work related competencies, (6) entrepreneurial spirit, (7) innovativeness, proactive, and reactive abilities, and (8) changeability. These factors, highlighted by them according to their beliefs on human capital, should be able to provide useful insights and development toward the tourism image.

Meanwhile, in the context of food tourism, these factors are also applicable where the quality should be maintained by any restaurant in Malaysia to give the tourist a taste of Malaysian culture. In order to manage these theoretical thinking, restaurants that prepares traditional cuisines in Malaysia should be equipped with the following skills: (1) innovation skills, (2) leadership skills, and (3) management skills (Sousa & Rocha, 2019). In a different study of tourism development suggested that human capital with a different set of skills will be helpful in nurturing prospects of better tourism destination and will create a perspective on the destination image (Milovanovic, 2017). The quality in various types of fields in the tourism industry, such as the restaurant industry and the food and beverages industry, will directly contribute to the quality of the destination. In terms of tourist destination image, tourist behaviour can be explained by their intention and also returning tourists to the particular destination. This shows how important human capital is in giving a significant contribution to tourist destination image. Although the study on human capital and tourist destination image in the context of food tourism is mentioned by other scholars, the contribution needs to be furtherly studied as it has limited evidence in Malaysian setting.

H4: There is a significant relationship between human capital and tourist destination image.

2.9.5 Relationship Between Perceived Value and Tourist Destination Image

Perceived value has been relatively identified as a common independent construct which works as a predictor of another construct. The finding can be seen as previous studies have managed to measure the impact of perceived value on tourist satisfaction, consumer intention, purchase decision, and repurchase decision (Kuncoro & Kusumawati, 2021; Adirestuty, 2019; Dam, 2020). Another study on the dimensions of perceived value that can be adapted within this study is from Rohman et al. (2023), which emphasised on the functional value, economic value, emotional value, and social value. These dimensions have been studied widely by various researchers in the context of tourism development and destination image. In a similar note, general acceptance agreed that loyalty is the biggest contribution on choosing a destination (Su et al., 2011). However, an increasing number of authors mentioned that destination image and perceived value, will lead to tourist satisfaction, might be the key to progressive development in the context of the tourism industry. Some attempts to analyse the relationship between perceived value and tourist destination image have succeeded, for example, Jeong and Kim (2020) found out in their study that perceived value is positively related to the tourist destination image by keeping loyal tourists to revisit the destination.

A different study contributed to the analysis of perceived value and destination image, where experience quality interference in these predictors was measured (Ghorbanzadeh et al., 2020). The need for behavioural effect, satisfaction, and quality brought a significant difference in perceived value and destination image as it provides a different result in each individual. Dedeoğlu (2019) argued that the destination provider should have its own strength to provide a significant impact on the destination image and should be aware of any changes during the phase. In the context of food tourism, travel experience will have a bigger perspective on tourist's mind. It is exactly the concept that has been discussed by Loureiro et al. (2019), whereby they mentioned that the learning phase and response in social interaction will have a better adaptation in personal experience. Some roles need to be looked up for which every aspect of value would influence the destination in the context of food tourism. Al-Ansi and Han (2019) explained that the roles mentioned in food tourism should have a different concept to

market the industry. Within their views on food tourism, halal-friendly food is the best concept to be represented in a Muslim country. By referring to the study, they have concluded that Muslim tourists will experience value, satisfaction, and generate destination image while travelling within Muslim countries. However, it depends on other influences such as environment and political implications. Investigating the factors that influence tourists to revisit the destination mainly focuses on the perspective of destination image. Roustia and Jamshidi (2019) have provided a detailed concept on how food tourism is benefited by tourist arrival and the quality of dining experiences, specifically in food taste and food service are important factors included. Evidence shows that these factors are the biggest value contribution to the image of the destination where perceived value is involved. Overall, the current study is in the right phase after further investigation on the literature review; however, a deeper investigation is needed to test both variables in the context of food tourism in Malaysia, where it has limited studies on overall assessment, as well as to answer the study's hypothesis.

H5: There is a significant relationship between perceived value and tourist destination image.

2.9.6 Innovation Practices as a Mediator

Innovation has been studied widely as a mediator for any construct referring to the performance, orientation, management, business engagement and development, tourism and hospitality industry, and many other studies (Zafar & Mehmood, 2019; Nguyen & Dao, 2023; Kijkasiwat et al., 2023; Chen et al., 2017; Enobong et al., 2022). Innovation is rapidly changing in time and is considered one of the biggest factors for development. It has the capacity to turn any idea and perspective into an improved product and classification. In the literature where innovation is the main topic stated that innovation practices integrate variables in terms of the study of dependent and independent variables (Ahmed et al., 2023). The adoption of innovation practices into the operations of any business development will impact its process, improve performance, and achieve a competitive advantage. The effect can be seen in the tourism and hospitality industry, where the application of innovation as a mediator would bring

many successful stories in terms of sustainability by preserving the local destination attraction. Seow et al. (2020) mentioned the mediating role of innovation practices in supporting the tourism industry as inevitable. They stated that, tourism industry is focusing more on towards small-medium enterprises (SMEs), which contributes to the development of local economic growth and country development. From the perspective of food tourism, the contribution it made significantly affected the food tourism industry, which tourists will benefit from the development of local restaurants operating as a local tourism product in the context of the business process. Kuhn et al. (2024) supported the statement, which they analysed to see how food tourism from a gastronomic perspective will be affected as innovation practices take place as a mediating role. In the sense of contribution, they have found that innovation practices underscored an important influence in the food sector and the creativity in developing innovation as the main figure in business development in food, affecting the industry image. Hjalager (2022) made a statement regarding the innovation in food tourism where the literature has focused on the digitalisation and technological enhancement should not be abandoned in order to gain recognition by the tourists and shape the destination image as innovation took place. The statement has a strong line which supports all arguments and statements on innovation, as the mediating role is a construct in the current study to be discussed as an overall statement in the context of food tourism in Malaysia.

The competitive strategy for business owners to present their ability to develop their product and quality by mentioning innovation practices is the way to trigger the effectiveness of performance in the restaurant industry (Islam et al., 2019). The adoption of new technology and innovation in the business has made various industries have their own advantage. Lee et al. (2016a) suggested that innovation practices can be equipped in terms of developing food businesses to be more relevant and sustainable. This is by referring to Schumpeterian theory, which mentions the factor of deriving economy in the business would interact with the strategy made by the business owner. Assaker et al. (2018) highlighted that the innovative idea should be implemented in the business strategy, especially in the restaurant industry. As previous studies provided a perspective on the human capital development and innovation practices implementation should be categorised into education, experience, training, and skills (Assaker et al., 2018;

Aboobaker & D, 2020; Budiningsih et al., 2023). In terms of knowledge gained during formal education or on-the-job training, Rejeb et al. (2023) provided a simple view that innovation practices in human capital can be accepted through these factors. The statement has been supported by Sun et al. (2020), which described that human capital development should have innovation practices in order to have innovative ideas in terms of management, work performance, skill development, employees' satisfaction, and management sustainability. Huang et al. (2021) made a statement that human capital and tourist destination image have not been widely studied; however, their perspective on tourism development mainly depends on the decision-making made by the particular destination and could lead to destination image. As claimed by Baron and Dober-Baron (2011), human capital has its own ability to decide and to operate the image development and economic profitability. Furthermore, a previous study stated that innovation practices would nurture the possibilities of the destination to be recognisable by implementing destination image factors such as service quality and unique value (Boon et al., 2021; Labanauskaite et al., 2020). Previous studies mainly focused on the business development in business organisation and the tourism and hospitality industry, however, there are still limited studies of innovation practices as a mediator construct in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. Therefore, the innovation practices will be studied to see the effect on every construct in the current study to achieve its objective as a reliable mediator for human capital, perceived value and destination image.

H6(a): Innovation practices mediate the relationship between human capital and tourist destination image.

H6(b): Innovation practices mediate the relationship between perceived value and tourist destination image.

2.10 Theory Related to the Study

2.10.1 Resource-Based View Theory (RBV)

Theories that have been discovered in this study are derived from the resource-based view (RBV). The theories mentioned mainly focus on innovation theory, human capital theory, the endogenous growth theory, and motivation theory. In relation to the

study, the performance of the restaurant and its business organisation is also discussed to maintain the suitability of its concept to match with the framework. The framework of this study is a substantial form from a several studies and multiple resources namely innovation theory and its expansion (Schumpeter, 1975; Hjalager, 2010; Barras, 1986; Hall, 2009), human capital theory and endogenous growth theory (Nafukho et al., 2004; Nelson and Phelps, 1966), motivation theory (Maslow, 1943; Dann, 1977), and the customer-perceived value theory (Zeithaml, 1988; Graf & Maas, 2008; Payne & Holt, 2001). These theories have been discussed widely as an essential form to interblend with the resource-based view (in short: RBV) (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993; Wernerfelt, 1984). RBV is an initiative for business management in deploying a better development for small, medium and large-scale businesses (Gerhart & Feng, 2021). RBV has a structured interplay between human capital with a particular interest. It gives more insight into the direction of the business organisation as a discipline in order to achieve the organisation objectives. Previous study on RBV mentioned that business organisation needs to have a tool to sustain the business and to determine the strategic use of available resources (Ariffin, 2013). This should be focused more on the overall usage of resources and the way to organise the organisation.

In the study of RBV, it comes from the root which past researchers have attempted to solve the business and organisation problems. It was introduced by Barney (1991) from the initial study by Wernerfelt (1985). Initially, RBV is mentioned as an alternative for competitive advantage to give a better understanding of the business performance activities. However, when the study reaches its findings, a model has been developed and the connecting dots for every problem in the business organisation have been concluded. The model would provide a simple solution for the resource utilisation in the organisation. However, in the early stages of RBV, various researchers have been involved in order to finalise the structure and to prioritise on the framework to show the competitive advantage process as well as sustainability performance of organisation (Barney, 1989, 1991, 2001; Peteraf, 1993; Wernerfelt, 1984). In the study of competitive advantage, Barney (1991) mentioned that the value of the products and services can be essentially used to control their uniqueness. Nevertheless, the statement was made for the particular businesses which could outperform the competitors in business strategic management and gain a profitable advantage in market performance. In addition to the

statement made by Barney (1991), Freeman, Dmytriiev, and Phillips (2021) argued on the same RBV term but particularly stated that the business should aim more for ethical and socially responsible outcomes rather than focusing solely on profitability. This is aligned with the statement made by Barney (2018), which highlighted that the decision-making made by business organisation needs to have other perspectives on ethical and social issues. Furthermore, to add on the business performance, Freeman et al. (2021) clearly stated that in order to maximise the use of RBV, a sustainable term is needed as the key to open up competitive advantage. The theory has circulated on the keyword sustainable in order for the business organisation to sustain its business.

In relation to the RBV and competitive advantage, a systematic review which explained VRIO resources which known as valuable, rare, inimitable, and organization indicates the process of achieving sustainable competitive advantage (Mailani et al., 2024). It is a tool to assess whether a resource provides a competitive advantage by asking these configures of a resource. This study explains how food tourism in the context of Malaysia using RBV VRIO model for sustainability and be more competitive by integrating other theories into the model. Mailani et al. (2024) explains the differences between these characters; (1) Valuable helps achieve goals and create advantage, (2) Rare related to the uniqueness of the subject or product compare to other competitors, (3) Inimitable represents the cultural knowledge that hard to replicate, (4) Organized is whether the resources are properly managed to create advantage. These are essential explanation towards the goal in creating competitive advantage in the context of Malaysian food tourism. Applying RBV and the VRIO framework, human capital, perceived value, and innovation practices are conceptualized as strategic resources for Malaysian food tourism. Their value, rarity, inimitability, and organizational deployment provide a competitive advantage, supporting their inclusion as key variables influencing the country's tourist destination image.

A study on big data culture has proved that RBV would maintain the organisational harmony, which can be assumed that individuals are motivated to optimise their performance and to comply with available economic choices (Dubey et al., 2019). By following the RBV logical insight, it is understandable that resources can be categorised by physical capital, human capital and organisational capital, which include the choices of individuals on several options in the economic (Barney, 1991).

Financially, the demand on the economy is a set-up for employee as their motivation in order to sustain their performance. Dubey et al. (2019) argued that the RBV structure is a high order of development and can be well-preserved under a better organisation. On the other hand, further study on RBV posits that the true meaning of the usage of competitive advantage has several impacts to the particular organisation (Varadarajan, 2020). From the researcher's point of view, organisation need to have valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources to achieve a competitive advantage. However, by looking at the initial term of RBV, the firm's resources can be referred to as the assets, capabilities, organisational processes, business attributes, knowledge, and other factors that can be used by the firm to control its product and service quality (Barney, 1991).

RBV is also mentioned in strategic management, which focuses on the human resource strategy to provide a better solution and create a unique course for employee sustainability and effective performance (Collins, 2020). Previous studies have mentioned that human resources could provide an enhancement to the human capital and significantly contribute to the business performance (Jackson et al., 2014; Jiang et al., 2012). Autonomy that it should continuously look at will be the effectiveness of business performance through an underlying effect of RBV and competitive advantage. Collins (2020) suggested that the key importance for the RBV concept in the organisation is the concept of organisational fit, which referred to the potential and the capability in a productive manner. Based on the previous study on the organisational culture, competitive advantage is seen as a stronghold for organisational structure (Azeem et al., 2021).

In addition, RBV has been studied in the context of the tourism industry, which provides a better solution for the industry development. Proponents of RBV in the tourism industry have been discussed as a leverage for corporate strength by using existing resources rather than acquiring new skills (Ogutu et al., 2023). Past scholars have indicated that RBV prioritises investment-based strategies for the sustainability and development of the industry (Kor & Mahoney, 2004) to maximise the image of the destination. Zainuddin et al. (2016) claimed that destination image will flourish if the antecedent of tourist experience creates the intention and the tourist plans to revisit the destination (Boulding et al., 1993). The study of RBV in tourist destinations in Brazil

has found that tourists have their own resources on whether to travel or otherwise but following the physical and geographical location and condition of the destination (Massukado-Nakatani & Teixeira, 2009). The study has allocated that tourists as the most important subject rather than public policy to know the intention. In consequence, their study is more towards tourist destinations accessibility and attractiveness to become their major motivation for tourists to visit the destination. Although RBV has been studied mostly in the context of management perspectives, it provides a useful insight into RBV to be used in the management and to get a better acknowledgement by the tourists who visit the destination (Peters, Siller, & Matzler, 2011). Previous study on the RBV towards the travel destination competitiveness for the city of Malang, Indonesia has provided an insight on how RBV application in the tourism business development has acquired a reachable potential to sustain their businesses and to get the tourist intention to visit the destination (Risfandini et al., 2021). The concept is aligned with the total competitive advantage that has been studied, where management should be aware of the new enhancements in the tourism industry and apply the necessary changes to gain relevant growth and profit.

Although the study on literature for RBV is widely discussed, in this study, RBV is adopted from the tourist perspective. Tourists are considered as resource evaluators who assess the destination's human, cultural, and service resources to determine their perceived value and satisfaction. By focusing on the tourist's lens, RBV provides a theoretical foundation to understand how the unique resources of a destination, such as skilled personnel, local cuisine, and authentic experiences, influence tourists' perceptions, choices, and overall destination image. This approach aligns with the study's objective of exploring the relationship between human capital, innovation practices, and tourist destination image through the perceptions of tourists themselves. Further discussion to highlight the theory application on the current study is needed to measure how RBV, as the main theory, would provide a useful insight into the competency of the constructs proposed. RBV assisted in the integration of knowledge-sharing and organisational innovation through various factors to support competitive advantage.

Furthermore, RBV collected an implication from previous experience of the resources to be applied in the various settings (Azeem et al., 2021), including the tourism

industry. While RBV provides an excellent understanding of available resources for the purpose of sustaining business performance, other theories that can be used, namely innovation theory, human capital and endogenous growth theory, motivation theory, and customer-perceived value theory maintains the proposition of giving a competitive advantage to be utilised. This study retains RBV because it examines how tourists evaluate the destination's resources (e.g., human capital, innovation practices) to form perceived value and destination image. RBV is integrated with other theories to provide a comprehensive explanation of the mechanisms through which destination resources influence tourist perceptions and behaviour. Therefore, these theories are essential to be set under the resource-based view constitution for further justification. The discussion below is on the underpinnings of RBV as the main theory. The discussion of the theories involved innovation theory, human capital and endogenous growth theory, motivation theory, and customer-perceived theory. These theories are essential for the development of the framework and the construct used.

2.10.2 Innovation Theory and its Expansion

Innovation practices have been a moulded foundation in order to expand the reliability and sustainability of business performance. From the beginning, the theory of economic development discovered by Schumpeter (1975) has changed the entire perspective on innovation. The study suggested that economic growth is related to innovation. However, in the study, he also added that innovation and economic growth should be aligned, and the activity should be organised by an active entrepreneur. The whole study offered the theory on the importance of entrepreneurs and how innovation should be sufficient in business organisation. Without prejudice, the theory has been expanded into several versions which can be seen in the Schumpeterian literature reorganised by Barras (1986) and Sundbo (1998). The literature indicates how innovation plays a major role in the improvement of the delivery system, service quality, and product innovation. Hjalager (2010) then explained more about the theory of innovation from the previous expansion and highlighted the use of innovation in the hospitality industry. From the perspective of past researchers, many studies on innovation have been conducted to provide useful information in the literature on the

tourism and hospitality industry. In addition, the expansion began to point out components of innovation practices, namely product, service, process, marketing, and organisational (Hall, 2009; Hjalager, 2010; Varis & Littunen, 2010). The study marks the importance of innovation practices in business performance and how it could be created in accordance with the business trend. These components in innovation practices would be sufficient practicality in to provide propaganda.

According to the entrepreneurship theory of innovation, the system used to compute the structure of the economy is the capitalist system. It is mainly to destroy the traditional method and use the monopoly system for a new standard of economy (Schumpeter, 1975). By looking at the tourism and hospitality industry, a new standard is commonly used to follow the trending phenomenon from an environmental view (Hjalager, 2010). The standard is mainly to compromise the consumer preference and develop competitive reasoning for the industry to grow. Empirical evidence has suggested that the hospitality industry is equipped with innovative practices which it could sustain its businesses (Marasco, et al., 2018; Islam, et al., 2019; Ahmad & Scott, 2019). Previous studies have mentioned the concern about the innovation practices used, only focusing on economic development rather than service organisations (Damanpour, 2014). However, the restriction on the study has been finalised and by referring to the Schumpeterian literature and with accordance to the guideline highlighted by the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) and Oslo Manual (Eurostat, 1997), the component of innovation practices (product, service, process, marketing, and organisational) could be appropriately acquired. The explanation in various literature has essentially prominent in business development as well as to increase organisational performance. Thus, innovation is an important factor for aiding business performance and sustainability.

2.10.3 Human Capital Theory and Endogenous Growth Theory

Initially, human capital was discussed by Schultz (1961) to solve the problem happened in the production line known as “residual factor”. The discussion then expanded into several perspectives, which specifically mentioned physical capital, labour, land, and management, which were used in residual factors (Eicher, 1996;

Mincer, 1962). As the study on human capital is widely known, the human capital literature has become a fundamental in business and management courses. According to Nafukho et al. (2004), human capital theory is uniquely discussed where it has been explained as one of the investments in management and operation. The researcher mentioned that human capital theory could be an alternative in assisting the business owner in terms of improving performance, productivity, profitability, and social benefit. The investment that has been stated by Nafukho et al. (2004) is specifically on the education system. From the perspective of the researchers, education is important in building a potential individual in thinking and practicality. From a theory perspective, education has been said as one of the important tools to develop a person with sufficient attributes to become better in understanding and knowledge acceptance. Furthermore, Weisbrod (1962) has explained that formal education, training, and work experience are essential in building the business strategy and performance. Previous studies have mentioned how human capital has provided a systematic and strategic cause for business development (Rusmingsih et al., 2021; Sobakinova et al., 2019; Brinckmann et al., 2018; Lado & Wilson, 1994). This evidence from previous studies has made a strong justification for how human capital is highlighted as the core in organisation in order to suppress competitive advantage.

Through the perception of human capital theory, Hadjimanolis (2000) provided a better explanation of how knowledge and education the fundamental in the development of an individual. By looking at the human capital strategy, it could provide a better understanding of how the expansion of the dimension has been empirically in terms of construct development. Hadjimanolis (2000) added that the attributes of human capital could influence the structure of business management and organisation by encouraging new ideas, technology advancement, and innovation. Davidsson and Honig (2003) argued on the human capital dimension which they indicate that education, knowledge, and work experience are inseparable. On a different view of the similar statement, Nelson and Phelps (1966) have discussed the importance of education in the Endogenous Growth Theory, and the difference in the level of education could provide a different insight into individuals' knowledge. From the view made by the growth theory, it could be stated that the application of a similar situation in the food tourism industry is inevitable (Assaker et al., 2018). Empirical evidence has been distributed to

show that human capital theory and competitive advantage under RBV have a lot of possibilities for the food tourism development and sustainability by equipping the necessary factors such as skills (Chou, Horng, Liu, & Huang, 2020; Lee et al., 2016a).

Based on the previous statement by Schultz (1961), human capital theory has similarities with the Endogenous Growth Theory (Nelson & Phelps, 1966). The relation between economic growth and human capital could not be separated as it needs to be aligned with organisation performance. While the human capital theory has the attributes for education and knowledge, the growth theory by Nelson and Phelps (1966) mentions the same structure in terms of education and knowledge. These ideas can be reflected in the statement where technological and human capital endowment are the basis for the organisational sustainability performance (Badinger et al., 2019). From RBV perspectives, the relation between these two theories can be described as imminent and the resources that have been highlighted as the attributes for business development. Jones (2019) pointed out the idea from growth literature where the researcher found out that a significant reaction between economic growth and the surrounding acceptance. To begin with, the argumentative solution by Jones (2019), the researcher stated that the resources need to be equivalent to the competitor's scale. The scale used refers to the fundamental justification for production in a business, and the resources used must be balanced. The implication of the statement, researchers have developed a contextual understanding where the equator of the development needs to have an overview on human capital and the attributes of growth theory (Jones, 2019; Dosi et al., 2019). However, Dosi et al. (2019) explained more on endogenous growth is essentially one of the modes of the development of innovation practices.

In addition, previous researchers have expanded the paradigms used in endogenous growth to evolve in technological progress, which can be considered exogenous (Arjun et al., 2020). The external cause of the current trend in business, management, especially in the restaurant and tourism industry, has led the significant adaptability for the advancement in human capital and growth performance. By referring to the statement made by Arjun et al. (2020), the analysis of short-term and long-term dynamism of the output from technology, human capital and growth performance has been finalised in the causation of the variable environment. In addition, Bustos et al. (2019) analysed the structural transformation of the company is technically

dependent on its composition. This factor can be viewed as the opportunity given by the progressive attitude of employee and their dependence on performance progress. In addition, exogenous factors are also included in picturised the overall assessment of the sustainability of an organisation. Previous studies have indicated that the monopoly in using innovation has driven endogenous growth to measure the market power (Boldrin et al., 2021). The study then argued that endogenous growth cycles can be built by focusing on productivity and the capacity of adopted technology. In accordance with the endogenous growth, Mun and Jang (2018) declared that profitability in the restaurant business should come from various specialisation, including new product development, menu improvement, innovative ideas, and the education factor. Thus, it is appropriate to mention that human capital theory and endogenous growth theory have similar characteristics in giving scenario illustration whether the development of business, especially in the restaurant industry, would benefit the attributes mentioned, as well as it will help in the context of the current study of food tourism.

2.10.4 Motivation Theory

In a theory of human motivation explained by Maslow (1943), it is understandable that human behaviour can be described as essential for the development of individuals. The hierarchical category based on the needs that have been portrayed by the study makes an excellent comparison for the needs of individuals that should be fulfilled according to their preference and strength. However, Cohen (1972) classified motivation theory as having a different approach based on tourist behaviour, namely organised mass tourists, individual mass tourists, explorers, and drifters. The theory that has been related to the motivation theory explains how tourist behaviour is influenced an assumption about particular places which they have the entire decision to consider in making their next destination. In relation to tourist behaviour, Dann (1977) argued that the motivation theory is based on the push and pull factors of the destination. The study explained that personal needs are important in deriving the decision of the tourist to go to a particular destination. In a relation with the study, push and pull factors are essential to be looked at in the usage of the motivation theory in the business image and

performance. However, based on the study by Dann (1977), the study mentioned how push and pull factors as a theory related to the motivation theory. The theory developed from Maslow (1943) has inspired many other researchers to find a way for motivation theory to expand, including Cohen (1972) and Dann (1977). In a study on motivation theories and their literature, Pardee (1990) contributed to the expansion. The study mentioned how motivation theory relates to job satisfaction and employees' attitudes toward work. In this case, the motivation theory has been studied on the organisational behaviour which represents the perspective on the organisation. Moreover, in the tourism and hospitality industry, motivation theory is used for the relevance of the consumer's understanding of the tourism product, which will lead to the tourist decision-making process (Kay, 2003). By referring to the study of tourist motivation, Kay (2003) refers to Crompton (1979) who identified several motives to travel, including push motives, pull motives, novelty, and education. These motives that have been presented are useful in measuring the motivation of an individual or a group to revisit the destination or even a place. A study on motivation theory application in the organisation has made an impactful justification on how the organisation will be successful by having a common equity (Badubi, 2017). The study has identified five major job characteristics that will increase the motivation of the employee in an organisation by equipping various skills learned, the significance of the task, the identity involved in the job given, autonomy, and feedback. These characteristics will be discovered by their employer evaluation while on-the-job training. These are important in terms of employee development, as well as it would make a major contribution to destination image, or in this study, it refers to the restaurant image.

On the other hand, the motivation theory has been discussed not just in the organisation perspective, but it has been discussed in the context of the tourism perspective in relation to organisation. Madde et al. (2016) have claimed that motivation theory has supported destination image in the formatting of two different situations, which can be described as internal motivation and external motivation. The justification of the study has been expanded into various results, which the researcher mentioned about destination image was used as several attributes in the variables study including, independent variable, mediating and moderating variable (Prayag, 2009; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Bigne, Sanchez, & Sanchez, 2001). By comparing to the previous research,

destination image has been discussed as an antecedent for the tourist to travel (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Beerli & Martin, 2004a). The main internal motivation for the tourist to come again to the destination or the particular place depends on the motivation sources, which follow the previous experience or opinion from family and friends. The driving force to move an individual to decide is somehow necessary in the theory as it will be used as a useful source to satisfy one's needs (Chen et al., 2014). In a different study of motivation theory, it implies psychological factors such as needs, wants, and goals (Fodness, 1994).

2.10.4.1 Tourist Destination Image

Motivation theory has explained how the importance of tourist motivation influences their decision, environmental factors, and behaviour to travel. Based on the statement that has been mentioned, tourist destination image and tourist motivation are vital parts in understanding tourist intentions and behaviours (Madde et al., 2016). Tourist destination image can be defined as the tourist's perception of a destination whenever they find the information or go to the destination provided which can include both functional and psychological characteristics. This has been mentioned by previous scholars on the functional and psychological value that has similar use in perceived value term explanation and motivation theory in representing tourist motivation and behaviour (Sthapit et al., 2021; van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011).

It is a dynamic process in which every individual has their own preference and concept of motivation. The process can be presented in terms of their decision-making; however, it includes their motive to go to the particular place or revisit the place or destination. Šimková and Holzner (2014) illustrated the results of the individual motivation to go to a particular destination. The results from the study have been finalised and the findings mention about the "seeking" connection in every respondent. Overall assessment identified that the respondent mainly wanted to find an alternative for authentic experience, enjoyment, relaxation, and other factors. To describe the connectivity of the responses with the restaurant, motivation theory has provided potential individuals to decide whether the restaurant would suffice in terms of the quality, environment, and experience to hold the motivation of the individual for revisit

intention. While destination image is the case for motivation theory, RBV has been mentioned by Siregar et al. (2022) as a theory that is related to the organisation structure. However, it can be applied to the destination image where the researchers brought up an argument on its components, tangible and intangible assets. Particularly, tangible assets in the argument refer to the physical figure, such as landscape, and the intangible asset refers to the value owned by the respective destination. By looking at the claim made by Siregar et al. (2022), it has been confirmed that the use of RBV is important to discuss as it refers to the theory of affective and cognitive. To connect the antecedent that have been mentioned, the claimed eventually describe individual possessed by the motivation to travel will have their own RBV connection as they will experience the destination they choose (affective) and they will consider to have knowledge on the particular destination that they have gone (cognitive) (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Pike & Ryan, 2004). Previous subtopic mentioned about the components of destination image represented by cognitive and affective which captures emotional responses (Gartner, 1993). Scholars have made a clearer version for its multi-dimensional construct which consisting of cognitive and affective components (Tapia et al., 2017; Yang & Pesonen, 2026). The integration of cognitive and affective constructs in this study follows the hierarchical model of destination image formation. Cognitive components (human capital, innovation practices, and perceived value) represent tourists' rational assessments of destination resources. These cognitive evaluations subsequently shape affective responses, which reflect emotional attachment and feelings toward the destination. The interplay between cognition and affect provides a comprehensive explanation of how destination resources translate into overall tourist destination image. Therefore, it is safe to assume that motivation theory has an impact on the RBV theory development and its relation between theories is significant for the literature's constructive argument.

2.10.5 Customer-Perceived Value Theory

Perceived value is always related to the customer orientation and acceptance towards significant attractions, products and services, and behaviour. The fundamentals of perceived value can be seen as an important factor to assist the ability to

understanding customer decision-making and related behaviour (Zauner et al., 2015). The comprehensive structure of the perceived value construct is derived from past studies on value perspective, which covers the customer perceived value (CPV) and its relationship with marketing, management, and business models (Zauner, et al., 2015). Multidisciplinary roots of CPV are based on the views of scholars who examined the CPV as contextual in the diversity of research fields and theoretical perspectives, including in the tourism industry (Graf & Maas, 2008; Payne & Holt, 2001). According to Zeithaml (1988), CPV is considered in marketing research to see the interaction of different environmental conditions and nature. In the study of the value, the term perceived value can refer to customer value (Woodall, 2003; Woodruff, 1997). Hence, the theory of perceived value is related to the customer's perceived value that comes from the extension of various opinions and discussions on the values. CPV occupies a prominent place in various studies and managerial practice. Furthermore, referring to the past studies mentioned, perceived value is a trade-off between benefits and offerings made by suppliers and customers, which results in the end satisfaction (Dodds et al., 1991; Zeithaml, 1988). Scholars have viewed this discussion on a critical point and measurement where it is surely making a resourceful idea on the definition and its expanded meaning (Blut et al., 2023). Extensive literature reviews have provided further insight into the main conceptualisation of theory and its overall conclusion, which dictates the overall assessment of CPV theory and well-versed foundations on different constructs:

Table 2.1
The Study of CPV, Insights, and Conceptualisation

Authors	Focus of the Study	Conceptualisation
Sheth et al. (1991)	The study on functional value, emotional value, social value, conditional value, and epistemic value.	Consumption of experience and value for money.
Sweeney and Soutar (2001)	Emotional value and Social Value.	Insights on the experience that value held. Benefits and sacrifices related to

Based on the studies, perceived value theory conceptualisation has been seen as crucial to find out the exercise on experience and consumption of value following the behaviour of the customer and benefits. Further study has stated that the dimension of perceived value can be specifically derived from the study, which posits a relevant concept towards the conceptualisation of the construct and understanding of perspective in the context of the study (Singh et al., 2021). Recent studies are focusing more on products and services, loyalty, and experience quality in the context of small-medium enterprises (SMEs) (Kusumawati & Rahayu, 2020; Rahardja et al., 2021). The value mentioned in these particular studies are interaction between customers' perception on the costs and comparing with the value of the products and services. The concept of value is seemingly wider than just SMEs, as it could be seen from another scope of industry, which is the tourism and hospitality industry. Jiang and Hong (2021) examined the relationship between perceived value and tourism activities are positively correlated, where the dimensions of functional value, emotional value, social value, and economic value have been analysed. A similar study was conducted to see what attracted youth to have the intention to travel and the involvement of these values (functional value, economic value, social value, and emotional value) involved within the concept of perceived value (Caber et al., 2020). Seemingly, the value of the destination is influenced by the food tourism or food activities in the area. The findings have made a revelation on the assumption of the CPV theory on experience-based related to the intention to travel and revisit intention. In the theory of customer-perceived value, overall evaluation will take place to consider the products and services based on customers' perceptions (Zeithaml, 1988). Prebensen et al. (2014) suggested that tourist value perceptions are related to what tourists obtain from the experience, and they include the different experiences gathered from different perspectives.

Based on the theory of CPV, Dai et al. (2022) monitored the difference between dimensions of values. From the beginning, they proposed that the dimensions for perceived value must include functional value, emotional value, economic value, and social value in their setting for tourism consumption satisfaction and loyalty. In the current study, these dimensions were applied to the current setting in the context of the

food tourism industry as its capability to understand the study of destination image. Through the theory of CPV, the connectivity of each construct by following the dimensions proposed is crucial to see how it will answer all questions and reach the objectives of the current study. On the other hand, the concept of values has emerged as a new contribution to competitive advantage set by RBV theory. Salazar (2017) made a claim, values are essential in RBV, and they drive by a certain magnitude in the relation of resources and structural performance. In the context of food tourism capability to adopt the RBV concept, while perceived value is a contributor to sustainability, it is fundamental for destination image setting, through food activities or food tourism activities. Slack and Singh (2020) provided a simple overview of competitive advantage with values that explained competitive advantage is a tool to push forward and maintain as competitive as the competitors. This has been supported by Tran and Le (2020) who stated that resources should be amplified to gain a competitive advantage over competitors. Literature from past studies has indicated that, competitive advantage that has been derived from RBV provides a significant contribution to the available resources, which come from the perceived value of customers' perspectives (Zhuang & Lederer, 2006; Chang et al., 2013). From the statement made by Chang, et al. (2013), they implied that perceived value and satisfaction are affected by the perception of customers. These values mentioned are important for the development of the RBV concept and to address the contribution of organisational resources and business value (Zubac et al., 2010). In the context of food tourism, it can be used as a subject to improve the image of the business as well as to improve the destination image. From the perspective of customer perceived value theory, it has a relation with RBV, which can be used to measure the development of the current study. Therefore, the dimensions of PV have been highlighted in the previous discussion in the current study, namely functional value, economic value, emotional value, and social value.

2.11 The Conceptual Framework of the Study

This study proposed below conceptual framework to assess the mediator (innovation practices) direct effect between HC and TDI, and PV and TDI. Based on the literature that has been discussed, it has been a probability that these constructs may affect the relationships. The conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 2.2. Two

exogenous variables, namely human capital (HC) and perceived value (PV), are measured according to their relationship with innovation practices (IP) as the mediator that will affect the endogenous variable in this study, which is tourist destination image (TDI) in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. Based on the conceptual framework proposed, the relationships between exogenous, mediator, and endogenous variables are specifically discussed in the literature and argued according to the previous literature. Other than that, this conceptual framework will test the direct effect of the mediator that may affect the proposed endogenous, TDI. In addition, there are a few hypotheses to confirm the dimension used in this conceptual framework based on the proposed construct.

For this study, two (2) relevant dimensions are used to represent HC, namely skills and cultural competence. Based on the literature on human capital (p.20) and the relevant theories discussed, which are RBV theory and human capital, and endogenous growth theory, education and knowledge are mainly highlighted as a support for the skills development relevant to the competency, including cultural understanding in the multicultural tourism-based activities (Nafukho, et al., 2004). While cultural competence is not explicitly named in the theory, the references from education and knowledge that promote innovation enhancement are the diverse applications to understand the norms and cultural sensitivities that are critically discussed in the literature (Hadjimanolis, 2000). In the meantime, the skills and cultural competence dimension that have been highlighted is appropriate to imply on the competitive advantage (Chou, et al., 2020; Lee, et al., 2016a) as RBV theory and human capital and endogenous growth theory are used in the current study. Although human capital theory and endogenous growth theory are traditionally applied at the firm or national level, this study conceptualises human capital from the perspective of tourists as external evaluators of destination resources. In line with the resource-based view (RBV), human capital is treated as a strategic destination resource that contributes to competitiveness. However, rather than measuring human capital at the macro level, this study captures tourists' perceptions of the destination's human capital such as skills, knowledge, other competencies, as these perceptions directly influence perceived value and destination image.

Perceived value provides four (4) dimensions, namely social value, emotional

value, functional value, and monetary value. These values have been discussed in the previous literature and with the current discussion on the effect of perceived value towards the construct proposed. The study on the theories underpinnings has discovered that the two (2) theories related to the constructs are customer-perceived value (CPV) and motivation theory. These theories have pinpointed a similar understanding of the theory which emphasised on the experience of the tourists, motivations, satisfactions, and expectations. Thus, the dimensions for the PV construct are as follow: social value, emotional value, functional value, and monetary value. Furthermore, the mediator for the conceptual framework is innovation practices as it implies the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables. The literature on innovation practices has been very deep, as the previous literature highlighted the dimensions of IP as a mediator for the tourism perspective and using innovation theory.

The theory related with innovation practices also discussed on the important of the structure to be applied in the study. Hence, the dimensions mentioned are product innovation, service innovation, process innovation, marketing innovation, and organisational innovation. Moreover, the endogenous variable in the framework proposed has been indicated by the previous literature, which pinpointed the use of tourist destination image in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. Based on the literature and theory explained, tourist destination image applies the theory of RBV and motivation theory as it focuses on leveraging internal sources such as human capital and innovation practices to create a positive image of the destination in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. As a previous study justified, a strong image of the food destination will attract more visitors and sustain a competitive advantage. To conclude the discussion on the conceptual framework, every theory has its own unique perspectives towards the framework, highlighting different aspects of food tourism in Malaysia and the relation to the constructs. Table 2.2 below shows a summary for each of the hypothesis, theoretical foundation, supporting authors, and the direction of relationship:

Table 2.2
Summary of Hypothesis and Theory Used

Hypothesis	Relationship	RBV Perspective	Supporting Theory	Key Scholars
H1	HC → IP	Human capital as	Endogenous	Barney (1991)

		strategic resource	Growth Theory	
H2	PV → IP	Value perception as competitive driver	Customer Perceived Value Theory	Zeithaml (1988)
H3	IP → TDI	Innovation as inimitable capability	Innovation Theory	Damanpour (2014)
H4	HC → TDI	Valuable & rare resource shaping advantage	Motivation Theory	Barney (1991); Dann (1977)
H5	PV → TDI	Value creates differentiation	Customer Perceived Value Theory	Zeithaml (1988)
H6(a)	IP mediates HC and TDI	Resource transformation mechanism	RBV + Innovation Theory	Barney (1991)
H6(b)	IP mediates PV and TDI	Capability deployment pathway	RBV + Value Theory	Barney (1991)

Overall, the current research framework and based on the hypotheses development discussed, H1 will test how HC will affect IP, H2 will test the effect of PV on IP, H3 will test on the effect of IP on TDI, H4 will test the effect of HC on TDI, H5 will test the effect of PV on TDI, H6(a) will test the mediator effect of IP between HC and TDI, and H6(b) will test the mediator effect of IP between PV and TDI. Furthermore, the study is also want to confirm the dimension for each construct which has been proposed in the previous hypotheses proposed (p.10); HC dimensions; (1) skills and (2) cultural competence, PV dimensions; (1) social value, (2) emotional value, (3) functional value, and (4) monetary value, IP dimensions; (1) product innovation, (2) service innovation, (3) process innovation, (4) marketing innovation, and (5) organisational innovation, and TDI dimensions; (1) intention to travel and (2) revisit

intention. Thus, below conceptual framework (Figure 2.2) is designed for the current study:

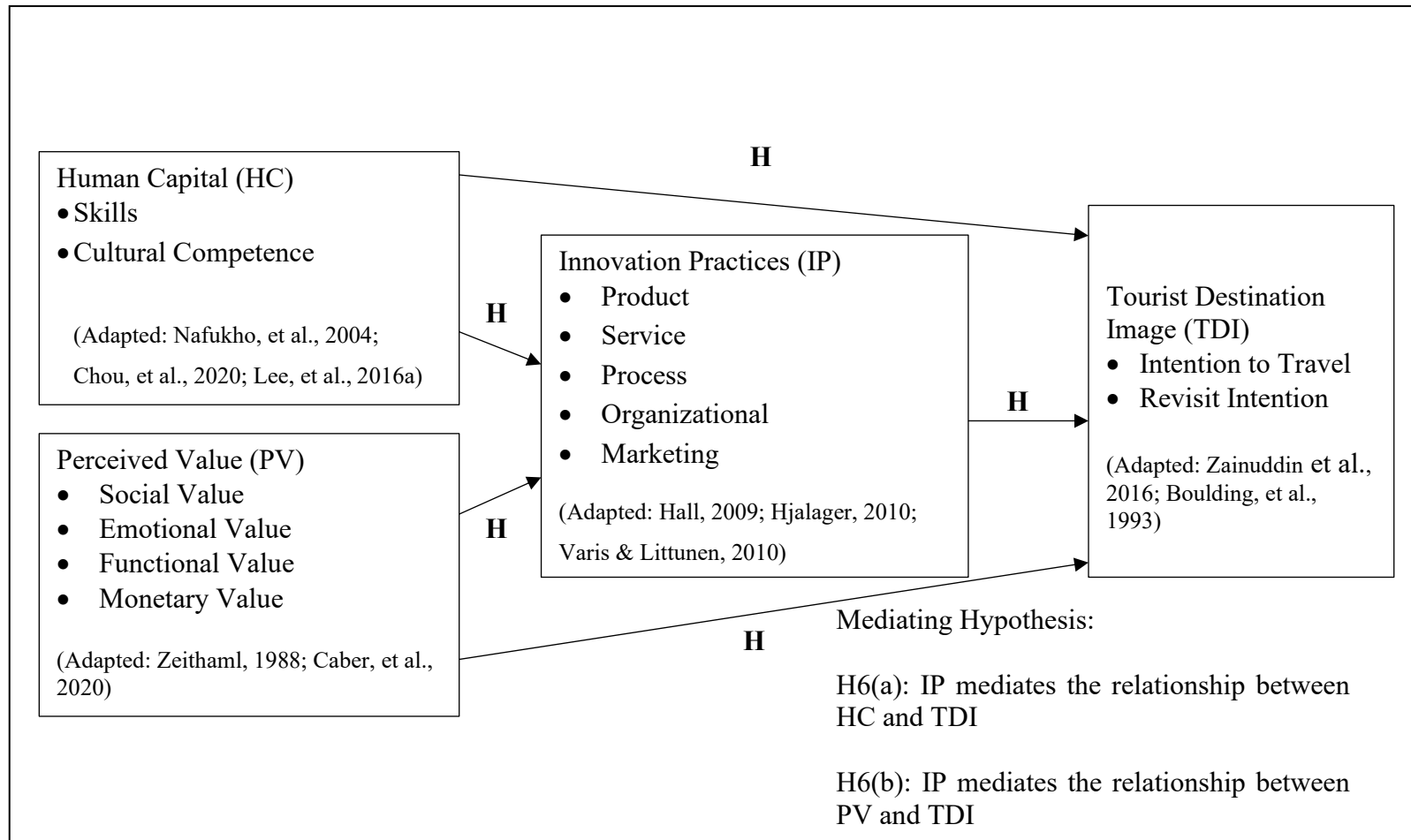


Figure 2.2 Conceptual Framework of the Study

2.12 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter is crucial to highlight the knowledge for every construct relation that has been proposed. Based on the empirical evidence that has been discussed in the literature, every construct has been used by several industries however, the link between constructs in the current study is yet to be tested in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. In relation to the literature contribution, the conceptual framework has been developed to be applied in the research field related to the tourist destination image in the context of the food tourism industry. This chapter also focusing on the theories underpinnings that significantly contribute to underpin the model and the ideas that researcher discovered within the conceptual framework. Furthermore, in this chapter, the researcher has brought the focus on the relationship linkages for each construct that will answer the hypotheses that have been developed in order to find the findings, methodology, and future suggestions for each relationship. Thus, a review from past studies is relevant to the contribution to the several gaps that are issued in the current study. This chapter also provides a significant body of knowledge to the whole writing structure and provides all the elements of the issues of the study for future reference. Other than that, the contribution for the gap study has been filled by model formulation as the human capital and perceived value as the predictors, innovation practices as the mediator, and tourist destination image as the output in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. This is according to the literature and also the findings from various sources about the theories underpinnings which resource-based view is the main theory and supported by other theories related, namely, innovation theory, human capital theory, motivation theory, and customer-perceived theory. The methodological aspect of this chapter will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Preamble

This chapter consists of a few technical and analysis processes that will be a major explanation in order to achieve the result of this study. The sub-topic that needs to be focused on in this study includes research design, sampling technique, plans for data collection, and plans for data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

Research design can be described as a guideline for researchers in order to complete the research process. It includes data collection, measurement, and analysis based on the research questions of the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). In a theoretical view, research design will give a better perspective on the research, pathway which could bring in other options to be equipped. As mentioned by Ariffin (2013), research design is an insight for the researcher to conduct the research, to gather the information from internal and external sources associated with the research problems. In addition, it could also explain how the variables and the interaction between variables will result in the findings of the research. Asenahabi (2019) argued on a similar situation of the function of research design, where it works on the interpretation of the research problem into data for analysis. The results from the data analysis were analysed to provide a relevant answer to the research questions that have been developed. This study aims to examine the relationship between variables, which includes constructs, and to confirm the dimensions that have been mentioned. Hence, for this study to get the rational findings, a descriptive research design is reliable in an attempt to explain the variables that have been developed (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). From the perspective of past researchers, a descriptive research design technically uses a correlational study to measure data related to variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010; Cooper & Schindler, 2003; Siedlecki, 2020). By using a correlational study, the researcher could be able to examine whether the variables have a correlation or no correlation. For instance, if there is a relationship between variables, then there is a correlation between the variables that

have been used. Furthermore, a correlational study has been mentioned by Cooper and Schindler (2003) as a subset of descriptive study where the bivariate relationship between variables can be analysed.

This study focuses on domestic and international tourists visiting Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, Malaysia, as they represent the target population for assessing human capital, perceived value, innovation practices, and destination image in food tourism. Due to the large and dynamic tourist population, convenience sampling was employed for accessibility and efficiency. Following Hair et al. (2017) and Roscoe (1975), a sample size of 650 respondents was determined using the "rule of thumb," multiplying 65 instrument items by 10. The initial questionnaire consisted of 65 items. Following the pilot study, four additional items were incorporated into two constructs to improve content adequacy and model fit. Therefore, a total of 69 items were subjected to exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Following the rule of thumb of 10 respondents per item, a minimum of 690 respondents would be ideal for 69 items. Although the study obtained 650 responses, this figure remains substantially above the minimum recommended by Hair et al. (2017) for SEM analysis. In addition, Awang (2015) suggests that a sample size of 500 or more is desirable for SEM to achieve reliable model fit indices. The present study obtained 650 usable responses, which exceeds this recommendation and is therefore considered statistically robust. Based on UNWTO (2020) and Cochran's (1977) principles of proportional allocation and sample size determination, 70% (455) of respondents are domestic tourists, while 30% (195) are international tourists. Furthermore, this study employs a personally administered questionnaire to assess human capital, perceived value, innovation practices, and destination image. The instrument was adapted from previous studies, allowing modifications to fit cultural and contextual settings (Parasuraman et al., 2005). Screening questions identify domestic and international tourists, while researcher assistance ensures accurate responses. Constructs include human capital (skills, cultural competence), perceived value (social, emotional, functional, economic), innovation practices (product, service, process, organisational, marketing), and destination image (travel and revisit intention). Reliability was ensured through validity tests and Cronbach's Alpha checks (Samuels, 2015), ensuring robust data collection and analysis.

In addition, this study uses a quantitative research method, as mentioned by Sekaran and Bougie (2010) as factors to analyse the statistical relationship among

variables. The statement for the quantitative research method was described by Saunders et al. (2009) as the relevance of using such a research design, which focus more on explaining of the context, describing the subject, predicting the analysis, and using a larger sample size to get a reliable result. Hopkins (2000), in the study of research methodology, explained that quantitative research has its very own objective to validate the relationship between variables. On the other hand, the research design and adopted instruments were developed specifically to aid the current study examining the constructs and to confirm the dimensions proposed. Based on this study, (4) main variables need to be emphasised namely human capital and perceived value as independent variables, innovation practices as mediator, and destination image as dependent variable. A wide range of studies have been discussed to address the structure of the conceptual framework. Furthermore, the framework can be a figure to develop research hypotheses, research questions, and research objectives to eventually assess the relationship between the variables.

By referring to the research design, this study utilised a structural equation modelling (SEM) to analyse the data gathered from the survey. There were two (2) phases that were conducted, named, first order and second order of confirmatory model approach or known as confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). According to Gaskin (2021), CFA can be interpreted as a measurement that will take place after exploratory factor analysis (EFA). After the researcher has gathered the results from EFA, the results were extracted, and the CFA was taken into consideration. In the first order of CFA, the focus was on construct validity and reliability, which researchers computed the data to receive reliable results. The data was then be used in the second order of CFA, where the study observed the latent variables for further analysis. Previous researchers explained about CFA second order, where the analysis will look into the constructs which have high correlation between variables, or otherwise it can be rejected in the findings (Zainuddin, 2012). The stages of research design in this study are shown in Figure 3.1 below:

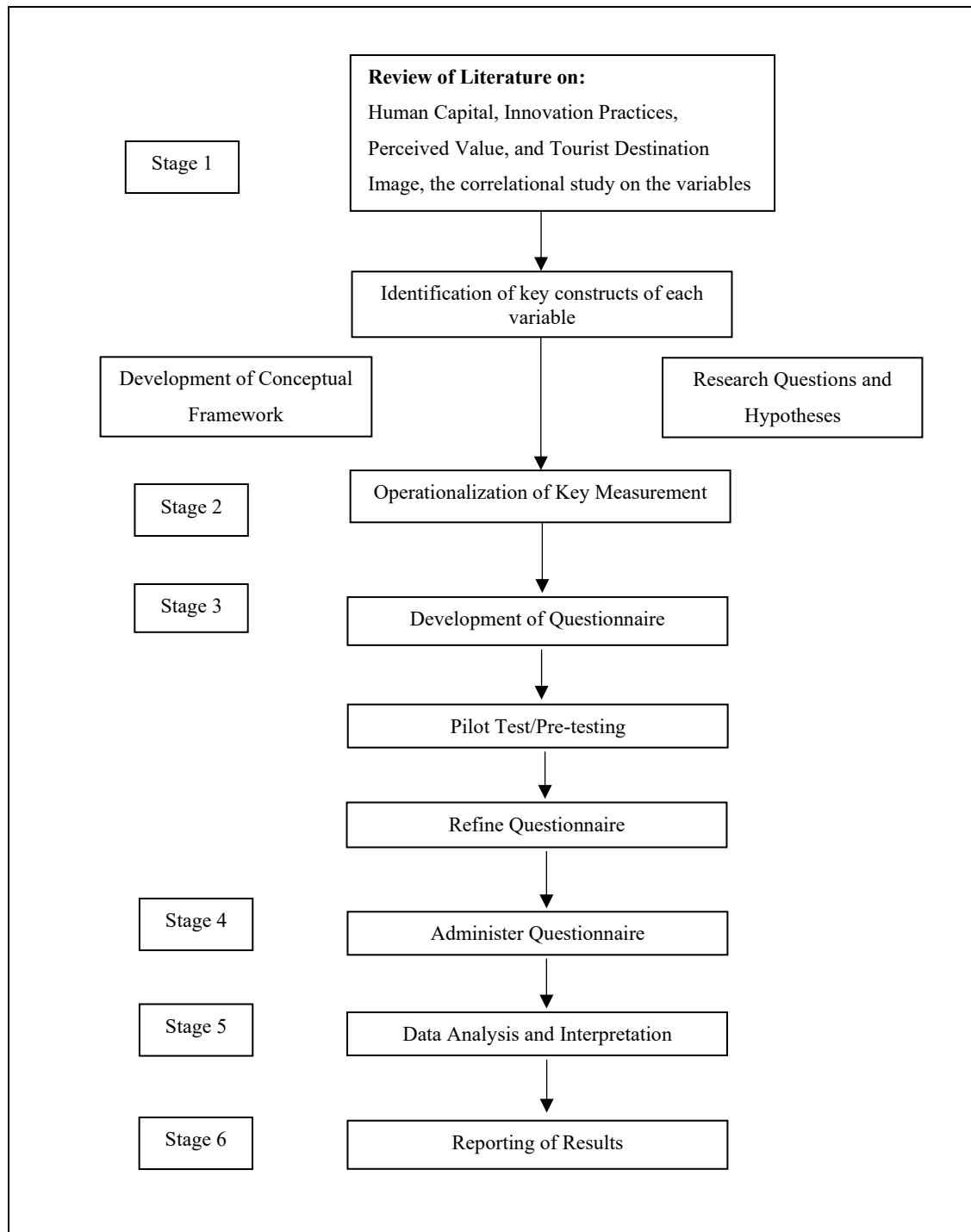


Figure 3.1 Research Design
(Adopted from Ariffin, 2013, p.92)

3.3 Population and Sample

3.3.1 Sampling

Sekaran and Bougie (2013) mentioned that the definition of population is related to individuals or groups, issues, problems, and things that are connected to some reason or event that occurred in some circumstances. This study aims for a large number of populations which specifically highlighting domestic and international tourists who travel to Malaysia and have tried to taste Malaysian food. To check whether the tourist arrival has a significant number, statistical data from Tourism Malaysia has been employed. In this study, the populations that have been selected are among domestic and international tourists who visit Malaysia. From the literature that has been discussed, these populations are considered reliable in accordance with the study perspective because they have an exact characteristic for the purpose of this study (Fitrizal et al., 2021). This has been highlighted by Bayih and Singh (2020), due to the high mobility of the domestic tourists, it is impossible to draw the actual population of the tourists. According to Siddharta on Statista (2024), in 2023, there were 213.74 million domestic tourists recorded have travelled to Malaysia. Based on the Malaysia tourism statistics provided by Tourism Malaysia (2024), in 2023, there were 20.1 million international tourist arrivals from all over the world. From the number, 11.8 million were from Southeast Asia. The tourist could be anyone who travel within the setting (Yang et al., 2024); in this context, the setting will be in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. From the study that has been conducted, the reliability of tourist arrivals can be crucial to determine the data. Therefore, this study is appropriate to propose the population to investigate the relation between human capital, perceived value, and innovation practices, and how these constructs will affect the efficiency of destination image in the context of food tourism in Malaysia.

The components or dimensions in the construct of human capital are important, as the current study will explore the reliability of the construct in assessing its relationship towards other constructs. While perceived value will have another impact on the overall assessment of the construct, namely innovation practices and destination image. Furthermore, in the sampling sub-section, Kuala Lumpur and Selangor were chosen because of the urbanisation is happening internally and externally. The structure of the urbanisation and development has been mentioned in the article and planning for

both cities (The Vibes, 2023; The Star, 2024). This includes the development of attractions and food and beverage suppliers assumed to be located at these particular destinations. Other than that, the development of these states has been a subject for people to travel and to begin exploring their satisfaction and experience (Yang, et al., 2024). From the report, it is understandable that there are massive possibilities for people to have the intention to travel for food, and the tourism activities involving food will be expanding.

3.3.1.1 Sampling Method

The method that is acceptable to be used in the current quantitative study is convenience sampling (Golzar & Tajik, 2022). According to the statement made by them, in non-probability sampling, convenience sampling is the data collection process from a research population that is reachable to the researcher (Rahi, 2017). This has been mentioned by other scholars who defined convenience sampling as a technique which allows researchers to go to the public locations and ask the passers-by to participate as respondents (MacNealy, 1999). In comparison, the current study was not using purposive sampling or known as judgemental sampling (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013), because of various factors. From the researcher's perspective, purposive sampling is used when the population is hard to assess. In addition, purposive sampling works under non-probability sampling, which uses the selection process by following the judgement. Neuman (2005) mentioned that purposive sampling allows researchers to select respondents based on particular factors.

The study employed convenience sampling due to practical considerations, including accessibility to respondents, primarily at KLIA1 and KLIA2 and nearest hub stations, time constraints, and cost efficiency. While convenience sampling is often viewed as operationally driven, it is commonly employed in tourism and social science research when the target population is difficult to access, large, and difficult to distinguish, and when the study aims to validate measurement instruments and test theoretical relationships (Hair et al., 2017; Fowler, 2014). In order to reduce potential sampling bias, respondents were recruited across multiple airport hubs, nearest public transport station hubs, demographic categories, and the sample size exceeded recommended thresholds for structural equation modelling, ensuring adequate

statistical power (Hair et al., 2017). Thus, the approach is justifiable for the exploratory and confirmatory purposes of this study. In this study, convenience sampling was considered applicable as it yields various benefits: (1) the researcher can consume less effort to select respondents, (2) low cost to handle, (3) less time to manage the sample, and (4) the researcher does not need to prepare a list of all the population elements. It is essential to achieve the objectives of the research where the actual population of tourist arrivals in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor are hard to ascertain because of the massive population, based on the data statistics gathered. Thus, the database to collect the specific sampling should be highlighted to ease the process.

3.3.1.2 Sampling Size

Based on the population settings stated in the previous subtopic, the actual population of tourist arrivals in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor was obviously challenging to justify. By looking at an unjustifiable amount of population from domestic and international altogether, Roscoe (1975) claimed that a “rule of thumb” is needed for the purpose of identifying the population to be set for sample size. Specifically, the sample size for this study can be referred to the information provided by Hair et al. (2017). According to the justification, the sample size can be determined by multiplying the total items of a variable using the rule of thumb which indicates that the preferred number of 10. By looking at the statement made by Hair et al. (2017), Roscoe (1975) has a similar opinion on the rule of thumb, where a large population should have been determined by using a preferred number of 10, and the sample size can be explained in terms of a smaller unit. This has been mentioned by Kline (2016), where he stated that the sample of over 200 is considered small for a complex model, particularly for those using the estimation method. Other than that, Kline (2016) added that any sample with below 100 is considered small and not recommended for any type of SEM technique.

In this study, there were four (4) constructs, which undergo a specification through theories and literature. It explains the justification of dimensions in each of the constructs, which the projection will reflect on the number of items used in this study. Thus, this study covers 65 items representing all dimensions for each construct. However, the demographic section will not be included in the amount. By referring to the sampling size explained by Hair et al. (2013) and Hair et al. (2017), the minimum

sample size in the SEM analysis should be at least 500. This was in accordance with the complexity of the constructs to identify the sample size. They highlighted the suggestion of the rule of thumb, which could help the researcher to study the sample size which explained by Roscoe (1975) and Hair et al. (2010). The consequent effect of this rule of thumb has been elaborated by Hair et al. (2010) which the respondents should multiply by ten (10) from the number of items in the instrument. Therefore, in accordance with the explanation of the rule of thumb made by Roscoe (1975) and Hair et al. (2017), the total items proposed is 65 will be multiplied by its rule, which was the preferred number is 10. Thereupon, 650 respondents from tourist arrivals are needed in the process of assessing the sample size.

By highlighting the statement from UNWTO (2020), domestic tourism provides a large portion of the total tourism expenditure with 75%. Although the current study employs convenience sampling, Cochran's formula (1977) for sampling size was used as justification to divide between domestic and international tourists. Following Cochran's (1977) principles of proportional allocation and sample size determination, the sample in this study was distributed to reflect the population composition of tourists (70% domestic, 30% international). Cochran provides the statistical framework, though the application to tourism is adapted for this research context. While convenience sampling is not equipped with probability principles, applying Cochran's recommendations will ensure the study's findings remain as robust and reliable as possible. Based on the Cochran's (1977) and referring to the suggestion by UNWTO of total expenditure in OECD countries, 70% of the respondents will be domestic tourists and the remaining 30% will be international tourists. As domestic tourists form the majority, their responses constituted a larger share of the data, while international tourists will set for 30% as recommended by Cochran's (1977) for effective sampling in tourism research. Thus, from 650 respondents, 455 respondents were from domestic tourists, and 195 respondents were from international tourists. In addition, it was particularly possible to include any tourists who visited the respective destination for the sampling, as mentioned by Fitrizal et al. (2021) and Yang et al. (2024), which comprehends the overall involvement. Thus, it can be concluded that the sample size for this study involved tourist arrivals (domestic and international tourists) in Malaysia.

3.4 Research Instruments

The conceptual framework in this study has been a guideline for questionnaire development. In order to develop a questionnaire, the researcher needs to adapt or adopt from previous studies so that the questionnaire can be applied in the research. The questionnaire was focused more on the constructs that have been demonstrated, including human capital, perceived value, innovation practices, and destination image. The connectivity of these constructs will gather important information through analysis for this study. To explain in detail, this study used a personally administered questionnaire where the researcher distributed the questionnaire that has been constructed and amended through the validity test personally to the respondent (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). Furthermore, a self-administered questionnaire would assist the researcher in collecting data from the specific population. Other than that, screening questions to identify whether the tourist is from domestic or international arrivals. The researcher helped in assisting the respondent to answer the questionnaire provided. The items in the questionnaire were adopted from various resources, which it was essential in questionnaire development. The adaptation technique will help the researcher to understand the scope of the study, and the item can be changed or deleted to fit in with the new settings (Parasuraman et al., 2005). Therefore, modification in the adopted questionnaire was possible due to the changes made in the settings to fit in with the culture and population. In addition, the changes made will be an advantage to the researcher in order to apply a technical ability of the specific study; however thorough check-up for the Cronbach's Alpha was necessary (Samuels, 2015).

3.4.1 Instrument Development

The instrument was developed for the purpose of studying settings. The instruments were gathered from the previous researchers, and the analysis must be conducted. The instruments were marked according to the differences between their constructs specifically; human capital (skills and cultural competence), perceived value (social value, emotional value, functional value, and economic value), innovation practices (product, service, process, organisational, and marketing), and tourist destination image (intention to travel and revisit intention). Table 3.1 below shows the original measure from the previous researchers:

Table 3.1
Measures of the study

Authors	Original Measures	Modified Measures
Skills		
1. Kamal & Begum (2019)	Employees have adequate technical skills to do their specific assigned job	The employees have the necessary skills to perform their jobs effectively.
	Employees can analyse and face a critical situation	The employees can handle challenging situations effectively.
	Employees have enough communication skills	The employees communicate well enough to be understood.
	Employees have good communication skills	The employees are easy to communicate with and understand.
	Employees have the skills to solve the problem.	The employees are good at solving problems when they arise.
Cultural Competence		
1. Yamazaki & Toyama (2021)	Become flexible in adapting to the manners of a different culture	The employees are flexible in adapting to different cultural manners.
	Change myself to meet a different culture	The employees adjust themselves to fit different cultures.
	Become adaptable to a different culture	The employees are adaptable to different cultural practices.
	Adapt myself to a way or behaviour required by a different country	The employees adjust their behaviour to fit different countries' expectations.
	Adopt the manners of a different culture, even if they are quite different from mine	The employees adopt other cultures' manners, even if they are different from their own.
Social Value		
1. Jiang & Hong (2021) 2. Lee et al. (2016b)	The night-time tourism experience made me feel more socially accepted.	The food tourism experience made me feel more socially accepted.
	The night-time tourism experience improved the way I am perceived.	The food tourism experience improved how others perceive me.
	The night-time tourism experience helped me get accepted by others.	The food tourism experience helped me feel accepted by others.
	The night-time tourism experience enabled me to impress others.	The food tourism experience allowed me to impress others.
	They are people with a certain level and style	The people here have a certain style.
Emotional Value		
	Overall, I think that Hong Kong	Overall, I crave Malaysian food.

1. Choe, et al. (2018)	food makes me crave it	
	Overall, I think that I am fascinated by Hong Kong food.	Overall, I find Malaysian food fascinating.
	Overall, I think that eating Hong Kong food changes my mood positively.	Overall, eating Malaysian food improves my mood.
	Overall, I think that eating Hong Kong food makes me feel happy	Overall, eating Malaysian food makes me feel happy.
	Overall, I think that eating Hong Kong food gives me pleasure.	Overall, eating Malaysian food brings me joy.
Functional Value	The night-time tourism destination offered tourism activities suitable for my travel needs.	The food tourism destination offered activities that suited my travel needs.
1. Jiang & Hong (2021) 2. Mohamad, et al. (2019)	The night-time tourism destination offered tourism resources that met my needs for travel.	The food tourism destination provided resources that met my travel requirements.
	The night-time tourism destination offered up-to-date facilities to satisfy my travel needs.	The food tourism destination had modern facilities that satisfied my needs.
	Compared to other tourism destinations, visiting Malaysia is good value for money	Compared to other destinations, visiting Malaysia offers good value for money.
	Compared to travel expenses, I got reasonable quality experience from visiting Malaysia	I received a good quality experience in Malaysia for my travel expenses.
Monetary Value	The night-time tourism experience was a good value for money	The food tourism experience offered good value for money.
1. Jiang & Hong (2021) 2. Eid (2013)	I found good deals during the night-time tourism experience.	I found great deals during my food tourism experience.
	The night-time tourism activities were reasonably priced.	The food tourism activities were reasonably priced.
	The tourism package was a good purchase for the price.	The tourism package was a worthwhile purchase for the price.
	The tourism package purchased was reasonably priced.	The tourism package I bought was fairly priced.
Product	Malaysia offers innovative tourism products.	Malaysia offers creative tourism products.

1. Cheng (2014) 2. Jayaram et al. (2014)	Malaysia offers new travel experience.	Malaysia provides new travel experiences.
	Malaysia offers various tourism products at a reasonable price.	Malaysia has a variety of tourism products at reasonable prices.
	Malaysia offers complete tourism products.	Malaysia offers a complete range of tourism products.
	We developed new products	Malaysia have developed new offerings.
Service	Introduction of a new or modified customer service process.	I noticed a new or improved way of serving customers in food tourism.
1. Lee, et al. (2016b)	Introduction of a new style of service (i.e. changing from customer self-service to waiter table service, first time introduction of table side cooking, etc.).	I experienced new styles of service, like waiter service or cooking at my table.
	Use of technology in customer service (i.e. first-time use of electronic handheld devices to collect order such as iPad or tablet	I saw that technology is used to take orders, like tablets or electronic devices.
	New or upgraded services were mostly new for our local market	I noticed that the new food services are mostly new to the local area.
	Our new set of services require new skills from our employees	I understand that the new food services require employees to learn new skills.
Process	Staff in Malaysia tourism industry are well-trained.	The staff in the Malaysian food tourism industry are well-trained.
1. Cheng (2014)	Travel information in Malaysia is easily accessible.	Information about food tourism in Malaysia is easy to find.
	Tourism arrangements in Malaysia are easily made.	Making food tourism arrangements in Malaysia is simple.
	Tourism organisations in Malaysia are well-collaborated.	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia work well together.
	Tourism organisations in Malaysia offer excellent services.	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia provide excellent services.
Organisational Innovation	Tourism organisations in Malaysia are well-managed.	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia are well-managed.
1. Lee et al. (2016b) 2. Cheng (2014)	Tourism organisations in Malaysia are easily accessible.	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia are easy to reach.

	Tourism organisations in Malaysia are innovative in information system.	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia use innovative information systems.
	Tourism organisations in Malaysia are innovative in assisting tourists.	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia are creative in helping tourists.
	New or upgraded management practices were mostly new for our local market	New management practices are mostly new to the local area.
Marketing	Tourism marketing strategies in Malaysia are well-planned.	Food tourism marketing strategies in Malaysia are well-planned.
1. Lee et al. (2016b)	Tourism marketing strategies in Malaysia are innovatively implemented.	Food tourism marketing strategies in Malaysia are implemented in creative ways.
2. Cheng (2014)	New media techniques for product promotion (e.g. TV ad, internet ad, smartphone app etc.)	New media techniques, like TV ads, internet ads, and smartphone apps, are used for promotion.
	Tourism marketing strategy activities in Malaysia are attractive.	Food tourism marketing activities in Malaysia are appealing.
	Malaysia tourism information is helpful.	Information about food tourism in Malaysia is helpful.
Intention to Travel	There is excellent quality workmanship in Turkey.	The quality of food and service in Malaysia is excellent.
1. Pereira, et al. (2019)	Turkey has recognizable brand names.	Malaysia has well-known food brands.
2. Dedeoğlu (2019)	Turkey is innovative.	Malaysia is innovative in its food offerings.
	Have an authentic experience about yourself	I have an authentic food experience in Malaysia.
	Experience new and different lifestyle	I experience a new and different lifestyle through food tourism in Malaysia.
Revisit Intention	I intend to visit Korea again in the near future.	I plan to visit Malaysia again in the near future.
1. Al-Ansi and Han (2019)	I am willing to revisit Korea in the near future.	I am willing to revisit Malaysia soon.
	I am willing to recommend other people to visit Korea	I would recommend Malaysia to others for a visit.
	I will say positive things to other people about Korea as a tourist destination	I will share positive things about Malaysia as a tourist destination.

My decision to visit Korea for halal-friendly travel was a wise one.	My decision to visit Malaysia for halal-friendly travel was a good choice.
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Although some intention to travel and revisit intention items have an international travel tone, domestic tourists are meaningfully capable of responding to destination evaluation scales (Yusof et al., 2021) because domestic tourism represents a significant portion of travel behaviour globally. This is aligned with statement from UNWTO (2020) which constitutes that domestic tourism represents a substantially higher volume of travel activity than international tourism and reflects tourist engagement with destination experiences within their own country. Therefore, domestic respondents' perceptions and intentions towards Malaysia as a food tourism destination remain valid and informative for this study's constructs. Specifically, for the instrument intention to travel and revisit intention to be used in this current study, the tone is highly international and focused more towards international. However, recent study used the same tone for domestic tourist for their particular instrument (Akbaruddin et al., 2025).

3.5 Scaling of Measurement

In this study, a questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions were utilised as the research instrument. The questionnaire was dissected into five (5) sections named Section A, B, C, D, and E. In order to get a reliable result from the survey, the instrument used (sections A to D) will be equipped with a 10-point Likert scale. The questions that needed an immediate answer are technically involved within the scope of human capital, perceived value, innovation practices, and destination image. The 10-point scale was chosen due to the interval scale in capturing more data compared to the 5-point Likert scale. According to Awang et al. (2016), 10-point Likert scales was more efficient than 5-point Likert scales in operating measurement models. As a conclusion of their study, the researchers found that, 5-point Likert scale could not meet the requirements of parametric-based in structural equation model (SEM). Hence, the use of a 10-point Likert scale was reliable for the metrics for the analysis. Based on the above statement, the scale without a label in the current study ranges from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 10 (Strongly Agree). However, section E focused more on the demographics of the respondents.

This was following to the measures contributing to the continuous interval data, thus meeting the necessary assumption by the current method for parametric t-test, regression, multiple comparisons and SEM analyses (Awang, 2014). Past studies have shown that the advantages of interval scales were for data analysis. For instance, they offer equal measurement points between each scale, where the scale was more essential compared to the ordinal and nominal measurement (Awang et al., 2016). Moreover, the measurement was left without ranking, showing that a better image was obtained in the case of the complete absence of an attribute. This has been stated by Hair et al. (2019), where to achieve the highest level of interval, it was suitable for the parametric approach. Other than that, 5 and 7-point Likert scales may increase the sensitivity without affecting the reliability (Leung, 2011). Previous researchers have done the test to see whether it was reliable to be used in the SEM analysis; however, the 10-point Likert scale scored the highest convergent validity coefficient compared to the smaller scales (Awang et al., 2016; Preston & Colman, 2000). Therefore, referring to the statement made by previous scholars, it was understandable that the chosen scale aided the researcher to combine the negative and positive items and gain respondents' attention and avoid bias in answering the questionnaire (Qasem & Gul, 2014).

3.5.1 Questionnaire Structure and Sequencing

Before embarking on the main questions, the respondent needed to answer a screening question to find an accurate respondent. This was a good strategy to be used for the screening process to get an accurate respondent. Such strategy has been applied by previous studies to show their concern in the context of the tourism industry and the food tourism industry (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Kozak, 2002; Gursoy & McCleary, 2004). In this screening question, the respondent needed to answer YES or NO to become the respondent:

1. Have you engaged in any food-related tourism activities (e.g., visiting food markets, local restaurants, food festivals, culinary tours) in Malaysia?

As mentioned in the sub-subtopic scaling of measurement, the structure for the questionnaire was simply divided into five sections according to the proposed variables.

In this study, Section A was specified on the independent variable, which was human capital, Section B was on perceived value, Section C was on the moderating variable, which was innovation practices, and Section D was on the dependent variable, which was destination image. For every section, instructions were stated on the header for each section to ease the response from the response. Meanwhile, section E was focusing on the demographic which the respondent was asked about their personal information to assist the researcher in the study validation. It includes age, educational background, experience in the industry, and other specifications to measure the reliability (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). For the instrument formation, Section A was five questions for the dimension, namely skills. In Section B, a similar number of questions was provided, which was five questions in total for each dimension labelled social value, emotional value, functional value, and economic value. In Section C, five questions for each dimension were labelled product innovation, service innovation, process innovation, organisational innovation, and marketing innovation. Section D have five questions for each dimension, labelled intention to travel and revisit intention. The last section was Section E, which covered demographic factors, and the section provided seven questions about the personal information of the respondents.

3.6 Translation

This study employed two languages, Malay and English, that can be understood by both domestic and international tourists. English was the main headline for the questionnaire, and the Malay translation was used to reach out to domestic tourists. By employing this method, the respondents were able to understand clearly the meaning behind the questions (Saunders et al., 2009). The current study implemented the back-translation method, which, as mentioned by Sekaran and Bougie (2011), was necessary to look into as it will prevent any issues regarding the response rate. Rubin (2015) declared the same situation as an important scene, whereby the translation by a language expert ensures the reliability of the questions used.

Historically, back translation can be referred to the past solution in cross-cultural research with different cultures and native speakers (Brislin, 1970). The introduction of back translation around the 1970s means that this type of translation has been widely used in a cross-cultural population. Several studies also used back translation as their

clinical strategy to validate the measurement in order to fulfil the needs of the native speakers (Afsar & Badir, 2017; Elche et al., 2020). As mentioned by the previous scholar, there were a few types of translation that can be used in a research questionnaire, including back translation. However, the most applicable and effective measure was back translation, which was widely used by research scholars (Mcgorry, 2000).

Based on the criterion in sub-topic 3.11, by referring to the respondents who participated in the process, domestic and international tourists were the main subjects. Thus, the implementation of Malay and English languages in the survey was applicable. According to the instruments that have been listed in Table 3.1, the current study employed an English questionnaire from the previous literature. However, by using back translation, there were suggestions from the expert to translate the English version into the Malay language. In accordance with the suggestion, the English version has been translated into the Malay language so that the respondents have an easier time understanding the language (Zainol, 2014). This current study employed English as the main language, and below each of the questionnaires were the Malay language that has been translated.

Before conducting the back translation, an expert review, a Master's in English Language Studies from UCYP University has been invited. The translation was necessary for the clearance of the translated questionnaire and to verify its accuracy of the translation. After the accuracy of the translation was certain, both English and Malay languages that have been written down in the questionnaire were ready for pretesting.

3.7 Expert Review

After translation of the questionnaire received validation from the expert, the next process was to check the content of the questionnaire with the experts. This process was important to get permission from the supervisor before proceeding to the next process. Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) mentioned that to get a more accurate statement of the correlation between constructs, the researcher must go through a phase where the questionnaire needs to be validated by experts from a similar field and methodology. The previous scholar highlighted that content validity was an ordinal before the actual field, and the action taken made it clear for the respondent to answer to achieve the

necessary objective (Taherdoost, 2016).

3.8 Content Validity and Face Validity

The current study implements the back translation method, which can be described as beneficial for getting a precise translation according to the questions that have been viewed. Based on the previous study mentioning about the development of survey form and questionnaire structure and procedures, a certain process needs to be done to get a valid questionnaire and to ensure that the respondent will understand the meaning of each of the question given (Saiful et al., 2021). By referring to the statement, the current study also employed a similar method to gain validity by expert review. Table 3.2 below was adopted from the previous study that shows the suggestions and recommendations by the expert reviewers and the decision after considering the nature of the study setting (Muda et al., 2020). An expert review must be someone who has extensive knowledge in the field and has demonstrated an excellent grasp of the subject matter (Masuwai et al., 2017). After the expert review has been conducted, the pretesting of the potential respondent was conducted. This followed by a pilot test, which considered a minimum sample size of 100 respondents to perform the exploratory factor analysis (Hair et al., 2019). The detail of the expert review was attached in the appendix section with the official cover letter from the institution.

Table 3.2
Expert Review of the Items Used

Expert's Feedback / Comments / Suggestions / Recommendations		Decision
Expert 1: Academician/Field		
SK3 and SK4:		SK3 and SK4 have been
- To ensure clarity, Q3 and Q4 need to be revised. - Suggestion to refine to: - Q3: The employees communicate clearly enough to convey message effectively. - Q4: The employees are approachable and make - communication easy and engaging.		amended according to the suggestion by the Expert 1. The researcher has adopted the suggestion to

**By revising, Q3 focuses on the employees' communication clarity, while Q4 emphasises the approachability and ease of interaction.	the current questionnaire.
CUL2 and CUL3: • Q7 and Q8 seem almost similar. • Suggestion to have a simple rephrase to improve clarity: - Q7: The employees adjust their approach to fit different culture. - Or are you looking at 'culture' and 'cultural practices' as two different things? - just need to improve to retain the question.	CUL2 has been amended according to the suggestion by Expert 1.
SOC5: • To retain this question (Q5), it can be refined to clearly convey the perceived value of a particular style of people. • Furthermore, Q5 did not demonstrate consistency with the other questions in this section. • Suggestion: - Q5: The food tourism experience made me perceive the unique culinary style of people, which reflects their culture.	Adopt the suggestion on SOC5 with amendment.
SOC1 until SOC5 • Similar meaning, you are suggested to reevaluate the question structure.	SOC1 until SOC5 have been amended.
FUN4 and FUN5: • Since your study focuses on food tourism, you might consider adding this to the sentence for Q14 and Q15 - Q14: Compared to other destinations, visiting Malaysia as a food tourism destination offers good value for money. - Q15: I received a high-quality experience in Malaysia as a food tourism destination for the cost of my travel expenses	FUN4 and FUN5 have been amended according to the suggestion by Expert 1. The researcher adopted the suggested questions to the questionnaire.
MOV1: • What makes this question (Q16) different from Q14 (Functional Value)? If you think at	MOV1 has been amended as per suggestion. The

'Functional value' - Q14 is to look at overall side of Malaysia (not focusing on Food Tourism), then just remain Q14 in Functional value.	question has a different meaning with FUN4.
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Expert 2: Academician/Field

SOC 5: The word “certain” needs to be refined.	The item has been amended according to the comment.
EMO5: The meaning for this dimension is quite similar. Readjust the meaning or sustain the item.	The item has been amended according to the comment. However, the researcher decided to add two more items to accommodate the meaning to get more reliable. Thus, emotional dimension has EMO1 until EMO7.
PRD1: Provide an example of creative product	The item has been amended according to the comment.
PRD4: Relate to innovation term.	The item has been amended according to the comment.
SRV5: - Add “technology” in the question. - Refine SRV or re-write the items.	The item has been amended according to the comment. however, the researcher added up two more items to fulfil the meaning of the dimension.

	Thus, service dimension has seven (7) items in total, SRV1 until SRV7.
MKT3: • Re-write the item to be more understandable and clearer.	The item has been amended as the suggestion needs.
MKT4: • Choose other term instead of “appealing”.	The question has been amended to show the clearer meaning.
INT5: • Use different term instead of “new” and “different”. It has a different meaning.	The item has been decided to be amended as per suggestion.

Expert 3: Language Expert

SOC1, SOC5, EMO1, FUN5, PRD5, SRV1, PRS2,	Adopt the suggestion and
and INT5 are having moderate matches. Consider refining the question according to the suggestion.	amendment has been made.

3.9 Pre-Testing

The review phase by experts was a preliminary phase which can be concluded as an important part of pre-testing. After the phase by experts, the researcher needs to get a good grasp of the questionnaire by handing the questionnaire for pre-testing to the potential respondents. From the perspective of scholars, Nunally and Bernstein (1994) highlighted that pre-testing was an important aspect to identify problems that might occur and to make improvements before the actual survey. It was actually an understanding of the target population from the pre-testing that needs to be analysed, which can filter up the potential biases or any errors that might occur. The scholars have mentioned that the respondent must have a similar characteristic to the actual field to discover a real perspective on the question, and this became an aid to the researcher to

improve the quality of the question. Several important elements have been discussed that were based on the pre-testing procedure (Ariffin, 2013; Hilton, 2017):

1. To check the validity of the questionnaire.
2. To review the content of the question.
3. To assess the layout.
4. To check the time to answer the questionnaire completely.
5. To review the structure of the question.
6. To check the understandable language structure.
7. To check that the reverse / negative question is understood.
8. Avoid using jargon.
9. To check if a repetitive question is used.
10. To check two questions in one question / double-barrelled question.

During the pre-testing phase, the questionnaire was distributed to the domestic respondents. This stage was actually to identify the clarity of language, layout, style, and target audience. It was one of the crucial parts in the pre-testing, which can discover how the question was related to the respondent's preferences on a dichotomous scale with "yes" or "no" answer. Specifically in pre-testing, Sang et al. (2017) specified that the pre-test sample was between 5 – 15 respondents, and it can be classified as sufficient for the questionnaire to get the improvement needed. However, Perneger et al. (2014) have a different view on the number of pre-test sample size, highlighting that a minimum of 30 samples was needed, and it uncovered the most common problems in the questionnaire. In this pre-test, there were 30 respondents took part in the process. They were willing to give suggestions and feedback on the questionnaire that has been distributed. The comment that was gained from their feedback was minor. Most of the respondents took approximately 15 – 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

3.10 Pilot Test

In a quantitative study, a pilot test was performed in the process before the actual survey was made. It was a crucial phase which can determine how the questionnaire that has been refined will be perceived by the respondent. Gani et al. (2020) made a

critical review of a pilot test, which they called pilot test a field test to measure the reliability and validity of each construct. Besides that, the objective of the test to be conducted was to examine the reliability and internal consistency. Although the refinement has been made through pre-testing, the pilot testing needs to be undergone as it can clearly project the questionnaire reliability and validity through respondent understandability. The previous study also included the indication of a pilot test as a feasibility process that uses research design for the actual study in terms of sampling techniques, data procedure process, and internal consistencies (Dzwigol, 2020). In terms of the specific amount of sample size for a pilot test, the most common number for a pilot test was 30, whereas it can be acceptable with for most of the study in quantitative (Browne, 1995).

Although Ruel et al. (2018) have their own view on the sample size of pilot test, which indicated that 30 to 100 respondents are recommended, however, 30 is the common practice in any study with a similar indication. Similarly, previous scholar has the same view on the sample size for pilot test, which clearly stated that 30 sample size is adequate (Johanson & Brooks, 2010). Thus, in this current study, a minimum of 50 respondents were involved in the pilot test process following the indication made by Ruel et al. (2018). In this phase, internal consistency was needed to conclude that the data was relevant or otherwise needs to be conducted. It follows the guidelines mentioned by previous scholars that the results of the pilot study were examined by reliability and internal consistency analysis (Sekaran & Bougie, 2011). On the other hand, the explanation on this matter has been justified by Tavakol and Dennick (2011), which refer reliability and inter-relatedness of the pilot test result as Cronbach's Alpha. They explained more about the procedure that the scale was expressed between 0 and 1. However, Sekaran and Bougie (2011) make a complete statement which indicates that a value less than 0.6 is seemingly poor, a value within the 0.7 range was acceptable, and those over 0.8 were considered good. After the researcher received the data, the researcher then had to test the internal consistency. The result was as follows:

Table 3.3

Reliability Test

Variable	No. of Item	Cronbach's Alpha
Human Capital (HC)	10	0.960

Perceived Value (PV)	22	0.982
Innovation Practices (IP)	27	0.988
Tourist Destination Image (TDI)	10	0.968

Based on the result of internal consistency that has been conducted, it can be concluded that all values from the reliability test were acceptable and above the good indicator, as mentioned by previous scholars. This phase was an indicator for the researcher to be ready for the next round, with the actual data collection being the next phase of the process.

3.11 Plans for Data Collection

The current study was a survey conducted by referring to the quantitative approach in collecting data, based on the required objectives and hypotheses. Carrying out the survey could be done in many ways according to the strategies used. Saunders et al. (2009) stated that the strategy used in the data collection allows data to be gathered effectively and efficiently. In addition, scholars have postulated that data collection by using a questionnaire was widely used in the research field as it is the most economical, quickest data gathering, and reliable based on the data analysis (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2013). Therefore, the questionnaire was suggested by the previous scholar as the most appropriate technique in order to gather the data from the respondents. Besides, based on the previous statement by Sekaran and Bougie (2020), questionnaire distribution in this current study can be done in many ways following the justification made referring to research design, sampling method, scaling of measurement and questionnaire sequencing. The ways to administer the questionnaire were through various options such as personal administration, email, or any electronic dissemination, including social media applications. The questionnaire was administered at Kuala Lumpur International Airport 1 and 2 (KLIA1 & 2) as the settings enable researchers to gather reliable data from international tourists comprehensively (Phoon, 2021).

In addition, KLIA 1 and 2 are the two biggest airports in the peninsular of Malaysia with high tourist footfall, diverse respondents, and efficient data collection. Phoon (2021) stated that these factors can be comparable to past studies, which included airports for tourism-related surveys. For domestic tourists, the alternate location could

be essential to gain responses from Malaysians; hence, the questionnaire was administered at local airports or regional transport hubs (Phoon, 2021). As mentioned by Halpern et al. (2021), the characteristics of respondents should be aged 18 years old and above. The age consideration should be an eligibility criterion for the respondent to take part in the survey, especially in the airport. Thus, this criterion was one of the important parts in the survey consideration as it will take a necessary measure from an ethical perspective and to avoid bias.

3.12 Research Ethics

The procedure that has been referred to from the past studies has a significant contribution to the current study. In terms of morality and as a prevention from any harm towards the respondents, the university has provided a guideline which emphasised research ethics. The researcher needs to go through research ethics, as mentioned by the previous study, which was a fundamental phase for any research activities to rule out any unnecessary problems, misconduct, and to prevent an unethical approach to the respondents (Correia, 2023). In social science, this includes details that the respondent participates such as a voluntary letter, along with the attachment of a consent letter and ensuring their information was confidentially stored. Based on the justification by Sekaran and Bougie (2011), any study or research that needs to be conducted must reflect to benefit of the organisation, and the researcher must embrace the knowledge and not demand the benefit for oneself. In alignment with the statement, research ethics posit a significant inclusion in the process of obtaining the data.

The systematic approach in collecting data must get approval from the Research Ethics Committee (REC) of the university to collect the data. This step requires a permission letter from the university to distribute the questionnaire. It takes approximately four (4) months for the whole process to be finalised. To obtain the respondents, this study has specifically mentioned that the questionnaire will be distributed at KLIA1 and KLIA2. The REC approval letter also states the venue proposed by the researcher in the early phase. After the researcher gets the approval, the cover letter from the REC and the university has been issued on 29th April 2025. The reference number can be referred to as: from the university (UiTM.800-1/19) and from the REC (REC/04/2025 (PG/MR/254)). The approval letter obtained from the

REC of the university for this current study marks the ordinance to proceed to the next phase. Therefore, the next phase was crucial to obtain the data and analyse it.

3.13 Response Rate

The original questionnaire consisted of 65 items. After conducting the pilot study, three additional items were added to two constructs to strengthen the measurement and improve clarity. As a result, the final instrument contained 68 items, which were then subjected to Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Based on the common guideline of 10 respondents per item, an ideal sample size would be around 680 respondents. Although this study obtained 650 usable responses, the sample size remains adequate for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). Hair et al. (2017) suggest that samples above 200 are generally acceptable for SEM, while Awang (2015) recommends 500 or more for stable model estimation. With 650 respondents, the present study exceeds these recommended thresholds and is therefore considered sufficiently robust for the analysis. It took the researcher nearly two (2) months to complete the data collection. It started in early May 2025 and ended in the third week of June 2025. Before conducted the data collection, formal approval has been sent by email to the airport. Although formal approval from the airport authority was not granted, the data collection was limited to public areas where passengers could voluntarily participate without disruption. This procedure aligns with standard ethical practices for survey research in public spaces (Creswell, 2014), ensuring that respondents' participation was fully voluntary and unobtrusive.

During the data collection, 653 respondents (480 domestic tourists and 170 international tourists) managed to answer all required questions. The researcher made it clear to tick all the questionnaire as required, as it can be easier for the respondent to answer all the questions plotted. However, in the early phase, 400 questionnaires were distributed at the venue by using a personally administered method, but the percentage of respondents who managed to answer the questionnaire is only 53.85% or only 350 respondents were responsive. Then, at the end of May 2025, the researcher made a bold move by giving 600 printed QRs to all the travellers for them to answer an online survey at the KLIA1 and KLIA2 and managed to get the remaining 46.15% or the remaining 300 respondents. In the middle of June 2025, the researcher obtained the necessary

number of respondents through an online method (QR distributions). Meaning, the response rate is only at 65%. In a different study, the average response rate reported is at 60% and a minimum is 40% (Sataloff & Vontela, 2021; Wu et al., 2007).

Although the response rate of 65% is considered acceptable in social science research (Baruch & Holtom, 2008), the possibility of non-response bias cannot be entirely ruled out. Some tourists declined participation due to time constraints or travel schedules. Since data were collected on-site, non-respondents were assumed to share similar characteristics with respondents. Nevertheless, future research may apply procedures such as comparing early and late respondents, as suggested by Armstrong and Overton (1977), to further assess potential non-response bias. Hence, this study is reportedly acceptable for online survey-based research in the social sciences (Babbie, 2007). Despite the average response rate, the sample size of 650 respondents exceeds the minimum threshold recommended for robust statistical analysis (Hair et al., 2010). The table below explains the percentage (%) of the response rate mentioned in this data analysis process and being adapted from the previous study (Ariffin, 2013; Edros, 2022):

Table 3.4
Response Rate

Items	Number	Percentage (%)
Total questionnaire distributed	1000	100.00
Total questionnaire received	653	65.30

3.14 Data Screening and Checking Data

The process of data screening and checking was important to ensure that the data was free of errors and problems. During the analysis, the robustness of the data can be detected during data screening and checking from the data spreading that is outer from the normal distribution (Cousineau & Chartier, 2010). This part was very important to avoid any negative affection towards the data, and the accuracy of the data will be troubleshooted. By screening the data, an accurate result will be received. The following sub-topics discussed on detection of missing values and detection of outliers.

3.15 Detection of Missing Values

During data collection, all questionnaires were checked to reduce the missing data. Then the collected data went through a manual procedure by keying in the data into the SPSS software version 25. Then, a frequency distribution analysis was run for each variable in the study, including the analysis of missing values to clean the data. The final step was conducted, whereby the researcher needed to see the result of whether there was missing data. If there is any missing data from the procedure, the researcher needs to go through the process where the guideline or rule of thumb for the missing data needs to be followed. The researcher needs to abandon the missing data if the respondent left more than 25% of the items that were compulsory to answer blank. If the answer form is blank, it will affect the normality of the data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2011). However, this study did not have missing values because the researcher had set up all questions specifically for the item measurement as “required”. Hence, all respondent needs to answer all questions in all pages, so that the respondent can eventually click on the submit button.

3.16 Detection of Outliers

In research methodology, an outlier can be defined as a data observation that significantly differs from the rest of the data. In a layman’s understanding, outliers are unusual or odd values in the data that do not fit in with other data. For example, if most people in the data collection are 21 to 25 years old, and suddenly the researcher encountered a person with 50 years old that answer will be an outlier or in a better explanation, if most of the respondent rates the food quality between 3 to 5, and one person gives 0, it is known as outliers. Outliers consist of four categories namely; a) data entry error or mistake in coding, b) outliers due to extraordinary event, c) extraordinary observations for which the researcher has no explanation, and d) observations that known within the ordinary range of values on each of the variables (Hair et al., 2006; Hair et al., 2014). Based on the previous justification on outliers (Das & Nayak, 2013), below are the reasons:

- a. Human Error – Faulty during data entry.
- b. Environmental Change – change like the environment.

- c. Error in the instrument – the instrument did not go through the content validity or pre-testing stage.
- d. Malicious activities – Any other activities that involve such as the system being hacked, malware or virus detection and many others.

Specifically in this study, outliers that should be deleted came from a procedural error that involved with incorrect data entry. To detect the error, a data cleaning procedure was done by running the frequencies and obtaining the descriptive tables. The procedure can analyse to extent of item non-responses and the detection of extreme values. From the output of the analysis, all items were examined to ensure the clarity of the data. Based on the detection of the outliers, there were no errors detected in the data set.

3.17 Introduction to Validity and Reliability

As mentioned by a previous scholar, validity testing is an integral part of the data collection process (Bolarinwa, 2015). The process was actually to acknowledge the consistency of research instruments that have been proposed. In this process, two important elements have been emphasised as crucial in scientific research, namely validity and reliability. This is a part of the process in answering the objectives and solving the research issues (Sekaran, 2003). Furthermore, these elements play a role in indicating the goodness of data (Malhotra, 2006; Cooper & Schindler, 2001). This process aims to manage measurement errors, and this procedure will help the researcher to obtain proper results. As justified by Churchill and Iacobucci (2002), the true score of the data depends on the previous research, hence, their applicability to the current settings. Thus, to get the right measurement, Robinson (2018) stated that the scale needs at least three (3) items to perform convergent validity in confirmatory factor analysis. However, the elimination of some of the items was necessary to improve the validity and internal consistency of the scales.

3.18 Validity

A study on validity has projected that validity can be defined as the degree to which a tool measures what it is intended to measure (Andersson et al., 2023). The process was essentially followed by accuracy and a meaningful outcome. The

importance of this procedure was that the researcher analysed the justification for validity based on the level of validity. This means that high validity helps researchers to draw appropriate conclusions and make decisions based on research findings. Validity has been discussed earlier in the process of validating the questionnaire, starting with content validity, which includes several other phases, including convergent validity, construct validity, and discriminant validity.

3.18.1 Construct Validity

One of the processes in validity testing is construct validity. Construct validity is the process by which the set of items measured reflects the theoretical latent constructs (Hair et al., 2006). In addition, construct validity involves the accuracy of the measurement of items chosen from the sample that represent a true score of the actual population. In simpler terms, construct validity is a test or tool that accurately measures the sample that captures the construct that the researchers are trying to assess. Each measurement scale for the current study has been evaluated using factor analysis by assessing both convergent validity and discriminant validity. According to previous scholars, factor analysis has its own value in testing the validity; hence, it is a proper procedure to be used (Nunally & Bernstein, 1994). In answering the hypothetical constructs, construct validity also applies after the deductive process to show how the development of the items can be assessed (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955). In a nutshell, construct validity is similar to validity (Landy, 1986; Messick, 1995). For the current study, two types of factor analyses were used to analyse the scale, namely exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The results of the measurement are as below. Specifically, construct validity represents correlations between constructs and several other measures, thus, it is associated with convergent validity and discriminant validity (Westen & Rosenthal, 2003).

3.18.1.1 Methods of Assessing Construct Validity

3.18.1.2 Factor Analysis

Covariance structure can be measured using factor analysis to determine whether it is appropriate to be used or can be applied to test the variables proposed (Gaskin, 2018; 2021). As mentioned by Mohd Alias (2022), the fundamental principle of EFA is the evidence must be proven, and the contribution of variables that have been observed must be explored. In addition, Awang (2014) justified that for the guideline for the EFA to be analysed, a sufficient sample in the study is needed. He then elaborated on the guideline, focusing on the minimum sample size of EFA by stating it must be 100 or more. Otherwise, the EFA projection will be a failure because it does not meet the criteria for the minimum sample size. On the other hand, CFA has a different perspective on assessing the hypotheses. As EFA is used to analyse and investigate the hypotheses, CFA has different principles. By referring to Tabachnik and Fidell (1996), they stated that CFA determines factors that exist within variables. In this process, there are common rules that can be used to assess the cases, such as the items that are highly interrelated will remain, and items with a small amount of factor loading should be removed from the variables. However, it depends on the factor loading and interrelationship between the variables (Gower et al., 1972). From the statement, it can be concluded that EFA and CFA are two different forms of factor analysis which can be used in the current study. Technically, EFA was used to investigate the underlying structure of a measure, while CFA has a different method focusing on specifying a hypothesised measurement structure (Kelloway, 1995).

3.18.1.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was technically applied to discover the data structure and its factors. Its very own objective is to summarise items and compress their attributes into fewer factors. Watkins (2018) justified that every variable contains essential information in terms of data. Thus, EFA was a reliable method to examine the relationship between those variables. However, it depends on the sample size as it meets the minimum sample size requirement to be able to examine the relationship between variables (Pallant, 2013). The step-by-step guideline for EFA to be conducted properly can assist a beginner in the EFA procedure. This means one must follow the guidelines that have been allocated for a valid reason (Gaskin, 2012). The guideline provided was useful in establishing the dimensionality and convergent validity of the relationship

between variables and items. In the current study, EFA was performed to see whether the constructs of HC, PV, IP, and TDI demonstrate acceptable fit. The guideline also aims to validate the measurement, identify representative variables and create new variables. The first step in the guideline was to quantify the degree of intercorrelations among variables using a statistical test (Hair et al., 2006). It was used to justify the adequacy of the sampling in the study. Hence, it was necessary to run the test as it will compress the items into a smaller set of items to be used in the next procedure.

In measuring the adequacy of sampling, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett's Test) and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) were used to obtain the intercorrelation result. According to Pallant (2007; 2013), Bartlett's Test should be in the range of ($p < 0.5$) for factor analysis. However, in the KMO test, the value should range from 0 to 1. This range was considered appropriate as a value is more than 0.6, which is reliable for factor analysis (Pallant, 2013). Different scholars suggested that the KMO test was an indicator that shows multicollinearity among the items, but, in Bartlett's Test, adequate correlations can be reported if the p-value is less than 0.5. The current study uses factor analysis under the extraction method principal component which emphasises the rotation method of Varimax with Kaiser Normalization to analyse the scale.

The Varimax rotation was preferred as it would minimise the correlation across factors and maximise within the factors. Nunnally (1978) emphasised on the method as dynamic and can simplify the factors and easier interpretation. Under this procedure, there was a large discussion on the method used, and it begins with Schmitt (2011) strongly urging that, by using Varimax, an idealistic pattern of loadings in the context of oblique rotation can be interpreted. He concluded that the researcher was suggested to use an oblique rotation as it profiles realistic results and a simple statistical structure.

The recommendation made by Schmitt (2011) has strong reference from Costello and Osborne (2005), who recommended such rotation to be used in obtaining the results. Thus, the current study used the oblique rotation technique in the Varimax method, as in the social science study, there was a high probability of correlation between factors. Nunnally (1978) extracted the perspective one EFA, whereby indicated that loadings higher than 0.5 on one factor are retained. Table 3.5 below shows the result of factor analysis on constructs:

Table 3.5
Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Constructs

Code	Factors/Items	Factor Loading
Human Capital		
KMO = 0.927, Bartlett's Test = 0.000		
SKILLS		
SKI1	Employees in the food tourism industry have the necessary skills to deliver quality Malaysian food experiences to tourists.	0.844
SKI2	Employees are able to handle unexpected or challenging situations that may arise during food-related tourist activities.	0.824
SKI3	Employees communicate clearly and effectively with both local and international tourists about Malaysian food culture.	0.817
SKI4	Employees are friendly, approachable, and make communication with tourists enjoyable and engaging.	0.852
SKI5	Employees can quickly and effectively solve problems related to food services or tourist needs.	0.757
CULTURAL COMPETENCE		
CUL1	Employees are flexible in adapting to the cultural preferences of tourists when presenting Malaysian food.	0.816
CUL2	Employees adjust their communication style to suit tourists from different cultural backgrounds.	0.863
CUL3	Employees are able to adapt to various cultural expectations during food-related tourism interactions.	0.837
CUL4	Employees adjust their behaviour to respect and accommodate tourists' cultural values while delivering food experiences.	0.840
CUL5	Employees show openness to learning and respecting food-related customs from other cultures, even if different from their own.	0.814
Perceived Value		
KMO = 0.945, Bartlett's Test = 0.000		
SOCIAL VALUE		
SOC1	The food tourism experience made me feel socially accepted.	0.652
SOC2	The food tourism experience improved how others perceive me.	0.845
SOC3	The food tourism experience helped me feel accepted by others.	0.847
SOC4	The food tourism experience allowed me to impress others.	0.789
SOC5	The food tourism experience made me perceive the unique culinary style of people, which reflects their culture.	0.519
EMOTIONAL VALUE		
EMO1	I enjoy eating Malaysian food.	0.705

EMO2	I often crave Malaysian food.	0.787
EMO3	Malaysian food lifts my mood when I eat it.	0.843
EMO4	Eating Malaysian food makes me feel content.	0.804
EMO5	Malaysian food gives me a pleasurable eating experience.	0.832
EMO6	Eating Malaysian food reminds me of my cultural roots and traditions.	0.810
EMO7	Sharing Malaysian food with others enhances my overall travel experience.	0.712
FUNCTIONAL VALUE		
FUN1	The food tourism destination offered activities that suited my travel needs.	0.703
FUN2	The food tourism destination provided resources that met my travel requirements.	0.761
FUN3	The food tourism destination had modern facilities that satisfied my needs.	0.745
FUN4	Compared to other destinations, visiting Malaysia for food tourism offers a worthwhile experience that meets tourists' needs and expectations.	0.668
FUN5	I received a high-quality experience in Malaysia as a food tourism destination for the cost of my travel expenses.	0.635
MONETARY VALUE		
MON1	Compared to other destinations, visiting Malaysia as a food tourism destination offers good value for money.	0.836
MON2	I found great deals during my food tourism experience.	0.807
MON3	The food tourism activities were reasonably priced.	0.821
MON4	The tourism package was a worthwhile purchase for the price.	0.783
MON5	The tourism package I bought was fairly priced.	0.802
Innovation Practices		
KMO = 0.961, Bartlett's Test = 0.000		
PRODUCT INNOVATION		
PRO1	Malaysia offers creative food tourism experiences for travellers.	0.790
PRO2	Malaysia provides tourists with unique and memorable food tourism experiences.	0.774
PRO3	Malaysia offers a wide variety of food tourism options at reasonable prices.	0.709
PRO4	Malaysia has a complete and diverse range of food tourism offerings.	0.755
PRO5	Malaysia has developed innovative food tourism products and experiences.	0.691
SERVICE INNOVATION		

SER1	I have experienced unique or creative ways of serving food that differ from traditional practices.	0.412
SER2	Some food outlets I visited offered interactive dining experiences, such as live cooking or personal dish customization.	0.423
SER3	I noticed that technology (e.g., tablets, QR codes, ordering kiosks) was used to improve the dining experience.	0.800
SER5	I understand that the new food services require employees to learn new skills.	0.818
SER6	Digital tools were used to make ordering or payment faster and more convenient during my food tourism experience in Malaysia.	0.859
SER7	I observed that staff members had been trained to use new service techniques or technologies to serve tourists better.	0.610
PROCESS INNOVATION		
PCS1	The staff in the Malaysian food tourism industry are well-trained.	0.593
PCS2	Information about food tourism in Malaysia is easily accessible.	0.616
PCS3	Making food tourism arrangements in Malaysia is simple.	0.650
PCS4	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia work well together.	0.651
PCS5	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia provide excellent services.	0.667
ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION		
ORG1	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia are well-managed.	0.746
ORG2	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia are easy to reach.	0.815
ORG3	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia use innovative information systems.	0.810
ORG4	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia are creative in helping tourists.	0.775
ORG5	New food tourism practices introduced are mostly new to the local destinations.	0.737
MARKETING INNOVATION		
MKT1	Food tourism marketing strategies in Malaysia are well-planned.	0.815
MKT2	Food tourism marketing strategies in Malaysia are implemented in creative ways.	0.842
MKT3	New media techniques, like TV ads, internet ads, and smartphone apps, are used for promotion.	0.679
MKT4	Food tourism marketing activities in Malaysia are appealing.	0.746
MKT5	Information about food tourism in Malaysia is helpful.	0.696
Tourist Destination Image		
KMO = 0.909, Bartlett's Test = 0.000		
INTENTION TO TRAVEL		
INT1	The quality of food and service in Malaysia is excellent.	0.811

INT2	Malaysia has well-known food brands.	0.663
INT3	Malaysia is innovative in its food offerings.	0.855
INT4	I have authentic food experience in Malaysia.	0.868
INT5	I experience a new and different lifestyle through food tourism in Malaysia.	0.841
REVISIT INTENTION		
REV1	I plan to visit Malaysia again in the near future.	0.862
REV2	I am willing to revisit Malaysia soon.	0.841
REV3	I would recommend Malaysia to others for a visit.	0.798
REV4	I will share positive things about Malaysia as a tourist destination.	0.830
REV5	My decision to visit Malaysia for halal-friendly travel was a good choice.	0.728

Table 3.5 above shows the 68 items that were subjected to the EFA. It was performed under exploratory factor analysis using varimax rotation, where the suitability of the data was analysed and assessed. After a thorough analysis of the variables and items, the correlation matrix revealed that most of the coefficients are above 0.3. The Human Capital (HC) construct has 10 items that were subjected to the analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified sampling adequacy exceeding the recommended value of 0.6 (Kaiser, 1970; 1974) for the component, and Bartlett's test shows a significant p-value ($p < 0.00$). During the analysis, two (2) components were extracted based on eigenvalues > 1 , explaining a cumulative variance of 80.34% of the total variance explained. Based on the rotated component matrix, the result indicated that five (5) items of dimension skill (SKI1 to SKI5) were loaded strongly on component 2, with loadings ranging from 0.757 to 0.852. Another five (5) items (CUL1 to CUL5) loaded on component 1, which was known as the cultural competence dimension, with loadings from 0.814 to 0.863. There were no significant cross-loadings observed, thus confirming a two-factor structure.

From the same table, the construct labelled perceived value (PV), the factor derived has four (4) indicators, which explain a strong indicator with a total of 22 items. By looking at the rotated component matrix, the result from the social value dimension was explained, which has five (5) items in total (SOC1 to SOC5). The factors were loaded strongly, ranging from 0.519 to 0.847 on component three (3). The second dimension was extracted named emotional value (EMO1 to EMO7), with seven (7) items. The result from the dimension was explained, ranging from 0.705 to 0.843 on

component 1. The third dimension is related to the functional value, which has five (5) items in total (FUN1 to FUN5). After the analysis, the factors loaded show a strong indicator ranging from 0.635 to 0.761 on component four (4), meanwhile, for the last dimension under the perceived value construct, was monetary value, which explained five (5) items in total (MON1 to MON5). The factors loaded significantly according to the acceptable value, ranging from 0.783 to 0.836, on component 2. In addition, during the analysis, four (4) components were extracted, explaining a cumulative variance of 78.38% based on the total variance explained.

The third construct for the analysis has 27 items in total, explaining 76.65% of the total variance explained, which has three (3) components extracted. For the product innovation dimension, the factor loadings ranging from 0.691 to 0.790 on component 2 have shown a significant loading; meanwhile, for service innovation, the factor loadings ranging from 0.412 to 0.859 on component three have been recorded. However, the loading on service innovation, specifically on the item tagged SER4, needs to be removed as it is placed below the acceptable threshold of 0.4, as mentioned by Hair et al. (2019), who recommend loadings more than 0.40 with a sample size of 300 or more. Based on the justification, the item was excluded from further analysis. All other items were retained based on the factor loading with acceptable values. By looking at the dimension of process innovation (PCS1 to PCS5), organisational innovation (ORG1 to ORG5), and marketing innovation (MKT1 to MKT5), the factor loadings from the items were recorded ranging from 0.593 to 0.667 (process innovation), 0.737 to 0.815 (organisational innovation), and 0.696 to 0.842 (marketing innovation) on component 1. All loadings indicated a strong factor that can be used for further analysis.

For the construct labelled under tourist destination image, 10 items use only one (1) component. This indicates that all items measured are strongly underlying as the correlation matrix shows the cluster into a single dimension. Previous study explained about the unidimensional construct, which will compress to only one dimension, no matter how many scales were plotted, because of the nature of the items that were established from a unidimensional variable (Dolma & Torun, 2017). The total variance explained for one component was 65.93%. Based on the component matrix, the dimension of intention to travel (INT1 to INT5) indicates that the factor loadings range from 0.663 to 0.868, while for the revisit intention (REV1 to REV5), the factor loadings range from 0.728 to 0.862.

Based on the explanation and justification of the EFA table (Table 3.5), the EFA procedures are acceptable. By looking at the process and the conditions of EFA, this study is using the varimax rotation technique, which can improve the solution from the unrotated variables. In summary, it is an acceptable and rational technique to be applied in the current explanation. In fact, the general rules of the analysis (EFA) and the total variance are also acceptable in accordance with at least 50% total variance explained (Samuels, 2016). Furthermore, the total sample used in the current study plays a pivotal role in explaining the indicator mentioned, which uses a sample of more than 100 (Awang, 2014). The current study is using 650 samples to get a strong result based on the responses that have been collected. Thus, the EFA procedure for all factors on variables is acceptable; further analysis can be made by using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in the next procedure, which focuses on the actual structural equation modelling (SEM).

3.18.1.4 Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Structural Equation Modelling

Structural equation modelling (SEM) has been used widely by researchers to explore and simplify the model construction, making interpretation easy, and facilitating complex analyses such as path analysis and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). SEM has a function that enables users to use various estimation methods and model fit indices to evaluate the complex model. Watkins (2018) made a pinpoint justification of using SEM in statistical measurement, where it is used in CFA to help the data validation of convergent validity and discriminant validity. In another study where Gallagher and Brown (2013) visualised CFA as a distinguisher to validate various validity measures by using variables. The validity that can be measured includes the relationship among variables, indicators, model specifications, reliability evaluations, and the reliability of variances when a new scale is developed. This shows how CFA would help researchers to find a necessary solution, as mentioned earlier. However, to perform CFA, the dimension used needs at least three (3) items for each factor (Karmani & Yunus, 2020; Kline, 2011). In a study of measurement model, researchers have been said commonly apply two methods to assess the validity; (1) testing each construct separately where each latent variable will be assessed independently (known as first-order of CFA) (Garver & Mentzer, 1999) or (2) all

constructs can be tested which known as second-order of CFA (Cheng, 2001). These two methods can be used to analyse the relationship between variables and get to see the model specification of both first-order and second-order measurement dimensions.

During the CFA procedure, the assessment will be focused on convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity can be assessed through the inspection of factor loadings from each item. It is also known as the parameter estimation between latent variables and indicators (Kline, 2011). Based on the previous justification of exploratory factor analysis, the value of standardised loading commonly has its own preferred threshold value of 0.40 (Ford et al., 1986). However, to present a holistic fit, there are multiple indices that can be used to present the model fit (Kelloway, 1995; Hair et al., 2006). In order to get a better model fit value by referring to the multiple indices that can be explored, there is little consensus on the best possible index performs better under different circumstances. On a particular note, the convergent validity scale needs to be highly correlated; then, convergent validity would be easier for interpretation (Robinson, 2018). Convergent validity can be referred to as a model interpretation by looking at the average variance extracted (AVE) when all items in a measurement are statistically significant. As an assessment, the AVE is successfully attained whenever it is greater or more than 0.50 (>0.50); meanwhile, the discriminant validity will be achieved when all items in the model specification reach redundancy-free (Muda et al., 2018). In gaining a reliable model, the proposed specification needs to illustrate a satisfactory fit based on absolute fit, incremental fit, and model parsimony on the AMOS software. For that particular reason, CFA can be justified as heavily depending on factor loadings and index fitness. Hence, if the factor loading is high, the index's fitness could not meet any requirement from the indicator, showing the incompetence of the data (Baistaman et al., 2020).

Through the explanation of multiple indices used, Hair et al. (2006) and Bentler (1995) have listed all indices in the measurement that can be referred to by the researchers. The indices mentioned are Normed Fit Index (NFI), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) or known as Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), and Relative Noncentrality Index (RNI). Finally, parsimony fit indices where the adjusted model is used to make the model simpler with adjusted parsimonious explanations. Under the parsimony fit indices, several indices can be observed, such as the Parsimony Goodness-of-Fit Index (PGFI), the Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI),

and the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC). According to Hair et al. (2006) explained that the significance level of chi-square could be misled, however, Hair et al. (2017) improved their justification by looking up the chi-square as the common method to be used in the estimation. In the current study, based on the justification and criteria that have been discussed, the TLI, CFI, and RMSEA were proposed. All the above explanation on indices is estimated in the current study mainly on convergent validity and discriminant validity. These indices are not the main criteria used to accept or reject the proposed model; however, the theoretical consideration, argumentation on the logical constructive statement, and opinions from the previous studies should be taken into consideration, as they can identify an important part of the criteria (Byrne, 2016). Further discussion on RMSEA can be found below in Table 3.6, the summaries of the definition of indices:

Table 3.6
The Summaries of Fit Indices:

Indices	Abbreviation	Acceptable Level	Comments
Chi-Square	(χ^2) (df,p)	$p > 0.05$ at $\alpha = 0.05$	Acceptable fit is above $p > 0.05$ while 0.1 reflects a good fit
Normal Chi-Square	$(\chi^2)/df$	$1.0 < (\chi^2)/df < 3.0$	Values close to 1.0 is acceptable but below 0.1 indicates overfit
Goodness of Fit	GFI	$GFI > 0.90$	values between 0.90 – 0.95 indicates satisfactory fit but values above 0.95 indicates a good fit
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	RMSEA	$RMSEA < 0.08$	Values below 0.08 indicates an acceptable fit
Normal Fit Index	NFI	$NFI > 0.9$	Satisfactory fit values between 0.90–0.95. Above 0.95 indicates a good fit. Values above 1 indicates over fit
Tucker Lewis Index	TLI	$TLI > 0.9$	values above 0.90 indicates a good fit. Values above 1 indicates over fit

Comparative Fit Index	CFI	CFI>0.9	Values between 0.90 – 0.95 indicates a satisfactory fit. Good fit values 0.95 and above and CFI = 1 indicates a perfect fit.
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Adapted from: Schumacker & Lomax (1996); Kline (1998); Hair et al. (2017); Byrne (2016)

Table 3.7
Measurement Model Fit

Validity	Indices	Name of Category	Threshold
Construct Validity	Fitness Indexes	Absolute Fit	RMSEA (<0.08)
		Incremental Fit	CFA & TLI (>0.9)
		Parsimonious Fit	Chisq/df<3.0, >0.5
Convergent Validity	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)		AVE > 0.50
Discriminant Validity	Discriminant Validity Index Summary		
Composite Validity	CR		>0.6

Adopted from: Awang et al. (2016); Awang (2014, 2018)

3.18.2 Convergent Validity

The fundamental understanding of convergent validity comes from its definition, which stem from the procedure of the measurement to get a similar result by using a different method (Anderson & Gerbing, 1991). A different statement from other scholars stated that convergent validity is an analysis which determines the items in a scale in a single construct of a measurement model (Garver & Mentzer, 1999). From the understanding of the current researcher, convergent validity is used to observe the reaction between constructs and items in the measurement model. Then, CFA is a phase that is needed to provide a validation for the purpose. However, if the measurement does not have convergence, either the theory of the study or the measure taken for the measurement should be purified by eliminating items in the measurement model. On the other hand, discriminant validity has a different definition from convergent validity. While convergent validity is merely for validation of the model specification, discriminant validity is more towards the difference between constructs (Chen et al.,

2005). It means the item from the first scale should not be the same as the item from the second scale, or else, it will respond by giving the same meaning in its measurement (Garver & Mentzer, 1999).

The current researcher observes the meaning of the previous study by implying the best judgement from them by stating that discriminant validity will be present when the result of the analysis is low or has no correlation. Based on the indication of CFA, it has an absolute advantage whenever the analysis of convergent and discriminant validity proceeds. CFA was used widely in the previous research, specifically on parametric analyses, because of the accuracy in obtaining the model fit value (Jang & Kandampully, 2018). In the CFA procedure, CFA determines the overall fit by looking at the chi-square and goodness-of-fit tests, as well as observing the size of factor loadings, which can help the estimation of the model fit specification value. Other than that, CFA can provide the results from variances by seeking in-depth for its trait, method, and error components specifically via squared factor loadings and error variance (Bagozzi et al., 1991). Hence, the current study runs first-order and second-order CFA to overcome unnecessary problems and obtain a robust model fit index. This procedure has been equipped by previous studies which concentrated on the CFA first-order and second-order of the measurement model (Ariffin, 2013; Edros, 2022; Mohd Alias, 2022).

In this study, the initial CFA was conducted for each first-order construct independently to evaluate the measurement properties of each construct, including factor loadings, reliability, and convergent validity. While running CFA independently is acceptable for evaluating individual constructs, panels have noted that in CB-SEM (AMOS), a pooled CFA, where all first-order constructs are allowed to covary, is generally recommended for multi-construct models to avoid unrealistic orthogonality and to better reflect the theoretical relationships among constructs (Kline, 2016; Awang, 2014; Hair et al., 2017). Current study explains, although the first-order constructs were initially analysed independently, the inter-construct correlations were later examined during structural model evaluation, ensuring that relationships among constructs were meaningfully interpreted. For this particular study, SEM AMOS version 28 is used to examine the convergent validity of HC, PV, IP, and TDI. The result is shown below:

3.18.2.1 Results of Convergent Validity: First Order of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Table 3.8

Results of the first-order of CFA on the Constructs of the Study:

Variable	Chi-Square (χ^2)	P-value	χ^2/df	NFI	GFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
Human Capital								
Skills	16.548	0.011	2.758	0.994	0.990	0.993	0.996	0.052
Cultural Competence	2.485	0.115	2.485	0.999	0.998	0.997	0.999	0.048
Perceived Value								
Social Value	9.930	0.007	4.965	0.995	0.992	0.989	0.996	0.078
Emotional Value	19.644	0.006	2.806	0.993	0.990	0.990	0.995	0.053
Functional Value	3.810	0.051	3.810	0.998	0.997	0.991	0.998	0.066
Monetary Value	16.038	0.003	4.0095	0.995	0.990	0.991	0.997	0.068
Innovation Practices								
Product Innovation	14.845	0.005	3.711	0.995	0.991	0.990	0.996	0.064
Service Innovation	31.698	0.000	3.996	0.984	0.980	0.985	0.988	0.068
Process Innovation	1.641	0.200	1.641	0.999	0.999	0.998	1.000	0.031
Organisational Innovation	13.103	0.011	3.275	0.996	0.992	0.993	0.997	0.059
Marketing Innovation	6.194	0.103	2.064	0.997	0.995	0.997	0.998	0.040
Tourist Destination Image								
Intention to Travel	8.616	0.035	2.872	0.996	0.995	0.992	0.998	0.054
Revisit Intention	16.317	0.003	4.079	0.993	0.990	0.988	0.995	0.069

In the following pages, Figures 3.2 to 3.14 illustrate the measurement models for the construct that have been measured by using AMOS software version 28. All dimensions have been measured and analysed, and shown below:

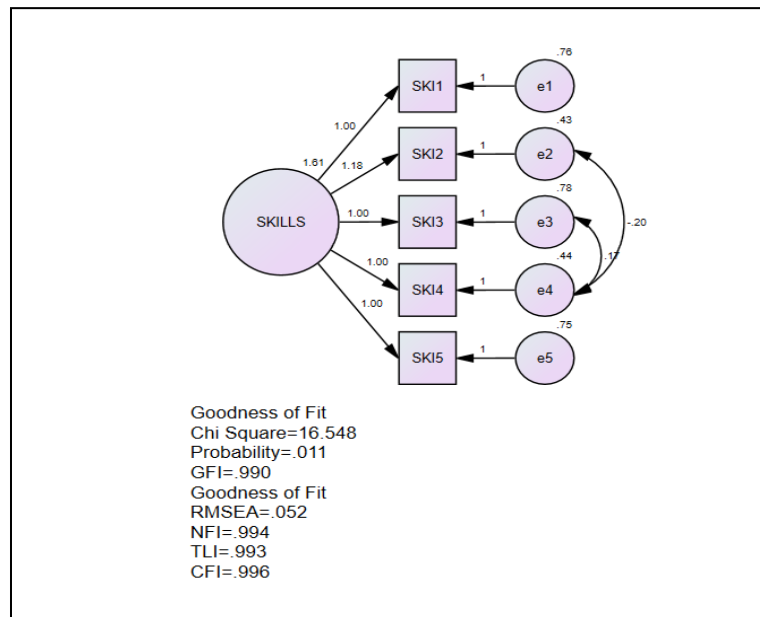


Figure 3.2 First Order of CFA for Skills

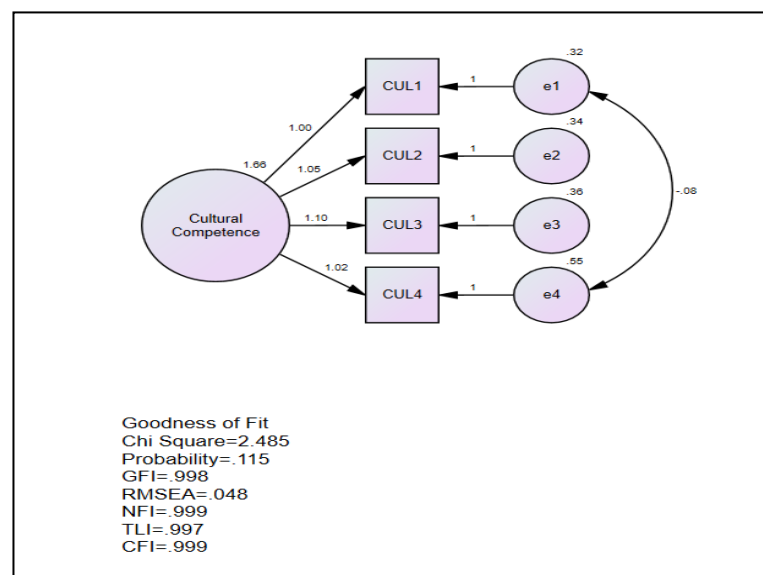


Figure 3.3 First Order of CFA for Cultural Competence

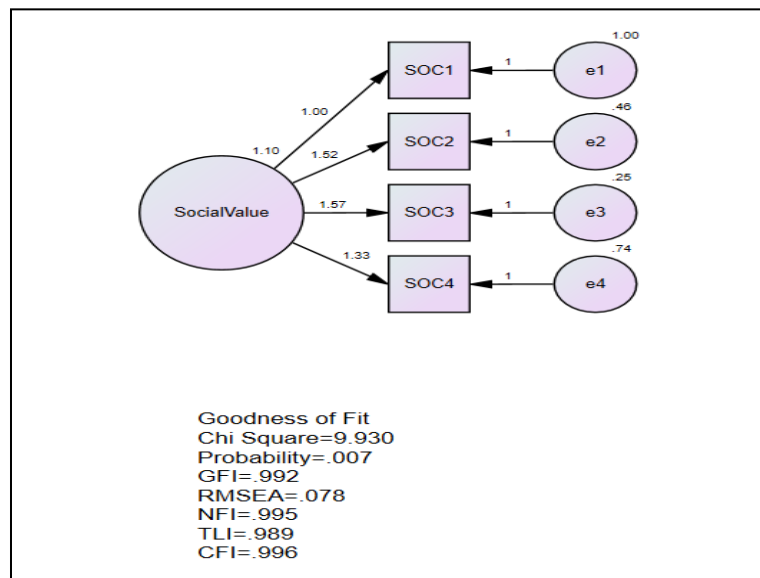


Figure 3.4 First Order of CFA for Social Value

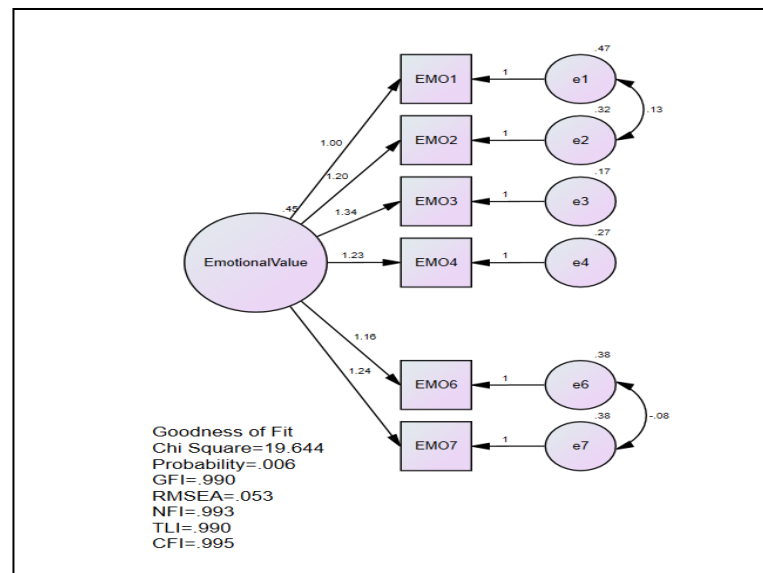


Figure 3.5 First Order of CFA for Emotional Value

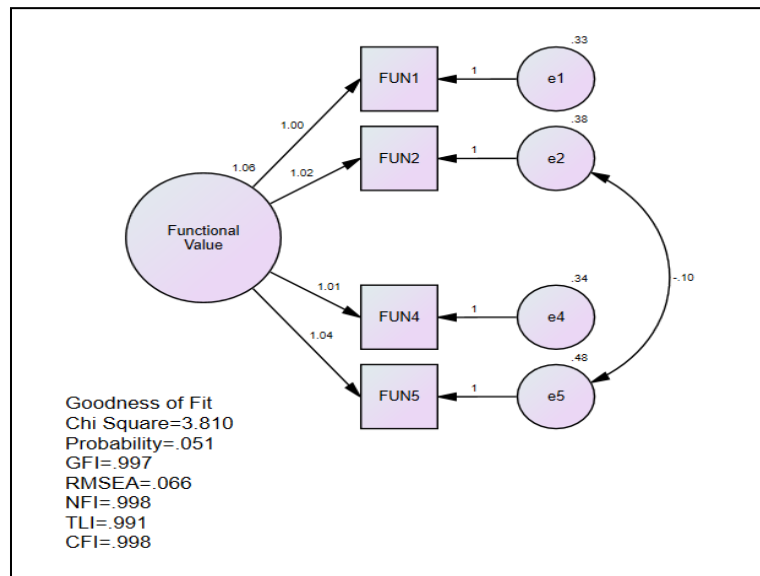


Figure 3.6 First Order of CFA for Functional Value

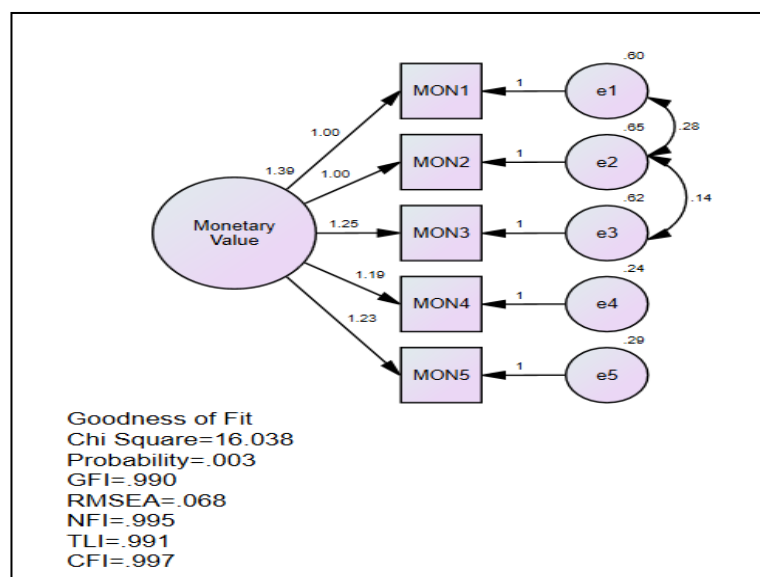


Figure 3.7 First Order of CFA for Monetary Value

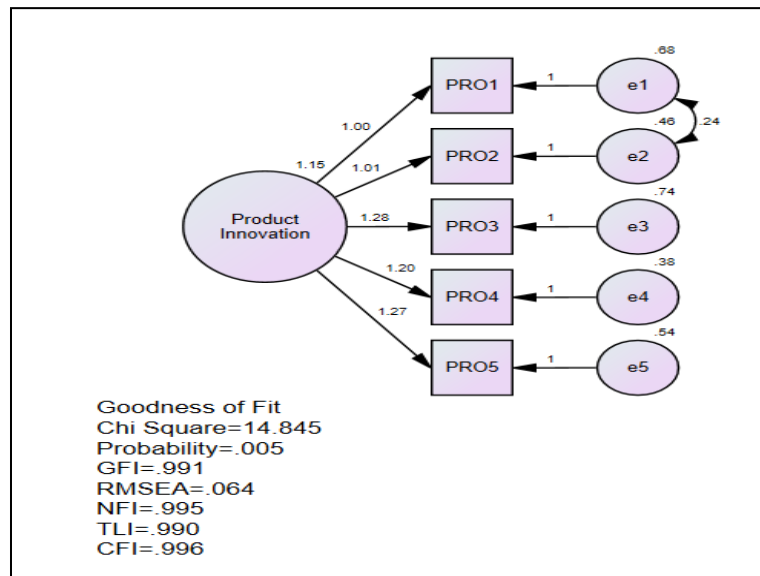


Figure 3.8 First Order of CFA for Product Innovation

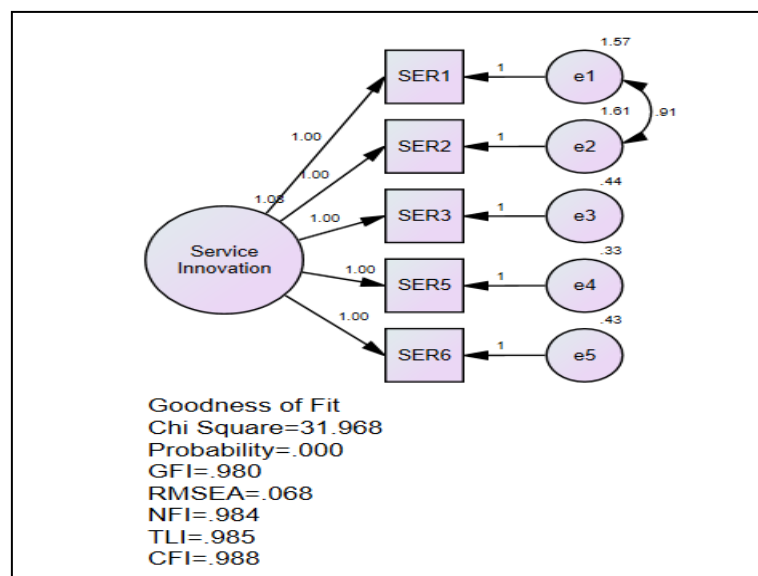


Figure 3.9 First Order of CFA for Service Innovation

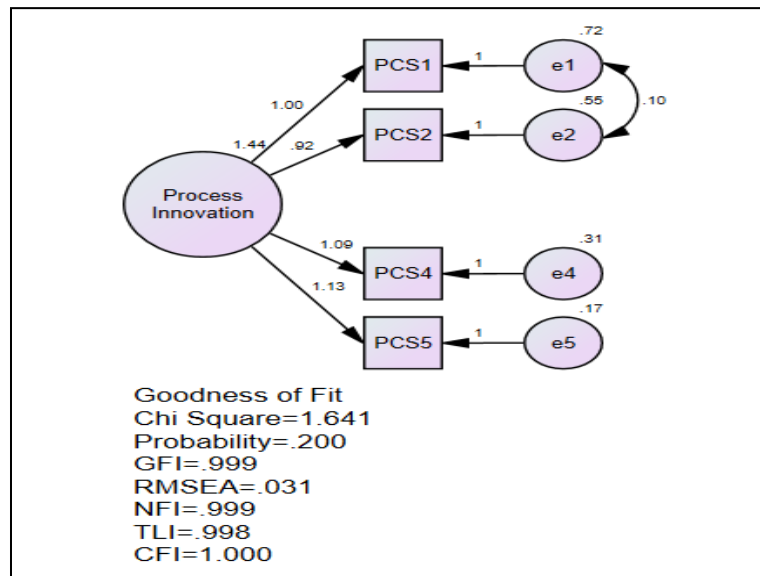


Figure 3.10 First Order of CFA for Process Innovation

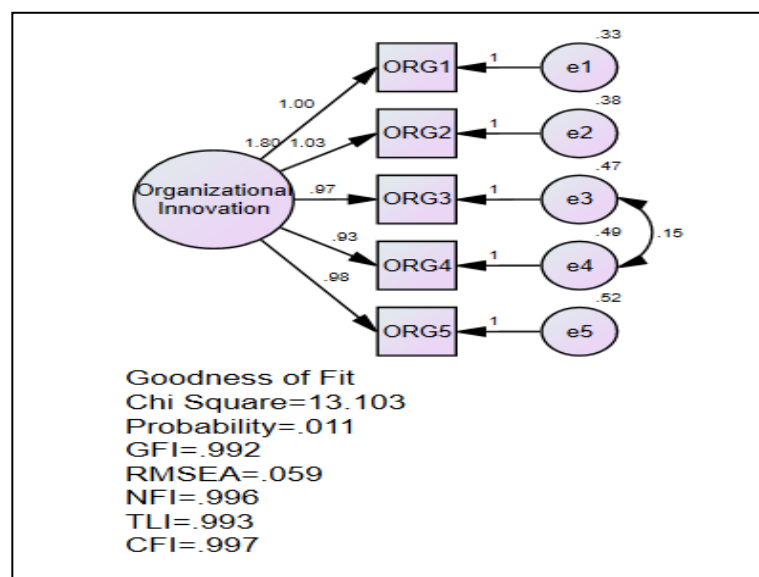


Figure 3.11 First Order of CFA for Organisational Innovation

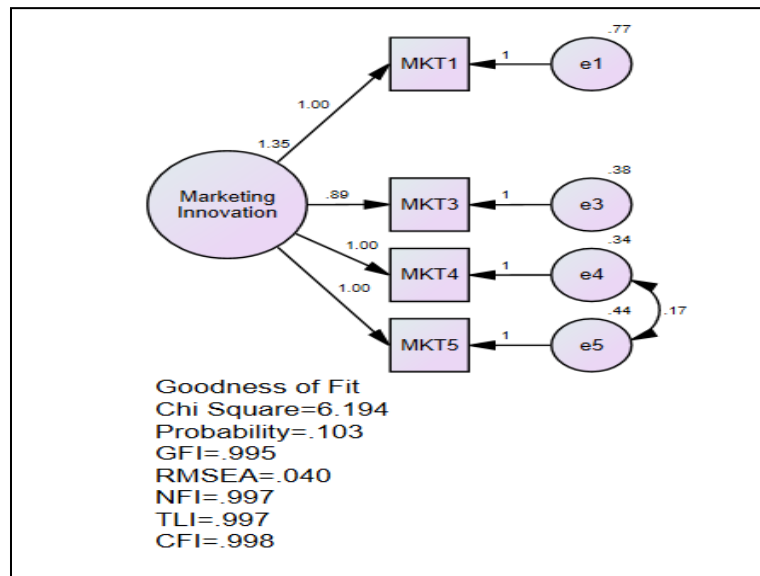


Figure 3.12 First Order of CFA for Marketing Innovation

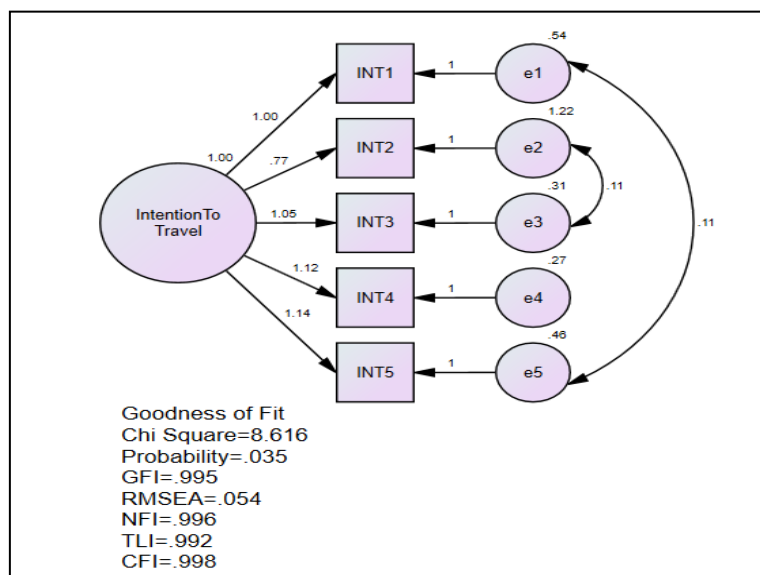


Figure 3.13 First Order of CFA for Intention to Travel

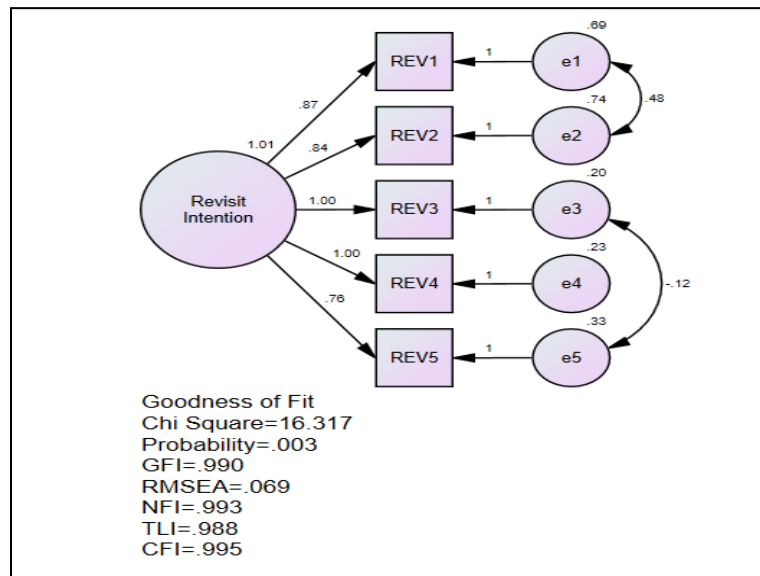


Figure 3.14 First Order of CFA for Revisit Intention

After a thorough measurement and analysis of the items, the results from the modification indices and standardised error indicated that a few items were dropped to get a fit model. For the HC construct, which has two dimensions, namely skills and cultural competence, all items were retained as the goodness-of-fit shows an excellent fit for both dimensions, except for CUL5, which needs to be taken out. However, for the PV construct with four dimensions, all items under social value were retained except for SER5, which needs to be dropped. For the emotional value dimension, EMO5 was dropped to get a better goodness-of-fit, while the functional value dimension, FUN3, was taken out to meet the criteria of the model fit. Meanwhile, monetary value dimension, all items remained as the model has achieved its model fit. As for innovation practices, all items for product innovation and organisational innovation remained. However, for service innovation, as stated by the statement earlier, SER4 were dropped during EFA as it did not meet the criteria of an acceptable threshold, but for CFA, to achieve the model fit, SER7 was taken out. Finally, based on the tourist destination construct, all items under the intention to travel dimension and revisit intention dimension were retained as they show a clear goodness-of-fit.

Although a few items were dropped from the model, it was not necessarily because the items indicated were not in good condition, but it was through a sensible procedure which is needed to meet the criteria of model fit (Nijssen & Douglas, 2004).

The scales of HC, PV, IP, and TDI were integrated from various studies and have limited support from the previous researcher on the integration between these scales in Malaysian settings. Based on the statement by Klein et al. (2006), the limited resources and justification in a different setting would be a reason for the dropping items to see whether the theory testing from various studies is captured by the measurement model. Hence, the procedure (dropping items) is needed for a better fit of the model specification. Other than that, the critical ratio (t-test) for factor loading is used to evaluate the convergent validity whenever the factor loadings seem statistically significant (Dunn et al., 1994). In convergent validity, the magnitude and the estimated parameters are also measured in the process (Steenkamp & Van Trijp, 1991). Table 3.9 below shows the results of latent variables, indicators, and statistical significance of the estimated parameter.

Table 3.9
The Magnitude, Direction, and Statistical Significance of the Estimated Parameters Between Latent Variables and Indicators

Latent	Indicator	Standardized Reg. Weight	Standard Error (S.E.)	Critical Ratio (C.R.)	P
Human Capital					
Skills	→SKI1	0.824	0.049	15.593	***
	→SKI2	0.915	0.046	9.4850	***
	→SKI3	0.820	0.053	14.799	***
	→SKI4	0.885	0.042	10.508	***
	→SKI5	0.826	0.048	15.528	***
Cultural Competence	→CUL1	0.916	0.027	11.643	***
	→CUL2	0.918	0.027	12.788	***
	→CUL3	0.921	0.029	12.508	***
	→CUL4	0.870	0.040	13.711	***
Perceived Value					
Social Value	→SOC1	0.725	0.058	17.029	***
	→SOC2	0.920	0.039	11.749	***
	→SOC3	0.957	0.034	7.2790	***
	→SOC4	0.852	0.048	15.423	***

Emotional Value	→EMO1	0.700	0.028	16.661	***
	→EMO2	0.816	0.021	15.342	***
	→EMO3	0.911	0.015	11.369	***
	→EMO4	0.844	0.019	14.723	***
	→EMO6	0.786	0.025	15.342	***
	→EMO7	0.805	0.025	15.024	***
Functional Value	→FUN1	0.873	0.026	12.906	***
	→FUN2	0.864	0.032	11.773	***
	→FUN4	0.873	0.026	12.905	***
	→FUN5	0.840	0.038	12.677	***
Monetary Value	→MON1	0.836	0.037	16.023	***
	→MON2	0.825	0.040	16.338	***
	→MON3	0.883	0.041	14.884	***
	→MON4	0.943	0.023	10.554	***
	→MON5	0.936	0.026	11.371	***
Innovation Practices					
Product Innovation	→PRO1	0.793	0.044	15.423	***
	→PRO2	0.848	0.032	14.316	***
	→PRO3	0.848	0.051	14.455	***
	→PRO4	0.901	0.032	11.890	***
	→PRO5	0.881	0.041	13.129	***
Service Innovation	→SER1	0.639	0.094	16.784	***
	→SER2	0.634	0.096	16.814	***
	→SER3	0.843	0.033	13.464	***
	→SER5	0.875	0.028	11.950	***
	→SER6	0.847	0.032	13.300	***
Process Innovation	→PCS1	0.816	0.045	15.903	***
	→PCS2	0.829	0.035	15.695	***
	→PCS4	0.921	0.027	11.621	***
	→PCS5	0.957	0.024	7.1090	***
Organisational Innovation	→ORG1	0.920	0.026	12.558	***

	→ORG2	0.914	0.029	13.011	***
	→ORG3	0.885	0.033	14.161	***
	→ORG4	0.872	0.034	14.578	***
	→ORG5	0.877	0.035	14.796	***
Marketing Innovation	→MKT1	0.799	0.052	14.755	***
	→MKT3	0.858	0.033	11.503	***
	→MKT4	0.893	0.037	9.2970	***
	→MKT5	0.869	0.041	10.528	***
Tourist Destination Image					
Intention to Travel	→INT1	0.807	0.037	14.514	***
	→INT2	0.572	0.072	17.063	***
	→INT3	0.884	0.025	12.186	***
	→INT4	0.908	0.026	10.445	***
	→INT5	0.860	0.035	13.060	***
Revisit Intention	→REV1	0.724	0.041	16.702	***
	→REV2	0.699	0.044	16.892	***
	→REV3	0.912	0.022	9.1990	***
	→REV4	0.901	0.021	10.989	***
	→REV5	0.798	0.025	13.111	***

Table 3.8 above shows that the magnitude of all items measured, and their indicators are greater than the cut-off value of 0.40 as mentioned by Hatcher (1994). All of the parameters have the same directions as highlighted by the previous studies justified that all indicators need to have a positive direction for the purpose of the analysis to be reliable. Furthermore, the critical ratio for all parameters was found to be statistically significant as it exceeded the benchmark of +1.96. The standard error (S.E.) for all items measured was significantly acceptable by looking at the other values listed. To conclude the analysis, convergent validity exists for the current model measurement.

3.18.2.2 Results of Convergent Validity: Second Order of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

To improve model fit and minimize item redundancy, error terms were

correlated within the same construct where theoretically justified. Error terms between items of different constructs were not correlated, preserving the conceptual differences of each construct and maintaining the redundancy-free nature of the measurement model. This approach aligns with standard CFA practices for handling measurement error while maintaining construct validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Awang, 2014). Below are the results of second order of CFA for each of the construct:

Second Order of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Human Capital (HC)

The second-order of CFA is essential to determine the construct development and measurement as a latent construct. During the CFA process, it would configure the significant dimensions of the current study. For the current study, the second-order CFA model was used to analyse HC as a latent construct. The adequacy of HC can be interpreted by referring to the criteria of convergent validity. A fit value of factor loading is suggested of (>0.50) to be adequately accepted in the model fit. Based on Figure 3.15 below, the measurement model was run with nine measures to assess two dimensions – Skills and Cultural Competence.

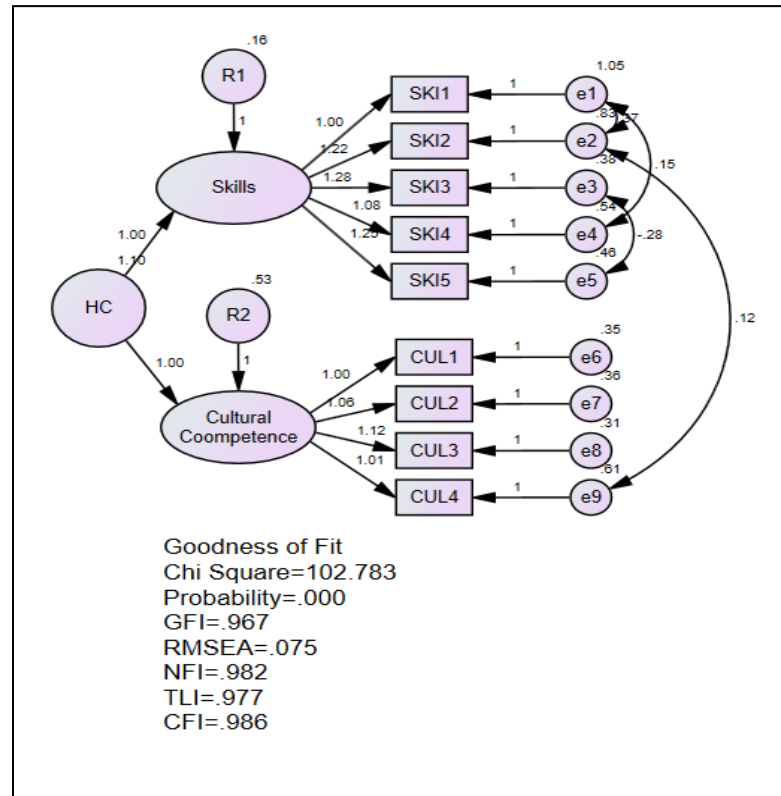


Figure 3.15 Second Order of CFA for HC

Table 3.10
Goodness of Model Fit of HC (After MI)

Model fit Indicator	Value
CMIN (χ^2)	102.783
<i>df</i>	22
CMIN/ <i>df</i>	4.671
P	0.000
GFI	0.967
RMSEA	0.075

Referring to Table 3.10, the goodness-of-fit of the model of HC shows an acceptable fit within the range of the fit model as mentioned by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). The goodness of the model fit with the value; $\chi^2 = 102.783$ with $DF = 22$, ratio (χ^2/df) = 4.671, $P = 0.000$, $GFI = 0.967$, and $RMSEA = 0.075$. These results were evidence of the convergent validity that exists within the model. By referring to the procedure that has been gone through, starting with EFA, first-order of CFA, and finally second-order

of CFA, it shows how the construct of human capital (HC) has a goodness-of-fit that can be evaluated through the measurement and the value reported.

Second Order of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Perceived Value (PV)

The second-order CFA technique was once again employed to analyse PV as a latent variable. Based on the CFA result, referring to Figure 3.16 shows the significance of the dimensions. The adequacy of PV as a measurement model can be interpreted through the measurement model analysis. The overall assessment has been evaluated on the criteria of convergent validity of factor loading (>0.50) by referring to the criterion of model fit of the data. The measurement model with 19 measurements was analysed with four dimensions, namely social value, emotional value, functional value, and monetary value.

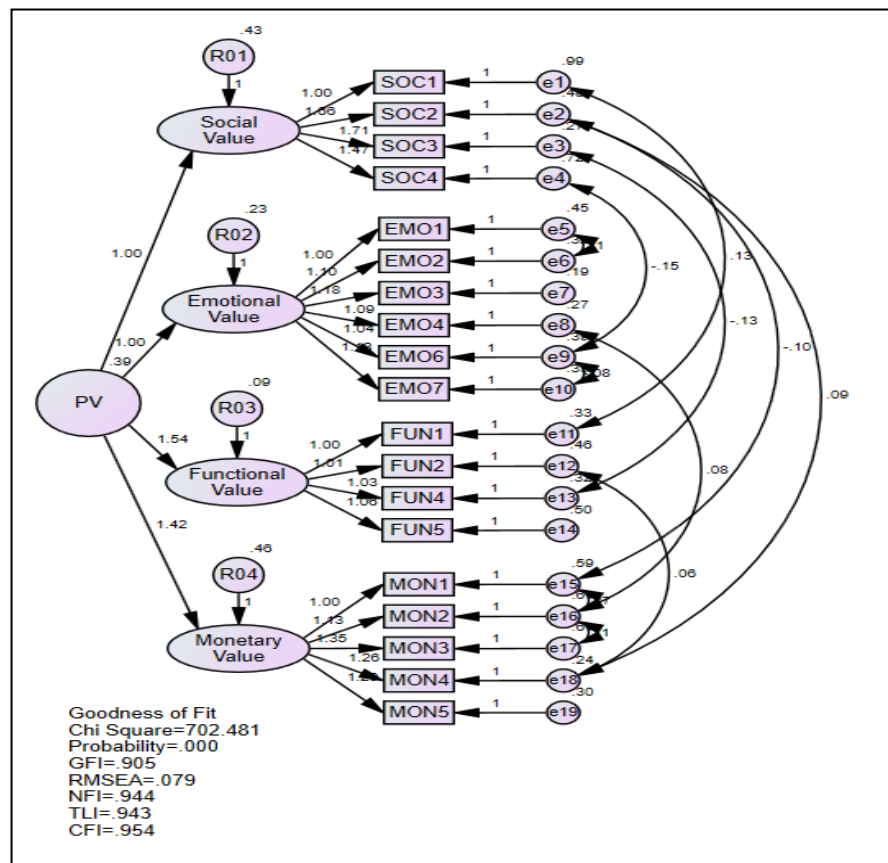


Figure 3.16 Second Order of CFA for PV

Table 3.11
Goodness of Model Fit of PV (After MI)

Model fit Indicator	Value
CMIN (χ^2)	702.481
<i>df</i>	138
CMIN/ <i>df</i>	5.090
P	0.000
GFI	0.905
RMSEA	0.079

Referring to Table 3.11, the PV construct has shown an acceptable result, which comprises all criteria that have been highlighted. The acceptable value of the model fit to the data is shown in Figure 3.16 above. The chi-square of goodness-of-fit can be referred to the previous scholar who indicated that due to the large sample size, the chi-square test can easily achieve statistical significance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). As evidence of convergence validity, all items loaded on their respective pre-specified constructs. The value for each of the indicators can be referred to confirm the significant model of PV. The goodness of the model fit is as follow; $\chi^2 = 702.481$, DF= 138, Ratio = 5.090, P = 0.000, GFI = 0.905, RMSEA = 0.079. By following the procedure of EFA, first-order of CFA, and second-order of CFA analysis, the current study confirmed the dimensions of PV with 19 measurements.

Second Order of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Innovation Practices (IP)

The second-order CFA was employed to measure the IP construct as a latent construct. Based on the CFA of variables, IP dimensions were illustrated by using AMOS software to go through a second-order CFA analysis. The second-order analysis has succeeded in analysing the significant dimensions of the current study. In addition, an endogenous construct was conducted to assess the psychometric and one-dimensionality of the dimensions. As mentioned above, the adequacy of the IP construct was assessed by the factor loading of (>0.50) and overall model fit. The measurement was initially run by 23 measurements to assess five constructs: product innovation, service innovation, process innovation, organisational innovation, and marketing innovation.

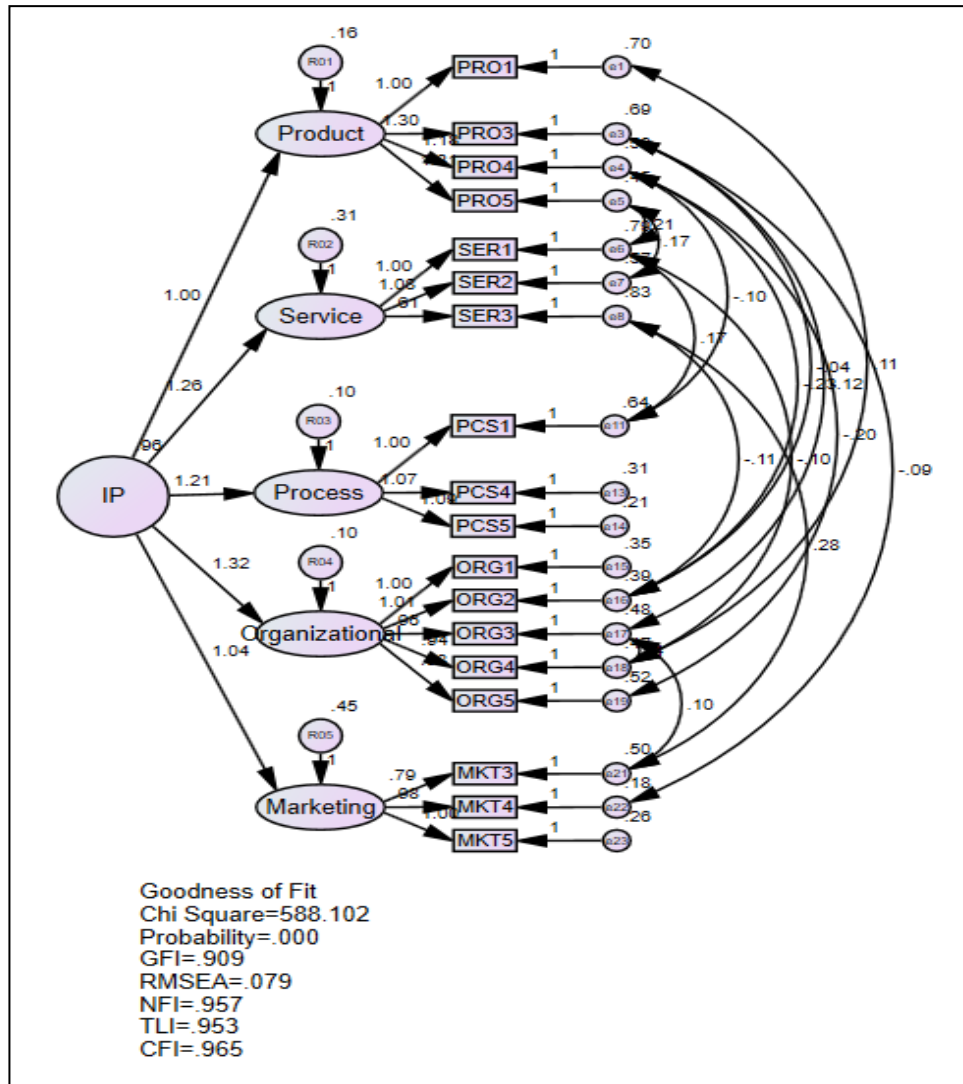


Figure 3.17 Second Order of CFA for IP

Table 3.12
Goodness of Model Fit of IP (After MI)

Model fit Indicator	Value
CMIN (χ^2)	588..102
<i>df</i>	115
CMIN/ <i>df</i>	5.113
P	0.000
GFI	0.909
RMSEA	0.079

The IP construct with its dimensions as a measurement model has achieved its

acceptable level, indicating a good fit data to the illustrative construct in Figure 3.17. The chi-square of goodness-of-fit has indicated a significant level of fit, which comes from the large sample size (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). However, by looking at the initial items within the measurement model, there are 23 items. After a thorough procedure, item deletion was needed to get the model-fit measurement. As mentioned by Awang (2014), the item deletion must be taken in a model, or else the confirmatory model would fail and be invalid. For the current study, the model needs to drop five items in response to get a model fit. The goodness of model fit is as follow; $\chi^2 = 588.102$, $DF = 115$, $Ratio = 5.113$, $P = 0.000$, $GFI = 0.909$, $RMSEA = 0.079$. With the acceptable range of each of the indicators, the goodness-of-fit of the model is significantly confirmed as the model of IP, hence, confirming the five dimensions of IP with 18 items.

Second Order of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Tourist Destination Image (TDI)

Finally, the last construct of TDI was measured by using a second-order technique whose objective is to confirm the construct. Based on the result of CFA, the second-order procedure has analysed the significant dimensions in the constructs by employing an endogenous construct to assess the psychometric and one-dimensionality of the measures. The adequacy of the model can be evaluated by referring to the criterion of (>0.50) of factor loading on the overall model fit. The measurement model was run with 10 items to assess the dimensions of the construct – intention to travel and revisit intention.

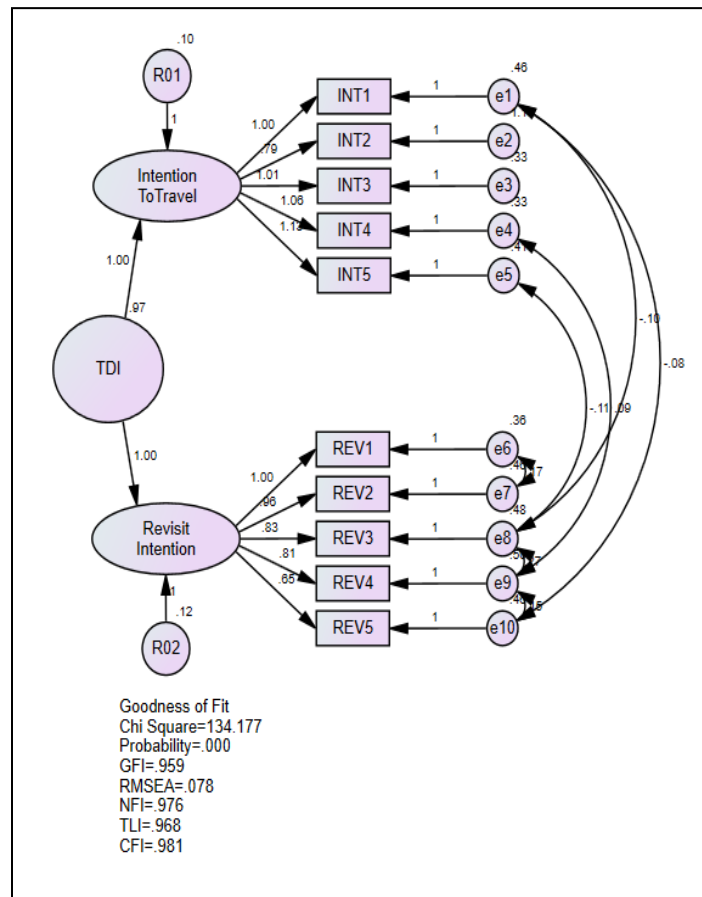


Figure 3.18 Second Order of CFA for TDI

Table 3.13
Goodness of Model Fit of TDI (After MI)

Model fit Indicator	Value
CMIN (χ^2)	134.177
<i>df</i>	27
CMIN/ <i>df</i>	4.969
P	0.000
GFI	0.959
RMSEA	0.078

After the analysis, TDI as a measurement model has shown an acceptable value of the model portrayed in Figure 3.18. The chi-square goodness of fit was deliberately calculated, and it is due to the large sample size (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). As evidence of convergent validity, all items have been analysed by using the measurement

model and show an acceptable level. The value for each of the indicator is as follow; $\chi^2 = 134.177$, $DF = 27$, $Ratio = 4.969$, $P = 0.000$, $GFI = 0.959$, $RMSEA = 0.078$. Hence, based on the measurement model and the values that have been indicated, the goodness-of-fit of the model is confirmed of the model of TDI is confirmed. This is after a thorough analysis in EFA, first-order of CFA, and second-order of CFA, which confirmed the two dimensions of the construct with 10 items in total.

3.18.3 Results of Discriminant Validity

In understanding discriminant validity, Hair et al (2017) provide a better illustration to recapture the definition, which is used to analyse the presence of differences between constructs. In other words, the discriminant validity is essential in verifying the model development and to compare the average variance extracted or known as AVE, within the variance of the correlation. Previous scholar identifies discriminant validity to confirm the scales that have been developed in the initial solution to see the difference between constructs (Garver & Mentzer, 1999). In the discriminant validity phase, the measurement model is a mandatory stage of model specification; hence, the relationship between constructs can be extracted, indicators can be measured, and the construct can be tested (Sarmiento & Costa, 2019). Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, where the square root of the AVE of each construct should exceed its correlation with other constructs, ensuring that each construct captures unique variance (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017). AVE was calculated as the mean of squared standardized factor loadings, representing the proportion of variance captured by the construct relative to measurement error. AVE measures how much of the variance of a construct's indicators is explained by the construct itself. Based on Fornell-Larcker criterion, the interpretation for the AVE to be accepted is >0.50 which the construct explains at least 50% of the total variance. The criterion explains about the way to use AVE in discriminant validity, AVE should be calculated for each construct, square root of AVE must be used, and comparison between construct and other constructs should be made. The measurement models that have been specified are as follows:

A. HC

HC comprises the dimension of Skills and Cultural Competence; and the average variance extracted was 0.765.

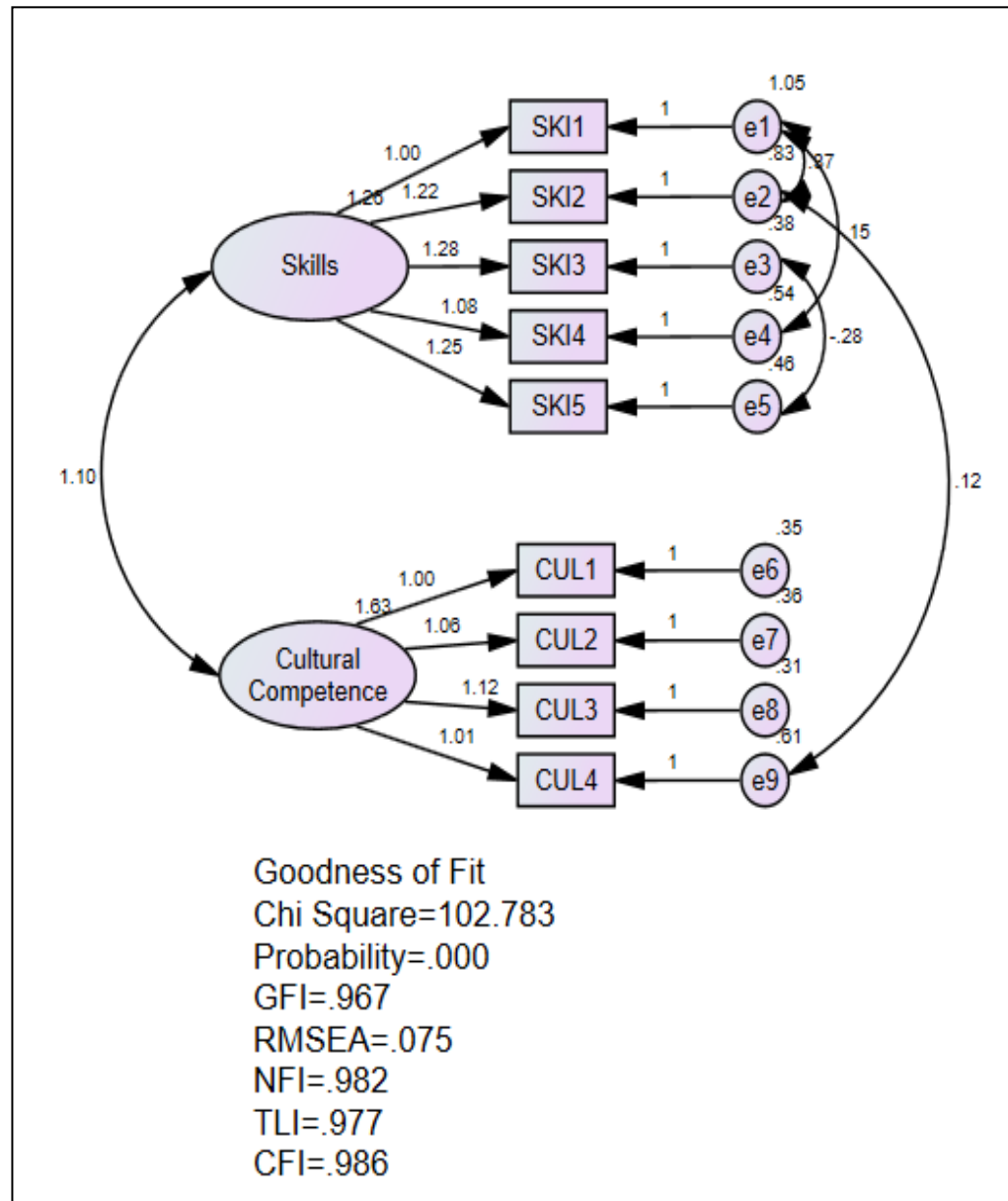


Figure 3.19 Measurement Model of HC

B. *PV*

PV comprises the dimensions of Social Value, Emotional Value, Functional Value, and Monetary Value; and the average variance extracted was 0.729.

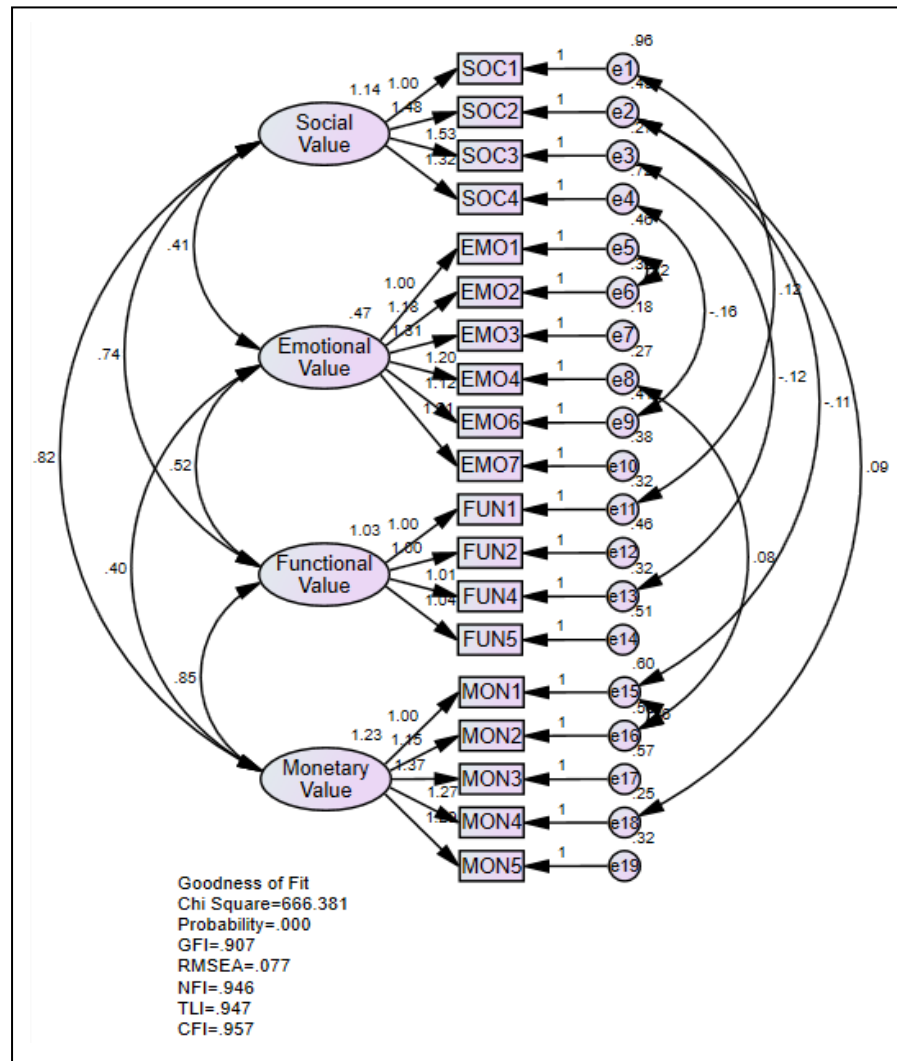


Figure 3.20 Measurement Model of PV

C. IP

IP comprises the dimension of Product Innovation, Service Innovation, Process Innovation, Organisational Innovation, and Marketing Innovation; and the average variance extracted was 0.811.

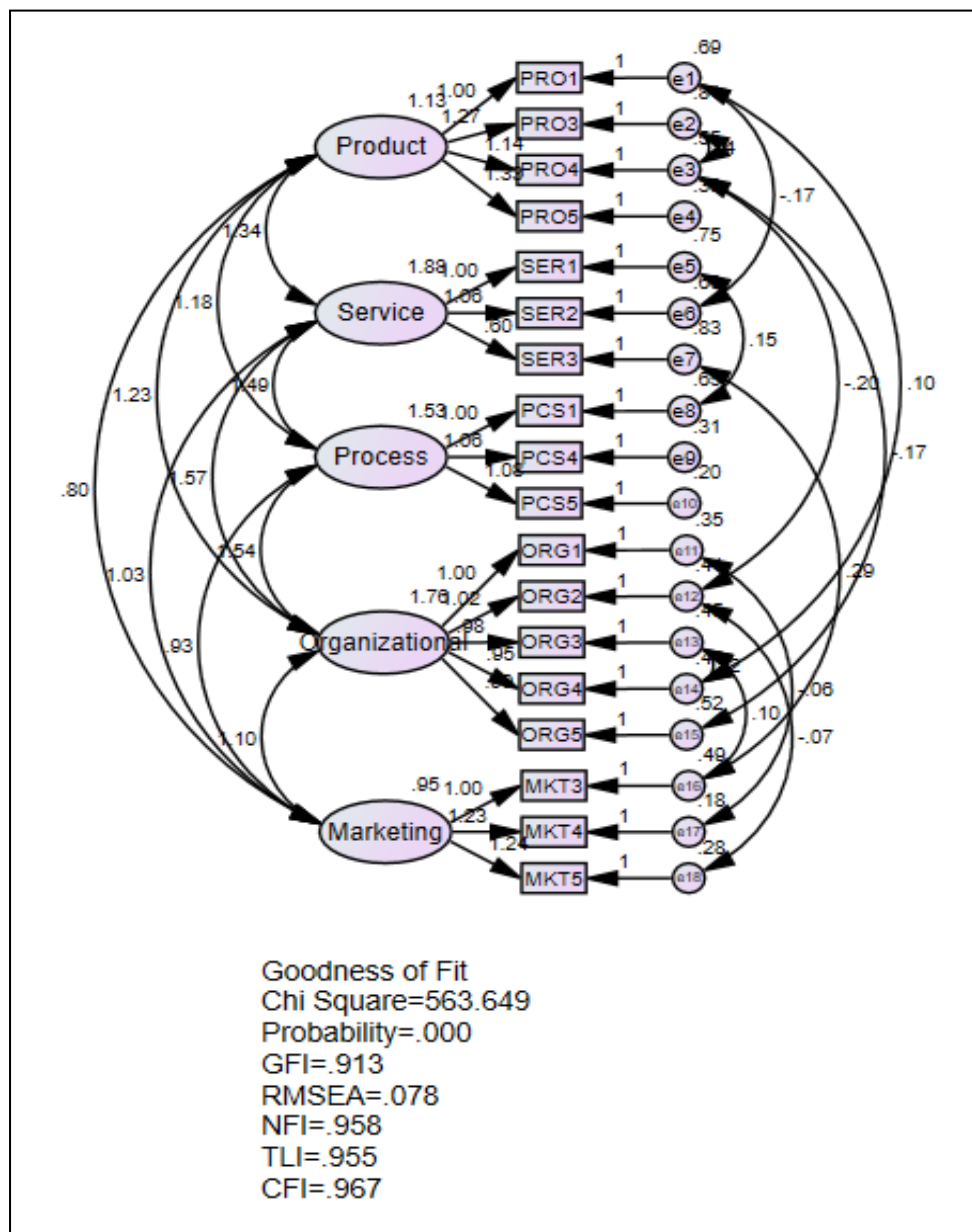


Figure 3.21 Measurement Model of IP

D. TDI

TDI comprises the dimension of Intention to Travel and Revisit Intention; and the average variance extracted was 0.655.

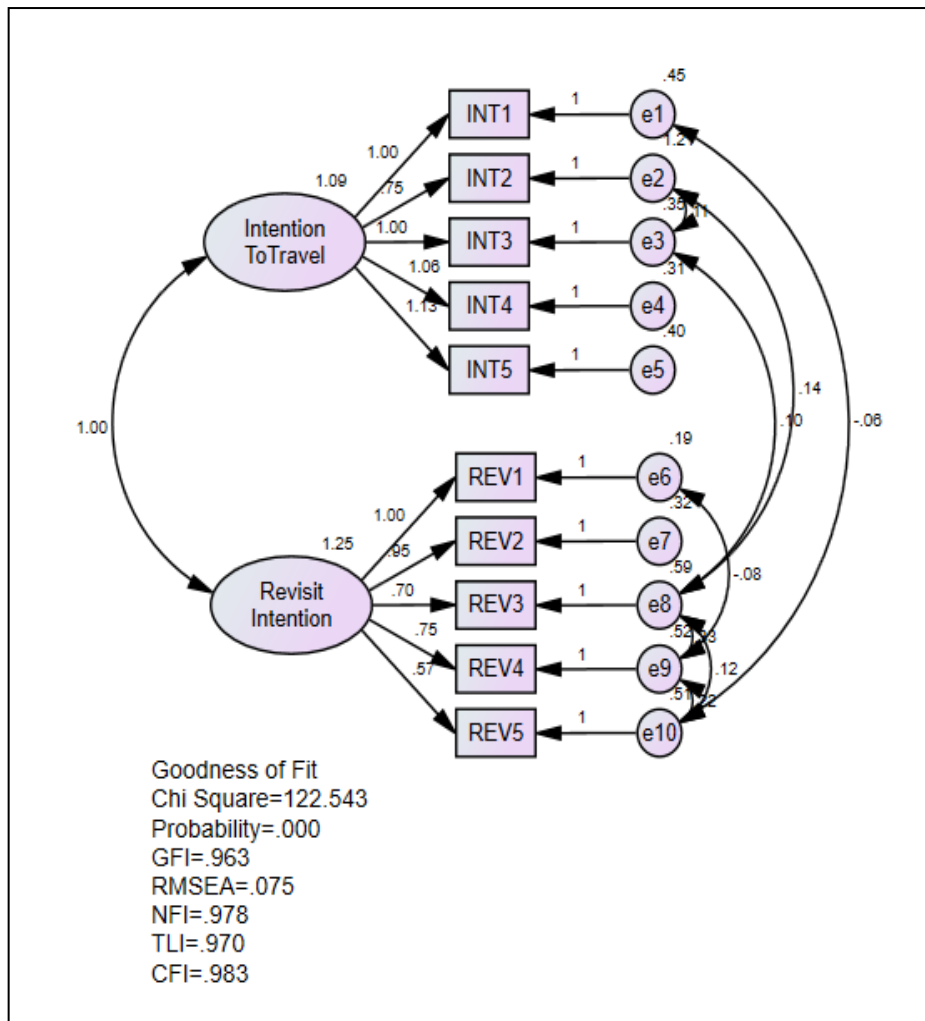


Figure 3.22 Measurement Model of TDI

3.18.4 Criterion Validity

The final test of CFA is known as criterion validity, whereby the researcher would compare the scale used with criterion variables to assess the relationship between constructs and variables. The results of criterion validity are crucial for the next discussion in the next chapter, as they reveal the structure of the model specification and its performance. In addition, it is important to reflect on the further elaboration and discussion on the findings from the test that has been conducted. Furthermore, it examines the extent of scale performance as expected in relation to other significant variables as the criteria (Malhotra, 2006). In another definition, criterion validity could describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the variables. It also provides a sufficient relationship between the measure and the outcomes. On top of that, a high-test score or known as correlated results, will show an overall assessment of the measurement, whether it meets the criteria or otherwise, uncorrelated.

In the criterion validity. The researcher discovers two main sub-criteria known as concurrent validity and predictive validity (Malhotra, 2006). These two methods differ from one another as concurrent validity is gathered simultaneously, while predictive validity is gathered at different times. These statements on the two methods refer to the data on scales and criterion variables, which the way the data is gathered in terms of the procedure underlying. The current study employed concurrent validity, as it shows the relevancy of the present settings, and correlational analysis was used to examine the validity (Ariffin, 2013). As further justification, correlation analysis is an analysis that could determine the degree of association between all constructs. Correlation coefficients whose value falls between 1 and 0.81 are considered to be very high, resulting in multicollinearity (Burns & Bush, 2000). Meanwhile, the value of 0.5 or higher is considered a strong correlation between variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). To simplify the understanding of the statement, Cohen and Cohen (1983) suggested that the correlation values; $r = 0.10$ to 0.29 as small correlations, $r = 0.30$ to 0.49 as medium correlations, and $r = 0.50$ to 1.0 as large correlations. Table 3.13 below shows the relationship between the constructs of the study and the evidence of the correlation between variables in this study. Table 3.14 below shows that 13 correlation coefficients exist among constructs and that they were related to the hypotheses of the study.

Table 3.14
The Pearson Correlation Matrix

	HC 01	HC 02	PV 01	PV 02	PV 03	PV 04	IP 01	IP 02	IP 03	IP 04	IP 05	TDI 01	TDI 02
HC01	1												
HC02	0.765	1											
PV01	0.345	0.405	1										
PV02	0.410	0.380	0.710	1									
PV03	0.480	0.335	0.750	0.695	1								
PV04	0.395	0.510	0.740	0.815	0.630	1							
IP01	0.410	0.455	0.415	0.480	0.350	0.395	1						
IP02	0.400	0.480	0.450	0.425	0.365	0.505	0.680	1					
IP03	0.340	0.430	0.520	0.425	0.490	0.470	0.660	0.680	1				
IP04	0.525	0.440	0.445	0.410	0.420	0.330	0.665	0.740	0.730	1			
IP05	0.430	0.525	0.335	0.465	0.390	0.420	0.740	0.635	0.710	0.725	1		
TDI01	0.505	0.350	0.435	0.480	0.355	0.515	0.425	0.360	0.460	0.370	0.350	1	
TDI02	0.345	0.400	0.385	0.395	0.375	0.485	0.410	0.330	0.385	0.480	0.370	0.820	1

Table 3.14 above shows the relationship between the constructs of the study as evidence of the absence of strong correlations between pairs of all variables in the current study. Consequently, multicollinearity was unlikely to have an impact on the analysis interpretation. The results from the table indicate the existence of significant relationships among constructs and that they are related to the hypotheses of the study.

3.19 Reliability

Another phase of the analysis, after convergent validity took place, is the reliability test, where the researcher needs to observe the consistency of the measurement items (Hair et al., 2006). During this particular phase, two types of reliability are known as internal consistency and external consistency tests. In observing the reliability of the measurement model, it can be represented by external reliability as mentioned by Bryman & Cramer (2001). External reliability can be examined through a test-retest whereby the researcher could administer the progress on two different occasions. As mentioned by Swanson and Holton (2005), test-retest is a process where it can be easily elaborated that the respondent who scored high on the first test should be scored again with the same result when taking the same test. However, a low test-

retest should not be the reason for the poor correlation or reliability, but it may amplify that the concept of the study and within the settings or theoretical understanding has changed over time (Bryman & Cramer, 2001). On the other hand, internal reliability is mostly used in multi-item scales. It refers to the items that are being used in the measurement model could measure a single concept to identify the consistency of the items (Bryman & Cramer, 2001). It means, if the correlation provides a high value, then the internal consistency will follow. In the analysis, most of the studies were using a simple measurement method, which is Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha (Hatcher, 1994). In relation to internal reliability, the composite reliability and average extracted should be examined. In the CFA, these two methods were applied to compute the value from the scales.

3.19.1 Internal Consistency Reliability Tests: Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha

The results of the internal consistency reliability test for the variables have been examined for thirteen factors. These results are obtained from the EFA phase. The reliability test for all dimensions has been recorded, and it shows an acceptable value of coefficient alpha above 0.60 as recommended by Nunnally (1967). Table 3.15 below illustrates the results of Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha of the respective test:

Table 3.15
Internal Consistency Reliability of HC, PV, IP, and TDI

	Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha
HC	Skills	5	0.931
	Cultural Competence	4	0.946
PV	Social Value	4	0.923
	Emotional Value	6	0.921
	Functional Value	4	0.916
	Monetary Value	5	0.952
IP	Product Innovation	5	0.933
	Service Innovation	5	0.883
	Process Innovation	4	0.935
	Organisational Innovation	5	0.954
	Marketing Innovation	4	0.920
TDI	Intention to Travel	5	0.904

3.19.2 Reliability Test: Using Structural Equation Modelling

Cronbach's Alpha is a basic reliability scale that is widely used in research studies, especially in the social sciences. However, all tools have a barrier that needs improvement from their limitations. The same goes for Cronbach's Alpha, where it has its own limitations that can be discovered (Bollen, 1989):

- a. The accuracy of the estimation – the estimation needs improvement in terms of accuracy of the estimation. It tends to overestimate items with large scales and underestimate items with small scales.
- b. Past studies have characterised reliability as a consistency – this shows the hard projection to analyse consistency.
- c. All items have equivalent reliabilities.

As mentioned by Hair et al. (2006), reliability is a part of convergent validity, where it is necessary to apply the process in the SEM procedure to estimate items and reliabilities. In SEM, the value related to each latent variable measures the dependability of that item (Garver & Mentzer, 1999). This indicates that the higher the correlation of the systematic component, the more reliable the latent construct. Thus, with the statement earlier, this current study combines the reliability test with coefficient alpha and the SEM model to portray the loading items referring to the variance extracted and composite reliability. The acceptable value for reliability using SEM is (>0.70), which can be assumed as a strong reliability (Hair et al., 2019). However, Hatcher (1994) made a clear justification for the acceptable value, whereby the values of 0.60 and above can be accepted as the indicator that the test is in the social science field. Hair et al. (2019) focused on variance extracted, whereby the variance extracted measures correspondence with construct reliability. From the value, the result can be found from the estimates from both standardised regression weights and squared multiple correlations (SMC) in the AMOS output software. From the estimations on both figures, it measures the total value of variance in the indicators for the latent variable. The formula to get construct reliability value is the standardised loading value being calculated, and the average variance extracted (AVE) must be greater than the value of

0.50 because of its adequacy for convergent validity. This is a common rule of thumb for AVE to obtain the correlations for each construct. Table 3.16 presents the results of construct reliability and variance extracted for all dimensions of HC, PV, IP, and TDI. Meanwhile, Table 3.16 shows the value of internal consistency and construct reliability for all dimensions of HC, PV, I and TDI. As previewed in the results below, all values for latent variables were above 0.60 as suggested by Hatcher (1994). Hence, the existence of reliability can be concluded as acceptable.

Table 3.16

Variance Extracted and Construct Reliability of HC, PV, IP, and TDI

Constructs	Variance Extracted	Construct Reliability
Skills	0.731	0.931
Cultural Competence	0.822	0.949
Social Value	0.754	0.919
Emotional Value	0.711	0.928
Functional Value	0.744	0.932
Monetary Value	0.785	0.961
Product Innovation	0.731	0.940
Service Innovation	0.600	0.873
Process Innovation	0.779	0.946
Organisational Innovation	0.799	0.960
Marketing Innovation	0.732	0.925
Intention to Travel	0.661	0.860
Revisit Intention	0.658	0.888

Table 3.17

Internal Consistency and Construct Reliability of HC, PV, IP, and TDI

Constructs	Internal Consistency	Construct Reliability
Skills	0.930	0.931
Cultural Competence	0.949	0.949
Social Value	0.919	0.919
Emotional Value	0.928	0.928
Functional Value	0.932	0.932
Monetary Value	0.961	0.961

Product Innovation	0.940	0.940
Service Innovation	0.873	0.873
Process Innovation	0.946	0.946
Organisational Innovation	0.960	0.960
Marketing Innovation	0.925	0.925
Intention to Travel	0.860	0.860
Revisit Intention	0.888	0.888

3.20 Analysis Techniques

A normal process for the technical part of research is data analysis. After the survey process, the data was gathered from respondents, and the data will contribute to the next data analysis process. In this study, data analysis was conducted using IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25, and in addition to getting a clean result analysis, Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) version 28 was utilised. By using SPSS software, it can be described as the best analysis resource to analyse descriptive statistics. It was also remarked by Sekaran and Bougie (2013) as the best software for illustrative statistics for having contextual charts, plots, and frequencies of the data. Furthermore, SPSS could share the analysis process for exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and reliability analysis. The built-in system in the software can be used by the researcher to have a better understanding of the data analysis. Other than that, SPSS should have a synchronised action analysis, which could be used to measure the reliability of the data, such as Cronbach's Alpha for coefficient alpha analysis and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to measure the validity of the items used. In addition, data analysis for the actual study includes a descriptive analysis of the demographic variables. Generally, the current study utilised SEM to analyse the measurement and structural models in the framework, which include a few processes; CFA, unidimensional and multidimensional construct assessment, validity and reliability test, and dataset normality evaluation. It is a powerful technique that combines the complex path model with a latent construct.

Dash and Paul (2021) stated that SEM has two different categories, namely covariance-based SEM or known as CB-SEM, and variance-based SEM known as PLS-SEM. From the discussion, SEM is a universal tool to measure both cross-sectional and

longitudinal data. Because of its flexibility in the research complex study, it has become popular across numerous disciplines and fields (Mueller & Hancock, 2018). The philosophy on the difference of CB-SEM and PLS-SEM is that, when the researcher wants to measure the theory and to confirm the theory by referring to the objective of the study, CB-SEM is appropriate to be used. However, if the research is merely a prediction and theory development, then PLS-SEM could be applied. Hair et al. (2017) mentioned that the researcher made CB-SEM and PLS-SEM a competition, regardless of how; it is not a competition, but both applications are complementary to each other. Hair et al. (2017) added that, to confirm the existing theory, CB-SEM is the chosen one, but in contrast, for theory development and prediction-wise, PLS-SEM is an excellent choice. Hence, in this study, CB-SEM will be used to test the hypothesis and to confirm the existing theory that is included in the study.

By referring to the study on structural equation modelling, two applications in using SEM measurement, Coltman et al. (2008) claimed that there are two measurements in the process, namely reflective and formative measurement. Based on their findings, reflective measurement is a measurement, which all the directions between causality flows from the construct to indicators; meanwhile, for formative measurement, the causality flows from indicators to the construct. However, previous scholars have indicated that in reflective measurement, not all constructs can be measured by using correlation items (Bollen & Lennox, 1991; Edwards & Bagozzi, 2000). The scholars added that formative measurement is known in economics and sociology, but reflective measurement dominates more in psychological and management sciences. Based on the statement made by previous scholars, the current study is using reflective measurement in which all causality flows from the construct to dimensions or indicators. Below is the figure of reflective and formative measurement:

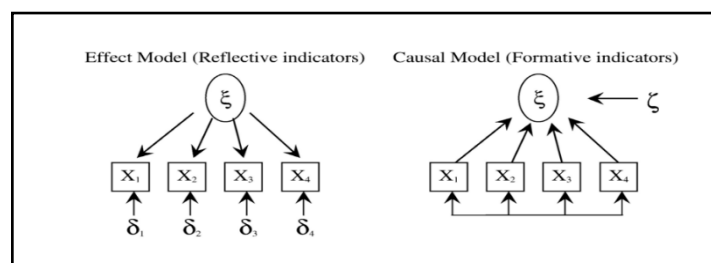


Figure 3.23 Reflective and Formative Measurement
(Adapted from Coltman et al., 2008)

In the process of analysing the descriptive analysis, there are a few other processes that need to be emphasised. The process includes frequency, means, and standard deviation to describe the sample (Zikmund et al., 2010). Normally, the descriptive analysis will be measured by using SPSS software and after the process, the frequency distribution table will show the respondent profile and mean. These data will be used to indicate how the data is spread out and the standard deviation of the data. After that, the technical part will be the measurement of inferential analysis, which needs to be studied for the purpose of answering the objectives and hypotheses of the study. By using SEM, the path analysis, the comprehensiveness of the results, and the fitness of the model will be discovered. Moreover, SEM will show the robust result, which can be discovered by testing the normality test, construct validity, reliability, direct and indirect effect, and works with minimum measurement in CFA, in providing a better illustration of the model (Rozman et al., 2020). In SEM, the study will focus on the first and second orders of confirmatory analysis (CFA). Gaskin (2021) showed a step of CFA that indicated that CFA can only be done by only if the researcher has gone through EFA. The result from EFA will then be the analysis for CFA by extracting the data and confirming the data for the study purposes.

The difference between the first order of CFA and the second order of CFA is that, during the first order phase, the measurement process focuses on the validity and reliability of the construct. This is to confirm that the data is useful for further analysis (Gaskin, 2012). The scholar then added, the second order needs to be done after validation of the constructs has fulfilled the requirements needed in the process. In the second order phase, the requirement basically comes from the first order of latent variables analysis. Awang et al. (2018) further discussed the second-order analysis of CFA, the need to explain the component used as the sub-construct, and the construct will be the second order.

After a thorough explanation by previous scholars, from the researcher's understanding, after the procedure has been followed, the second order is basically to assess several constructs which have a high correlation. Since the process is to find the correlation, is it safe to justify that, if the correlation is not related, it can be rejected in the findings. Therefore, in the current study, the researcher is focusing on the research methodology by using CB-SEM (SEM AMOS) to perpetuate the significance of the measurement and to analyse the data by using the software. Hence, by referring to the

previous studies, it is the best application to be used in order to measure a complex model and construct.

3.21 Summary of the Chapter

To conclude Chapter Three, it is crucial to explain the methodology used in this study. It was the most challenging and technical part in the study with crucial explanations that need to be emphasised in terms of population, sampling method, sampling size, questionnaire and sequencing, data analysis and analysis techniques. The methodology used needs to be concurrently rational, valid, and reliable to conduct the analysis. The proper preparation to propose the methodology used is important to get a valid explanation for the analysis. Hence, the justification from previous researchers is needed to make it more reliable. The ethical aspect also requires consideration during research, such as application to conduct a survey from the university's Research Ethics Committee (REC), pre-testing, validity testing, pilot testing, and other procedures related to the data gathering. Moreover, this chapter discusses the analysis that was utilised to test the instrument proposed to prevent errors during data computation.

The first part of this chapter introduced the research methodology used in this current study, an important part to know the direction of the study by using the plans that have been approved. It includes the discussion on research design, research instruments, sampling and population, techniques for sampling, data collection process and procedure, and the progress on reliability of the results through Cronbach's coefficient Alpha, EFA, first-order of CFA, and second-order of CFA. The most crucial part in this chapter was within the reliability and validity phase, where the assessment for all latent variables is needed to analyse the value. It provides a detail explanation and procedure in examining the validity and reliability. Therefore, the chapter can be concluded that all variables have been successfully examined, and the next phase of the process can be further discussed in Chapter Four, Research Results.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Preamble

This chapter is crucial to validate the assumptions that have been generated by the multivariate analysis through multiple regression, as well as variables that are related to the model specification. Specifically, structural equation modelling is adopted to analyse the relationship between exogenous variables and endogenous variables; hence, the results were tested with the hypotheses that have been highlighted. In addition, the model, namely the full model and the re-specified model, were tested to confirm the interaction among variables.

4.2 Profile of the Respondents

From 653 respondents took part in the survey, the majority of the respondents with 50.2% were male, and 49.8% were female. The data shows, 455 respondents (70%) came from domestic tourists, and 198 (30%) respondents were international tourists. Most of the respondents' age was between 31 to 35 years old, with the percentage of 21.0%. The profile of the respondent is shown in Table 4.1, and the variables were divided into categorical variables:

Table 4.1
Respondents' Profile (N=653)

Respondents' Profile	Number	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	328	50.2
Female	325	49.8
Nationality		
Malaysian	455	70.0
Non-Malaysian	198	30.0
Age		
18 – 21	88	13.5
22 – 26	124	19.0

27 – 30	110	16.8
31 – 35	137	21.0
36 – 40	88	13.5
Above 40	106	16.2
Purpose of Visit		
Leisure	402	61.56
Business	24	3.68
Education	56	8.56
Visiting Family & Friends	171	26.20
Main Activities While Visiting Destination in Malaysia		
Sightseeing	195	29.87
Shopping	50	7.66
Cultural and Heritage Exploration	180	27.56
Trying Local Food and Cuisine	228	34.91
What Attracts you the Most to Malaysian Food Tourism?		
Variety of Cuisines (e.g. Malay, Chinese, Indian, etc)	398	60.50
Street food culture	80	12.30
Unique dishes (e.g. Nasi Lemak, Laksa, Sate)	112	17.20
Cultural and Historical significance of food	63	10.00
Length of Stay in Malaysia		
Less than a day	37	5.6
1 – 3 days	55	8.4
4 – 7 days	41	6.3
More than 7 days	65	10.0
Born and raised in Malaysia	455	69.7
Sources of Information About Malaysian Food Tourism		
Social media (TikTok, YouTube, Instagram)	475	72.74
Friends and Family Recommendations	128	19.60
Tourism Board or official websites	50	7.66

4.3 Statistical Analysis of Propositions and Hypotheses

To test the hypotheses of the current study, multiple regression and SEM techniques were applied. Both methods were essential in presenting the results of the hypotheses. The details of the statement and justification are presented below:

4.3.1 Multiple Regression Analyses

Referring to the multiple regression analysis, it is known as a powerful statistical technique that can dictate the dependency of one variable on another (Hair et al., 2006). By using this procedure, the complexity of the analysis would influence the dependency of the regression application, which can be categorised into simple and multiple regressions (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). For instance, an analysis of a dependent variable and another single independent variable may use single regression analysis. Meanwhile, if the measurement is using several independent variables to predict a dependent variable, multiple regression analysis should be considered (Hair et al., 2019; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In conducting multiple regression analysis, available data need to be examined to ensure the rules of thumb in using the analysis are met (Hair et al., 2006). Specifically, the rule of thumbs includes normality test, linearity test, homoscedasticity test, multicollinearity test, and outliers.

4.3.2 Assumptions of Multivariate Analysis

Before starting the first phase of the analysis interpretation, several assumptions of multivariate statistical tools, known as multicollinearity, outliers, linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity tests need to be undertaken before running the multivariate analysis (Hair et al., 2014). To the best of the researcher's opinion on multivariate analysis, a proper arrangement of the tests that have been highlighted will reflect a good structure of the use of the rule of thumbs. It will prevent any issues regarding the interpretation of the regression results.

4.3.3 Linearity, Homoscedasticity, and Normality

Scatter plots in the analysis of linearity can be used to analyse the relationship between variables (Pallant, 2013). Whenever the relationship between two variables is linear, a straight line can be achieved. Visual inspections on linearity where the scatter plots are not showing; U-shaped distribution is not showing, and non-linear patterns are not appearing in the plots. These conditions illustrate that the assumptions of linearity are not violated (Pallant, 2007).

On the other hand, homoscedasticity can be defined as the variability in the scores of the variables. Variables should be similar for all values; for instance, the values of Variable A should be similar to the values of Variable B. This can be observed in the scatter plot. However, heteroscedasticity is the opposite case from homoscedasticity, where a visual inspection of the scatter plots did not show any pattern of a decrease or an increase in residual. In reference to the non-parametric test, the population is known as a non-parametric test and commonly known as no same variance (Awang et al., 2016). In the context of the current study, the visual inspection of the scatter plots did not show any incremental or decremental patterns of the residuals. This procedure was needed in terms of having linear regression testing on the hypotheses for a robust result (Yilmaz & Şencan, 2018). Thus, it can be concluded that homoscedasticity was found in the independent variable of the current study.

Next, an analysis known as normality by using a normal probability plot (P-P) for standardised residuals was performed. This analysis was conducted to determine the normality of the tested variables. The outcomes of the analysis disclosed a normal distribution for the current study in accordance with the statistical test. Hair et al. (2006) mentioned that this method is reliable for distinguishing normality. Pallant (2010) suggested that an assessment of the normality assumptions needs to be inspected from the regression standardised residuals. Besides, similar research justified that the statistical test for normality is one of the approaches for large sample sizes (Gower et al., 1972). To sum up the test, this study has passed all normality tests in order to continue the procedure in the next stage for the parametric test.

4.3.4 Multicollinearity

The expression to assess the relationships between variables or between two or more independent variables is known as multicollinearity. By looking at the acceptable value of multicollinearity, the problem may occur if high correlation among clustering variables would outweigh the underlying constructs. Multicollinearity may arise when intercorrelations among variables are very high, which may result in an unstable analysis. Hair et al. (2019) specified the use of observation of multicollinearity as important in terms of examining a correlation matrix. The problem can be identified if the denominators are too close to the value of zero (Kline, 1998). A high score of

multicollinearities may result in bias in the regression coefficient. Low multicollinearity showcases that the independent variables are independent of each other.

Measuring multicollinearity is a standard procedure with an easy guideline which has a straightforward process at the multivariate level (Kline, 1998; Hair et al., 2006). One of the common ways to detect multicollinearity in the analysis is by referring to the tolerance value in collinearity diagnostics. Tolerance in research understanding, or specifically in a regression perspective, is the amount of variability of the selected independent variable that is unexplained by other independent variables (Hair et al., 2019). If the tolerance values indicate less than 10 per cent or 0.1, this will indicate a multicollinearity problem (Kline, 1998). Furthermore, multicollinearity has another assessor to observe the value, known as the variance of inflation (VIF). VIF can be defined as the variance inflation factor, which corresponds to the tolerance value. It is the ratio of the total variance in standardised items to their unique variance. Therefore, it is safe to emphasise the VIF, whereby the higher the VIF, the higher the multicollinearity. As stated by Hair et al. (2019), a tolerance value of less than 0.10 and a VIF value exceeding 10 is regarded as problematic and needs to be assessed again through CFA. However, Hair et al. (2019) explained that the tolerance and VIF values indicate that tolerance values above 0.10 and VIF values below 10 indicate acceptable levels of multicollinearity. Table 4.2 previews the multicollinearity test of the dimensions and their items in the HC, PV, IP, and TDI constructs:

Table 4.2
Multicollinearity Diagnostics

Collinearity Statistics		
Variables	Tolerance Value	VIF Value
Human Capital		
Skills	0.450	2.223
Cultural Competence	0.329	3.036
Perceived Value		
Social Value	0.368	2.714
Emotional Value	0.396	2.525
Functional Value	0.257	3.891
Monetary Value	0.342	2.920
Innovation Practices		

Product Innovation	0.176	5.697
Service Innovation	0.270	3.706
Process Innovation	0.142	7.046
Organisational Innovation	0.134	7.450
Marketing Innovation	0.286	3.493
Tourist Destination Image		
Intention to Travel	0.215	4.642
Revisit Intention	0.266	3.758

Based on Table 4.2 above, multicollinearity was assessed by using collinearity diagnostics to analyse tolerance and VIF values. While most predictors have felt within acceptable thresholds (tolerance value > 0.2 and $VIF < 5$), a few indicators, such as product innovation (tolerance value > 0.1 and $VIF < 5$), process innovation, and organisational innovation (tolerance value > 0.1 and $VIF > 5$), showed moderate multicollinearity. However, by referring to Hair et al. (2019) and their theoretical relevance, they were retained with caution and results were interpreted accordingly. Hence, the values are acceptable for multicollinearity.

4.3.5 Outliers

An outlier is generally discussed as a data point which considered far outside the norm for a variable (Osborne & Overbay, 2004). The value of the standardised residual from case-wise diagnostics is used to assess outliers in the sample. Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) stated that outlying case values must exceed ± 3.3 . The outliers' values resemble any extreme numbers that pull the regression line near them has significantly resulting to the coefficients model (Marshall & Karadimitriou, 2018). In the context of the current study, the assessment of the outliers shows the absence of an outlier among the cases.

4.4 Distributions of the Study Variables

In accordance with the statistical analyses that this current study employed, such as multiple regression and SEM, it is important to note that the data is clean from any violation (assumptions) made by the individual (Pallant, 2007). Assumptions test

commonly provides a better view of descriptive statistics of variables. In this current study, the descriptive statistics used are skewness and kurtosis.

4.4.1 Skewness and Kurtosis

The fundamental understandings of skewness and kurtosis should refer to the generic discussion where both assessments are scrutinised in assessing the normality of the data distribution (Hair et al., 2006). These assessments should be observed by looking at the shape of the distribution, and can be used in observing the interval and ratio levels. To understand the acceptable value of the skewness and kurtosis, Hair et al. (2006) simplify it to assumptions of zero indicating perfect normality in the data distribution, which is known as seldom achieved, while ± 2.58 indicates rejected normality assumptions at the probability level of 0.1 and ± 1.96 indicates a 0.05 error level (Gower et al., 1972; Hair et al., 2019). Skewness provides a very useful indication of the variables, whereby a positively skewed distribution shows a small number of large values and tails off to the right. Meanwhile, a negatively skewed distribution has a relatively small number of small values and tails off to the left (Bouzari & Karatepe, 2017).

On the other hand, Kurtosis refers to the flatness of distribution in comparison with the normal distribution. A previous scholar mentioned the kurtosis, whereby they emphasised that distributions that are more peaked than the normal ones are known as *leptokurtic*, while distributions that are flatter in nature are known as *platykurtic*. The parameter discussed measures the height of the distributions, whereby the value depends on the distributions. A positive value indicates a peaked distribution, while a negative value indicates a flat distribution. The criteria used in kurtosis are used in finding skewness distributions. In a different study on kurtosis, Brown (2006) mentioned that the kurtosis value can be felt within the threshold range of ± 10 . However, Byrne (2016) made an indicator that the range for kurtosis must be within ± 7 , and it will be considered acceptable. Kline (2016) also made a justification on the acceptable range of skewness and kurtosis, especially for the researcher who employed SEM, whereby the acceptable range of skewness is ± 3 and the acceptable range of kurtosis is ± 10 . In the current study, skewness values fell between -1.621 and -1.096, and kurtosis values between 0.78 and 3.178, which were acceptable thresholds of ± 3 for

skewness and ± 10 for kurtosis. Table 4.3 shows the skewness and kurtosis results:

Table 4.3
Skewness and Kurtosis Results of the Variables

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis
Human Capital	-1.621	3.178
Perceived Value	-1.420	1.756
Innovation Practices	-1.304	1.571
Tourist Destination Image	-1.096	0.780

4.5 Structural Equation Modelling

The previous chapter indicated the meaning of structural equation modelling (SEM) and its features in analysing the value of goodness-of-fit in the model specification. The analysis is followed by several procedures, which include propositions in measuring variables. In the current study, the researcher employed AMOS version 28 to analyse the data. By looking at this topic, the technical part of SEM was used once again to measure the model specification based on the second-order of CFA that has achieved its objectives. Hair et al. (2019) emphasised that SEM is one of the best tools to analyse independent and dependent variables at once. This is based on the statement by Kline (2016) that the tool can help researchers in finding a better solution to validate the construct, mediation effect, relationships, and variables of the hypotheses. Previous scholars pinpointed the use of SEM to measure the latent variables and validate the relationship between variables (Hoyle, 1995). As it is important in the approach, SEM is a strong foundation to discover model fit and theoretical understanding in confirmatory research (Hair et al., 2019). However, to get access to the model, the measurement model must be in a healthy condition; hence, the procedures. For instance, the previous chapter discovered the measurement model by using the first-order and second-order of CFA. Meanwhile, the structural model validates all the hypothetical dependencies based on the path analysis (Hoyle, 1995; Kline, 2016; Hair et al., 2019). To be specific, this subtopic discovered the structural model by conducting an analysis on the full model and the respecified model.

Furthermore, the SEM technique supports the analysis of groups of independent and dependent variables simultaneously (Hair et al., 2019). It provides information on

the model fit and variance explained, also known as regression squares (R^2), through the measurement model. The usage of this method would predict and explain the variance in the variables and their influence on the variables (Ambali, Suleiman, Bakar, Hashim, & Tariq, 2011). In addition, the regression coefficient (β) provides a better understanding of the relationship between variables, whether direct, indirect, or total effects. The diagram below shows an explanation of the effect mentioned, whereby it includes the independent, mediating, and dependent effects on every pathway.

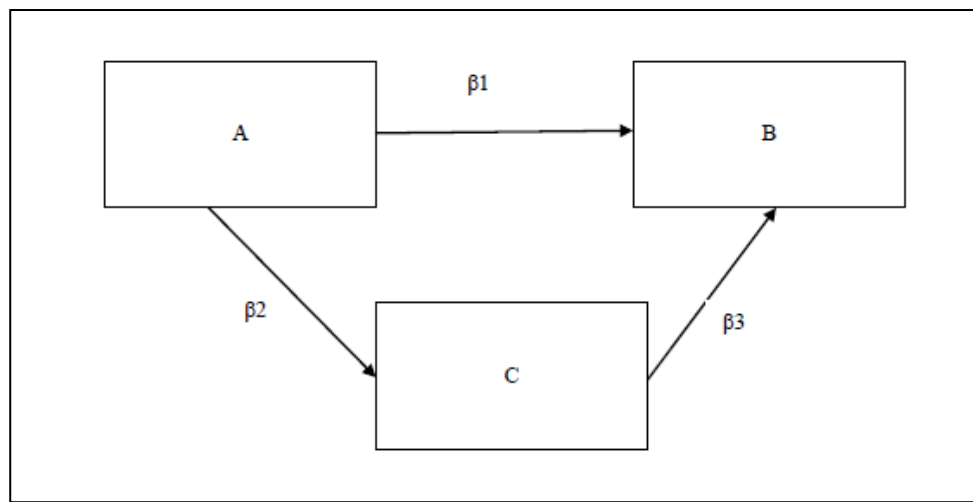


Figure 4.1 Direct and Indirect Effect

Figure 4.1 above shows the direct and indirect effects of the variables. Based on the diagram, β_1 is a direct effect, and β_2 and β_3 are both indirect effects. The figure above shows how the indirect effect happens through a structure coefficient or path coefficient, which known as a computed relationship between variables (independent and dependent variables). On the other hand, indirect effects are relationships that involve a sequence of relationships, which can be justified by the mediation (Hair et al., 2006; Bagozzi, 1980). The magnitude of these effects is given by the magnitude of the standardised coefficients from two variables. However, total effects can be achieved by the sum of all direct and indirect effects of the variables.

Indirect effect in the model helps the researcher to determine the possible questions of the effect (Hair et al., 2006). By referring to the justification made by the previous scholar, any model that includes a mediated relationship of the form $A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C$ should be tested, which includes the path of A and C (Kelloway, 1995; Bagozzi &

Dholakia, 2006). The analysis of mediated relationships can be performed by using two methods: multiple regression and SEM. However, previous scholars emphasised using SEM, as it can control the measurement error, provides an indicator of the fit, and is more flexible compared to regression (Frazier, Barron, & Tix, 2004). Baron and Kenny (1986) justified the procedures for mediation and highlighted four crucial steps to perform the mediation:

- a. The independent variable affects the dependent variable.
- b. The independent variable affects the mediator.
- c. The mediator affects the dependent variable.
- d. To quantify that the mediator mediates the independent-dependent relationship.

Full mediation occurs when the independent variable has no significant effect when the mediator is in the equation, whereas partial mediation is found when the effect is relatively small but significant in the presence of the mediator in the equation. Thus, assessing the mediation requires an understanding of the chi-square effect, followed by the indices of the fit statistics, and finally examining the statistical significance of the paths identified (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This current study focuses on the mediation effect of IP upon two independent variables, HC and PV.

4.5.1 Stages of Structural Equation Modelling

Path analysis and SEM procedures were considered in achieving a model that parsimoniously fits the data and can provide justification based on the relationships of the model.

4.5.2 Model Specification

The relationship in the hypothesised model was referred from a wide range of literature search. These procedures were taken as an essential part in seeking notions on the formulation of the hypotheses to specify the relationships in the SEM. Eventually, the literature was important to aid the researcher in handling SEM procedures.

4.5.3 Assessment of Model Fit

In assessing the model fit, several key steps were taken, including observing absolute fit, model parsimony, and incremental fit. The goodness-of-fit has been clearly justified in the previous chapter, in which Table 3.5 illustrates the details of the goodness-of-fit measure.

4.5.4 Model Re-Specification and Modification

In the process of model measurement and structural model measurement, researchers tend to use any possible approach based on the previous scholars' rule of thumbs, which can be referred to during the modification. If the model specification reflected an unacceptable fit, standardised residuals and modification indices might be helpful for the researcher to identify the problem. Garver and Mentzer (1999) had identified the way to elaborate more on the process when they remarked on the standardised residuals; patterns of large residuals should be taken into consideration. A large residual should be between 2.00 and 2.58 and can be considered significant at the 0.5 level. Significant residual indicates a substantial prediction error for the indicators involved in the measurement. In addition, items that correspond with more than one factor will preview large residuals with different items and should be considered for deletion. If the modification has been taken into consideration, the model should then be re-specified after each modification (Schumacker & Lomax, 1996).

However, item deletion should follow the process, and it needs to be specified. Modification indices (MI), for instance, are the loading values that can determine how to modify the measurement model. Hair et al. (2006) suggested that modification indices of four or more will improve the model significantly. The largest MI will have a bigger opportunity to improve the goodness-of-fit, and the value should be an indicator for the modification. After the deletion process, the model should be re-evaluated after each of the items deleted through MI (Garver & Mentzer, 2009). Then, the goodness-of-fit can be achieved following the healthy procedure.

4.6 Structural Equation on Hypothesised and Re-Specified Model

A structural equation model in this current study was a complete path model. The model differs from the simple path analysis in the first-order and second-order of CFA. All paths were connected to see how the measurement reacted to the process, as the residual error factor was connected to the latent endogenous variable. Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3 below show a structural equation model for exogenous constructs of HC and PV and the interactions with IP as a mediating variable and as a cause of endogenous constructs of TDI. The figures illustrate how the structural model represents the causal effect among the constructs:

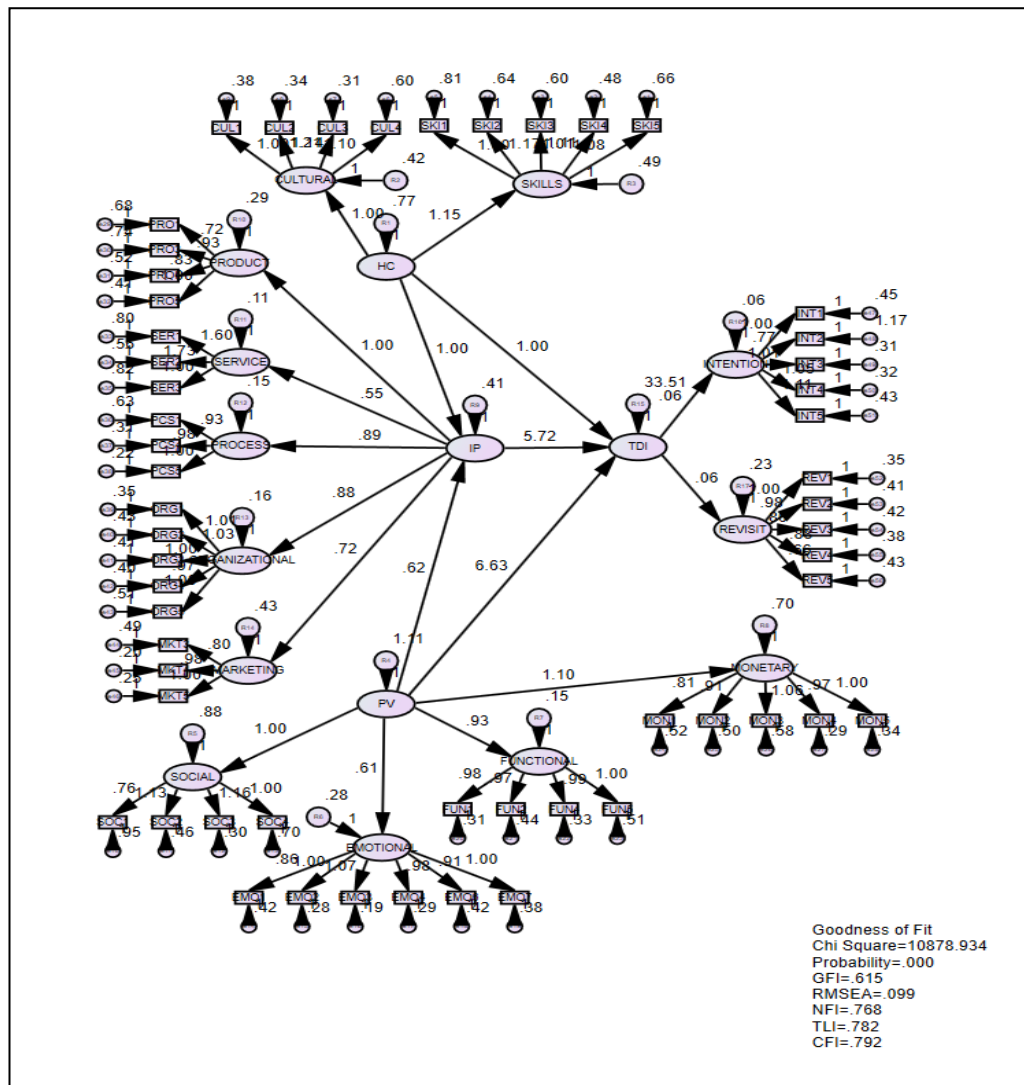


Figure 4.2 Generated Full Model of the Mediating Effect of IP in the Relationship Between HC and PV to TDI in the Context of Food Tourism in Malaysia

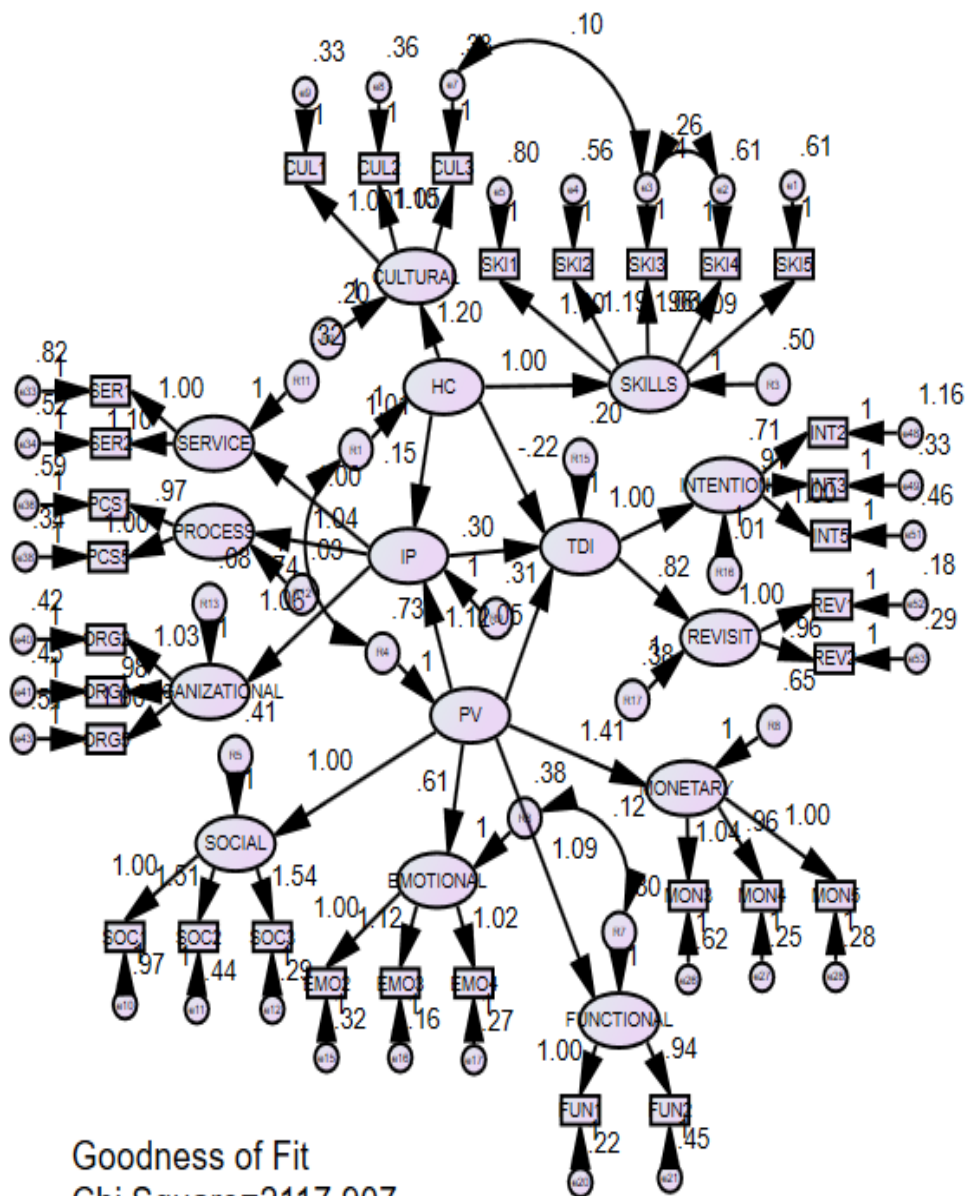


Figure 4.3 Re-Specified Model of the Mediating Effect of IP in the Relationship Between HC and PV to TDI in the Context of Food Tourism in Malaysia

Figure 4.2 illustrates the full model specification that went through a similar procedure to get goodness-of-fit based on the previous chapter. A structural equation model then described the two exogenous constructs of HC and PV, where each construct was measured by indicators and their relationship with the mediating variable, which is IP, and one element of endogenous (TDI). The figure shows how the latent variables were constructed, which uses ellipses, shapes, while the indicators are rectangles. The errors and residual terms were circles, and the causal relations are shown using single-headed arrows. The single-headed arrows are commonly used to show the causality as a causal relation measure to its indicator. As previewed, there were double-headed arrows, which were used to see the correlations between the indicators or can be described as exogenous latent measurement. All elements used in this statistical analysis were used to identify the level of multicollinearity.

Path coefficient values in the measurement can be placed on the arrows from latent measures to the indicators or from a latent measure to another latent measure, from an error to an indicator, or from a residual term to a latent measure. This technique has been used as it is a procedure, as mentioned by Awang et al. (2018), whereby they justified its essentiality, as every shape in the software has a different definition and a different task to run the software. Previous scholars have mentioned that, nowadays, researchers from all over the globe are considering the SEM AMOS application for hypothesis testing and modelling the model related to the field in behavioural sciences and social sciences (Holey, 2012). Technically, SEM was used to improve the model of fit, as mentioned in the previous chapter.

However, if the model shows an unacceptable fit, standardised residuals and modification indices should be referred to recover the model fit (Awang et al., 2018; Hair et al., 2019). In standardised residual, a large value is considered significant from a pair of indicators (Garver & Mentzer, 1999). However, if the items correspond with more than one factor and show a large number, the item-deletion procedure should be taken. In this case, Figure 4.3 indicates the re-specified model of the measurement model; however, by comparing it to the full model, two constructs need to be deleted (i.e., product innovation and marketing innovation). This aligned with the justification made by Hair et al. (2019) and Kline (2016) from a statistical view, whereby the item-deletion procedure can be significantly done if standardised loadings demonstrate low standardised loadings (below 0.50) or have poor reliability.

In this case, by looking at the tolerance value in collinearity statistics analysis, both have a very weak tolerance and are near the unacceptable threshold. In addition, the factor loads from both constructs demonstrated poor standardised loadings. Furthermore, by looking at the theoretical justification by Byrne (2016), decisions to retain or delete items or dimensions should be followed by the statistical criteria and theoretical coherence. Based on the suggestion given, the dimensions of product innovation and marketing innovation were removed from the construct of IP due to low factor loadings and poor model fit indices. This shows the limited contribution of statistical considerations to the overall model structure.

On top of that, the decision to remove both dimensions comes from the consideration of the theoretical reasoning in the context of food tourism in Malaysia, whereby food tourism is often revolved around traditional, authentic, and cultural meals (Ellis et al., 2018). They elaborated on the tourist actually seeking experiences from the traditional, authentic, and cultural aspects rather than innovativeness in the product, as the product often involves packaging, new product development, and technological enhancement. The focus was more on preserving heritage than on innovating the traditional meal into something unrecognisable.

The decision to remove marketing innovation was more towards the idea that tourists may not directly involve themselves in innovative ideas such as branding, as they were more towards seeking experiences in food consumption (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016). Marketing strategies and innovation must be done by the authorities or organisations such as agencies, state councils, city councils, or any bodies. When the public is unaware of the marketing, the factor loading is reduced. Thus, marketing innovation is important, but it is governed by the authorities, and tourists are not significantly involved in shaping the marketing.

Table 4.4 below indicates the goodness-of-fit of the re-specified model that has been measured. The table explained the variance in endogenous variables or squared multiple correlations (SMC). The SMC confirmed the model of IP and TDI, whereby the significant values of IP are 79.3% and TDI are 84.4%. A summary of the goodness-of-fit that has been obtained from Figure 4.3 is explained in Table 4.4 below:

Table 4.4
Goodness-of-fit Statistics of Re-Specified Model

Indicators	Value
CMIN (χ^2)	2117.907
DF	414
CMIN/DF	5.115
P	0.000
GFI	0.838
TLI	0.909
CFI	0.919
RMSEA	0.079

Goodness-of-fit for the 31 observed variables of HC, PV, IP, and TDI shows a good fit, ranging between 0.735 and 0.942 for exogenous variables and 0.600 and 936 for endogenous variables, for the standardised regression weight. Standard error yielded a good reading valued between 0.019 and 0.057 for exogenous variables and 0.026 and 0.068 for endogenous variables. Table 4.5 and Table 4.6 show the details of the exogenous and endogenous variables:

Table 4.5
Results of Exogenous Variables

Latent Variables	Observed Variables	Standardized Regression Weight	Standard Error	P
HC	SKI1	0.810	0.052	***
	SKI2	0.891	0.044	***
	SKI3	0.834	0.050	***
	SKI4	0.835	0.042	***
	SKI5	0.865	0.040	***
	CUL1	0.913	0.026	***
	CUL2	0.913	0.028	***
	CUL3	0.926	0.028	***
PV	SOC1	0.735	0.057	***
	SOC2	0.925	0.043	***
	SOC3	0.950	0.040	***
	EMO2	0.818	0.023	***

EMO3	0.912	0.019	***
EMO4	0.844	0.021	***
FUN1	0.917	0.029	***
FUN2	0.834	0.034	***
MON3	0.886	0.042	***
MON4	0.942	0.024	***
MON5	0.939	0.026	***

Table 4.6
Results of Endogenous Variables

Latent Variables	Observed Variables	Standardized Regression Weight	Standard Error	P
IP	SER1	0.830	0.060	***
	SER2	0.898	0.056	***
	PCS1	0.852	0.040	***
	PCS5	0.912	0.030	***
	ORG2	0.903	0.031	***
	ORG3	0.890	0.031	***
	ORG5	0.881	0.035	***
TDI	INT2	0.600	0.068	***
	INT3	0.878	0.026	***
	INT5	0.860	0.035	***
	REV1	0.936	0.027	***
	REV2	0.895	0.028	***

The re-specified model in Figure 4.3 reveals that the model has explained the variances across all endogenous variables. Specifically, Table 4.7 below shows that the two variables of exogenous variables, HC and PV, explained 79.3% of the total variance in IP. Meanwhile, HC, PV, and IP have explained 84.4% of the total variance in TDI.

Table 4.7
Squared Multiple Correlation (SMC)

Endogenous Variables	Squared Multiple Correlations	Explanation
IP	79.3%	HC and PV significantly supported IP by 0.793 of

		variance.
TDI	84.4%	HC, PV, and IP significantly supported TDI with by 0.844 of variance.

The goodness-of-fit indices that have been discussed from the re-specified model have indicated a significant criterion suggested by Schumacker and Lomax (1996), Kline (1998), and Hair et al. (2019) were met. To recap the justification, theoretically, SMC is an indicator to assess the exogenous and endogenous variables in the model. Based on the value assessed, the researcher may develop a suggestive discussion and recommendation for future research (Awang et al., 2018). Furthermore, Hair et al. (2019) mentioned the Goodness-of-Fit reading below 0.90, which falls at 0.838, as the common threshold that must be above 0.90 to be acceptable. The complexity of the model attribute and the large sample size may affect the value distribution. Hair et al. (2019) and Kline (2016) suggested complementary indices that need to be referred to such as CFI and TLI, must be above 0.90, and RMSEA must indicate a good fit below 0.08. Table 4.8 below summarises the model-of-fit for the model in detail:

Table 4.8
Summary of Goodness-of-fit Statistics of Re-Specified Model for HC, PV, IP, and TDI

Indicators	Value
CMIN (χ^2)	2117.907
DF	414
CMIN/DF	5.115
P	0.000
GFI	0.838
TLI	0.909
CFI	0.919
RMSEA	0.079

To summarise the journey of goodness-of-fit from the beginning of the SEM, AMOS, of CFA, Table 4.9 below shows the development of the process. The structural model testing has passed the criterion mentioned, even though the value of GFI is reported

below 0.08 for the re-specified model. Figure 4.3 of the re-specified model that has been discussed confirms that the final hypothesised model is re-specified.

Table 4.9
Summary of the Goodness-of-fit of the Structural Model

Indicators	HC	PV	IP	TDI	Generated Model	Re-Specified Model
CMIN (χ^2)	102.783	702.481	588.102	134.177	10700.621	2117.907
DF	22	138	115	27	1466	414
CMIN/DF	4.671	5.090	5.113	4.969	7.299	5.115
P	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
GFI	0.967	0.905	0.909	0.959	0.618	0.838
TLI	0.977	0.943	0.953	0.968	0.786	0.909
CFI	0.986	0.954	0.965	0.981	0.796	0.919
RMSEA	0.075	0.079	0.079	0.078	0.098	0.079

4.7 Descriptive Statistics, Discriminant Validity, and Average Variance Extracted of Re-Specified Model

4.7.1 Descriptive Statistics of Variables

In this sub-topic, descriptive statistics were employed to measure the percentage of variance after the procedure for re-specified model (Ariffin, 2013) and also to analyse the mean and standard deviation of endogenous and exogenous variables. Table 4.10 shows the mean value for Human Capital with M=8.704; SD=1.279, Perceived Value with M=8.903; SD=1.063, Innovation Practices with M=8.734; SD=1.329, and Tourist Destination Image with M=9.004; SD=1.049. Based on the mean analysis that has been reported, TDI has the highest score of meanwhile HC has the lowest level of mean variable.

Table 4.10
Mean of Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	No. of Final Items
Human Capital	8.704	1.279	8
Perceived Value	8.903	1.063	11
Innovation Practices	8.734	1.329	7
Tourist Destination Image	9.004	1.049	5

4.7.2 Discriminant Validity

Hair et al. (2019) defined discriminant validity as the differentiation between one construct with another construct. In the SEM procedure, discriminant validity can be applied to validate the statistical model that has been developed by using a few steps. One of the steps mentioned is using average variance extracted (AVE) as elaborated in the previous chapter. In addition, this analysis is important to assess the variance between latent variables, whether it is shared by other items or represented by other items. Hair et al. (2019) discussed the AVE, where the value of the variance extracted must be bigger than the squared multiple correlations (SMC). This statement has been widely used from the beginning by Fornell and Larcker (1981) in providing an essential perspective on the discriminant validity. Based on their suggestion, AVE is one of the important parts in handling the assessment of discriminant validity, which can validate the goodness-of-fit of the structural model.

4.7.3 Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Referring to the Fornell and Larcker (1981) test of composite reliability and average variance extracted, the acceptable value for composite reliability is above 0.7 (>0.70) while average variance extracted remarked the acceptable threshold above 0.5 (>0.50). This has been highlighted as well by Hair et al. (2019) as it provides supporting detail for discriminant validity. Table 4.11 below indicates the value of composite reliability and variance extracted from both exogenous and endogenous variables:

Table 4.11

Summary of Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

Variables	No. of Final Items	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Variance Extracted
Human Capital	8	0.876	0.942	0.779
Perceived Value	11	0.933	0.928	0.778
Innovation Practices	7	0.911	0.948	0.773
Tourist Destination Image	5	0.838	0.891	0.723

The composite reliability and variance extracted have been reported based on the suggestion by Hair et al. (2019) and Fornell and Larcker (1981), which Table 4.11 presented the value. It shows the value from both exogenous and endogenous variables, which indicates an acceptable threshold. These results support the internal consistency and convergent validity of the measurement model.

Tables 4.12 and 4.13 depict the result values of each of the variables' correlation squared obtained from the structural model. The table below indicates the AVE values in proving the discriminant validity of all observed constructs. Fornell and Larcker (1981) mentioned in their study on the AVE that it should be more than the correlation squared for both constructs to be accepted in discriminant validity. The values below were deployed as the procedure to preview the acceptable quality in the validity. Each of the values was found exceeded the correlation squared, and the discriminant validity was supported and indicating the absence of multicollinearity:

Table 4.12

Results of Calculated of Variables Correlation Squared

Variables	HC	PV	IP	TDI
HC	1.000			
PV	0.493	1.000		
IP	0.469	0.623	1.000	
TDI	0.354	0.581	0.588	1.000

*Values on the diagonal = 1 (Construct correlated with itself)

*Off-diagonal values = r^2 = shared variance between constructs

Table 4.13

Average Variance Extracted

Variables	HC	PV	IP	TDI
HC	0.883			
PV	0.702	0.882		
IP	0.685	0.789	0.879	
TDI	0.595	0.762	0.767	0.850

***Bold** diagonal values = $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ *If diagonal > any value in same row/column → **discriminant validity is supported**

Based on the results from both tables, all constructs revealed acceptable discriminant validity. The greater value from AVE is an indicator of the shared variance with other constructs. For instance, the value from Table 4.12 shows the shared variance between two constructs with diagonal values that represent a perfectly correlated construct (Hair et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Table 4.13 indicates the diagonal values that represent the square roots of the average variance extracted (AVE). Each of the values represents the amount of variance from its own indicators. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity can be assessed if the AVE of a construct is greater than its correlations. In this case, Table 4.13 explains the correlations for every other construct, as the bold values represent good discriminant validity. All correlations were lower than the bold values. Since the AVE for each construct has a larger value than other correlations, it can be concluded that the existence of discriminant validity for all constructs, HC, PV, IP, and TDI.

4.8 Results of Hypotheses Testing

In the early phase of the analysis, the current study used a comprehensive two-stage analysis that has been suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). The first stage of the study employed the confirmatory factor analysis, with the objective was to confirming the measurement model. Then, after the measurement model has been confirmed, the second stage was to provide a better assessment by using structural equation modelling to analyse the performance of both exogenous and endogenous variables by referring to the acceptable goodness-of-fit of the hypothesised model. In addition, these two stages specify the relationship between the observed measures with underlying constructs and provide a confirmatory assessment during construct validity

(Bentler, 1978). Then, the structural model began to test the causal relationships among the constructs by applying the theory from Anderson et al. (2024). The analysis for each of the dimensions was carried out to confirm the construct of HC, PV, IP, and TDI. In this sub-section, the empirical evidence on the measurement analysis was justified based on the stated dimension. All relationships from the hypotheses were analysed based on the results from the SEM analysis.

4.8.1 Hypothesis 1: HC has a Significant Positive Relationship with IP

Table 4.14 below indicates the results of path analysis between endogenous and exogenous variables of HC and IP. Based on the results, it can be concluded that the relationship between HC and IP is positive ($\beta=0.127$) but not statistically significant at p-value ($P<0.05$), which can be asserted ($P>0.102$). Hence, hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Table 4.14
HC has a Significant Positive Relationship on IP

Exogenous	Endogenous	Std. Estimate	Std. Error	CR	SMC	P	Status of Hypothesis
HC	IP	0.127	0.094	1.637	0.793	0.102	Not Significant

4.8.2 Hypothesis 2: PV has a Significant Positive Relationship with IP

Hypothesis 2 between the second variable, which is PV, indicates the path analysis between the variables of both exogenous and endogenous variables of PV and IP. The table showed a significant result for PV and IP ($\beta=0.779$; $P=0.000$). The indicators for the analysis represent a satisfactory or significant relationship between both PV and IP. Hence, Table 4.15 below summarised the results:

Table 4.15
PV has a Significant Positive Relationship on IP

Exogenous	Endogenous	Std. Estimate	Std. Error	CR	SMC	P	Status of Hypothesis
PV	IP	0.779	0.130	8.588	0.793	***	Significant

4.8.3 Hypothesis 3: IP has a Significant Positive Relationship with TDI

The path analysis for IP and TDI was due to the interpretation of the significant status of the hypothesis, where the results show a positive result ($\beta=0.321$; $P=0.000$). Table 4.16 below shows the indicators involved in the process:

Table 4.16

IP has a Significant Positive Relationship on TDI

Exogenous	Endogenous	Std. Estimate	Std. Error	CR	SMC	P	Status of Hypothesis
IP	TDI	0.321	0.075	4.016	0.844	***	Significant

4.8.4 Hypothesis 4: HC has a Significant Positive Relationship with TDI

Hypothesis 4 indicates the hypothesised path, which involved HC and TDI, whereby the analysis provided an unsupported value for standard estimate but acceptable value for p-value ($P<0.05$) ($\beta = -0.189$; $P = 0.016$). The negative indicator hints at the non-significant relationship between HC and TDI; hence, hypothesis 4 was significant but negative. Table 4.17 summarises the values:

Table 4.17

HC has a Significant Positive Relationship on TDI

Exogenous	Endogenous	Std. Estimate	Std. Error	CR	SMC	P	Status of Hypothesis
HC	TDI	-0.189	0.090	-2.400	0.844	0.016	Significant

4.8.5 Hypothesis 5: PV has a Significant Positive Relationship with TDI

The significant relationship between PV and TDI is shown in the analysis, whereby hypothesis 5 provides a useful value for the relationship between both constructs. The analysis then concluded with significance, as $\beta = 0.783$ and $P = 0.000$. Table 4.18 below provides a summary of the analysis:

Table 4.18

PV has a Significant Positive Relationship on TDI

Exogenous	Endogenous	Std. Estimate	Std. Error	CR	SMC	P	Status of Hypothesis
PV	TDI	0.783	0.170	6.197	0.844	***	Significant

4.8.6 Hypothesis 6(a): IP Mediates the Relationship Between HC and TDI

This sub-section revealed the indicators in the mediating variables by using path analysis. After a careful estimation of the analysis, there were uncertain values obtained from the indirect effect of HC and IP, a significant negative value from the indirect effect of IP and TDI, and a significant assessment from the direct effect of HC and TDI. Table 4.18 below shows all indicators that have been assessed; however, the uncertain value of HC and IP provides an insignificant status for the hypothesis to be asserted. Hence, hypothesis 6(a) was rejected or can be concluded as no mediation:

Table 4.19

IP Mediates the Relationship Between HC and TDI

Path	Std. Estimate	Std. Error	CR	P	Status of Hypothesis
HC → IP	0.127	0.094	1.637	0.102	Not Significant
IP → TDI	0.321	0.075	4.016	***	Significant
HC → TDI (Direct)	-0.189	0.090	-2.400	0.016	Significant

4.8.7 Hypothesis 6(b): IP Mediates the Relationship Between PV and TDI

In the analysis of the final hypothesis to get the full conceptual understanding of the mediation effect of IP, the indicators show the mediating variables by using path analysis. A constructive analysis has been used to get the value from the mediation of IP on PV and TDI. The result shows the indirect effect of PV and IP, and the indirect effect of IP and TDI. The indirect effect of PV and TDI was also being assessed to get the whole perspective on the path analysis. IP acts as a partial mediator suggesting that while innovation enhances the image, the value of the food experience itself still carries significant direct weight. IP acts as a bridge between PV and TDI which explains the significant status of hypothesis for the path analysis. Hence, IP explained the effect of PV and TDI as a mediating variable. Table 4.20 below interprets the analysis:

Table 4.20
IP Mediates the Relationship Between PV and TDI

Path	Std. Estimate	Std. Error	CR	P	Status of Hypothesis
PV → IP	0.779	0.130	8.588	***	Significant
IP → TDI	0.321	0.075	4.016	***	Partial Mediation
PV → TDI (Direct)	0.783	0.170	6.197	***	Significant

4.8.8 Summarisation of Hypotheses Results

After a thorough analysis of the hypotheses projected by the study, it can be concluded that two hypotheses were insignificant to the study. Path analysis on both exogenous and endogenous variables has concluded all hypotheses and asserted four hypotheses. Table 4.21 below showcases the summarisation of hypotheses results that have been concluded:

Table 4.21
Summarisation of Hypotheses Results

Hypotheses	Results
H1: HC has a significant relationship on IP	Rejected
H2: PV has a significant relationship on IP	Accepted
H3: IP has a significant relationship on TDI	Accepted
H4: HC has a significant relationship on TDI	Accepted
H5: PV has a significant relationship on TDI	Accepted
H6(a): IP mediates the relationship between HC and TDI	Rejected
H6(b): IP mediates the relationship between PV and TDI	Accepted

In this current study, the mediator had to be assessed by referring to the recommendation using the method applied by Baron and Kenny (1986), which involves the first step needed in the analysis is to assess the independent variables, HC and PV. The step used will reflect the statistical significance of the mediator variable (IP). They then added, the second stage of the analysis should assess the mediator variable that should impose a significant effect on the dependent variable (TDI). The procedure used can extend the significant effect on the independent and dependent variables. In simpler terms, mediation will be present when the independent variable cannot influence the dependent variable, and the dependent variable has full control over the conditions listed by Baron and Kenny (1986).

The process was then elaborated when the entire effect of the independent and dependent variables is channelled by the mediator, or known as full mediation. Meanwhile, the process of the mediator only explains a part of the variables of effect of the independent and dependent variables is known as partial mediation. However, the analysis showed no mediation for the said mediator (HC), where the mediating factor was not supported by the hypothesis (Hypothesis 6(a)) as the indirect path provided insignificant status. Consistent with the justification of the mediation, it only occurs when both paths from independent and dependent variables to the mediator and from the mediator to the outcome are significant (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Hence, an elaboration on the insignificant hypotheses would be necessary, as it could configure the future study. The elaboration on the topic will be discussed in Chapter 5 under Summary, Implications, and Future Research.

4.8.9 Hypothesis 7: Skills and Cultural Competence are the Dimensions of HC

4.8.9.1 Hypothesis 7(a): Skills is a Dimension of HC

Based on Table 4.22, the results of path analysis indicated a significant positive relationship between HC and Skills ($\beta = 0.817$; $P = 0.000$). It can be concluded that hypothesis 7(a) was accepted as the analysis of the construct on Skills as the dimension of HC was confirmed.

Table 4.22
Skills is a Dimension of HC

Variable	Dimension	Std Regression Weight (β)	Items	Std Regression Weight (λ)	P	Status of Hypothesis
HC	Skills	0.817	SKI1	0.810	***	Asserted
			SKI2	0.891	***	Asserted
			SKI3	0.834	***	Asserted
			SKI4	0.835	***	Asserted
			SKI5	0.865	***	Asserted

4.8.9.2 Hypothesis 7(b): Cultural Competence is a Dimension of HC

Table 4.23 below indicates the overall assessment of cultural competence as a dimension of HC. It provides a significant positive relationship between the variables ($\beta = 0.938$; $P = 0.000$). Hence, the result from the analysis was confirmed:

Table 4.23
Cultural Competence is a Dimension of HC

Variable	Dimension	Std Regression Weight (β)	Items	Std Regression Weight (λ)	P	Status of Hypothesis
HC	Cultural Competence	0.938	CUL1	0.913	***	Asserted
			CUL2	0.913	***	Asserted
			CUL3	0.926	***	Asserted

4.8.10 Hypothesis 8: Social Value, Emotional Value, Functional Value, and Monetary Value are the Dimensions of PV

4.8.10.1 Hypothesis 8(a): Social Value is a Dimension of PV

Hypothesis 8(a) explained the significant relationship of the social value dimension. It provides a significant positive relationship between the variables ($\beta = 0.800$; $P = 0.000$). Table 4.24 below shows the result from the analysis:

Table 4.24
Social Value is a Dimension of PV

Variable	Dimension	Std	Items	Std	P	Status of Hypothesis
		Regression Weight (β)		Regression Weight (λ)		
PV	Social Value	0.800	SOC1	0.735	***	Asserted
			SOC2	0.925	***	Asserted
			SOC3	0.950	***	Asserted

4.8.10.2 Hypothesis 8(b): Emotional Value is a Dimension of PV

Table 4.25 indicates the result of path analysis between PV and Emotional Value ($\beta = 0.642$; $P = 0.000$). In conclusion, the analysis confirmed emotional value as the dimension of PV.

Table 4.25
Emotional Value is a Dimension of PV

Variable	Dimension	Std	Items	Std	P	Status of Hypothesis
		Regression Weight (β)		Regression Weight (λ)		
PV	Emotional Value	0.642	EMO2	0.818	***	Asserted
			EMO3	0.912	***	Asserted
			EMO4	0.844	***	Asserted

4.8.10.3 Hypothesis 8(c): Functional Value is a Dimension of PV

Table 4.26 indicates the result of path analysis between PV and Functional Value ($\beta = 0.861$; $P = 0.000$). In conclusion, the analysis confirmed functional value as the dimension of PV.

Table 4.26
Functional Value is a Dimension of PV

Variable	Dimension	Std	Items	Std	P	Status of Hypothesis
		Regression Weight (β)		Regression Weight (λ)		
PV	Functional	0.861	FUN1	0.917	***	Asserted

Value	FUN2	0.834	***	Asserted
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4.8.10.4 Hypothesis 8(d): Monetary Value is a Dimension of PV

Table 4.27 indicates the result of path analysis between PV and Monetary Value ($\beta = 0.830$; $P = 0.000$). In conclusion, the analysis confirmed monetary value as the dimension of PV.

Table 4.27
Monetary Value is a Dimension of PV

Variable	Dimension	Std	Items	Std	P	Status of Hypothesis
		Regression Weight (β)		Regression Weight (λ)		
PV	Monetary Value	0.830	MON3	0.886	***	Asserted
			MON4	0.942	***	Asserted
			MON5	0.939	***	Asserted

4.8.11 Hypothesis 9: Product Innovation, Service Innovation, Process Innovation, Organisational Innovation, Marketing Innovation are the Dimensions of IP

4.8.11.1 Hypothesis 9(a): Service Innovation is a Dimension of IP

Table 4.28 indicates the result of path analysis between IP and Service Innovation ($\beta = 0.907$; $P = 0.000$). In conclusion, the analysis confirmed service innovation as the dimension of IP.

Table 4.28
Service Innovation is a Dimension of IP

Variable	Dimension	Std	Items	Std	P	Status of Hypothesis
		Regression Weight (β)		Regression Weight (λ)		
IP	Service Innovation	0.907	SER1	0.830	***	Asserted
			SER2	0.898	***	Asserted

4.8.11.2 Hypothesis 9(b): Process Innovation is a Dimension of IP

Table 4.29 indicates the result of path analysis between IP and Process Innovation ($\beta = 0.990$; $P = 0.000$). In conclusion, the analysis confirmed process innovation as the dimension of IP.

Table 4.29
Process Innovation is a Dimension of IP

Variable	Dimension	Std	Items	Std	P	Status of Hypothesis
		Regression Weight (β)		Regression Weight (λ)		
IP	Process	0.990	PCS1	0.852	***	Asserted
	Innovation		PCS5	0.912	***	Asserted

4.8.11.3 Hypothesis 9(c): Organisational Innovation is a Dimension of IP

Table 4.30 indicates the result of path analysis between IP and Organisational Innovation ($\beta = 0.978$; $P = 0.000$). In conclusion, the analysis confirmed organisational innovation as the dimension of IP.

Table 4.30
Organisational Innovation is a Dimension of IP

Variable	Dimension	Std	Items	Std	P	Status of Hypothesis
		Regression Weight (β)		Regression Weight (λ)		
IP	Organisational Innovation	0.978	ORG2	0.903	***	Asserted
			ORG3	0.890	***	Asserted
			ORG5	0.881	***	Asserted

4.8.12 Hypothesis 10: Intention to Travel and Revisit Intention are the Dimensions of TDI

4.8.12.1 Hypothesis 10(a): Intention to Travel is a Dimension of TDI

Table 4.31 indicates the result of path analysis between TDI and Intention to Travel ($\beta = 0.998$; $P = 0.000$). In conclusion, the analysis confirmed intention to travel as the

dimension of TDI.

Table 4.31
Intention to Travel is a Dimension of TDI

Variable	Dimension	Std	Items	Std	P	Status of Hypothesis
		Regression Weight (β)		Regression Weight (λ)		
TDI	Intention to Travel	0.998	INT2	0.600	***	Asserted
			INT3	0.878	***	Asserted
			INT5	0.860	***	Asserted

4.8.12.2 Hypothesis 10(b): Revisit Intention is a Dimension of TDI

Table 4.32 indicates the result of path analysis between TDI and Revisit Intention ($\beta = 0.838$; $P = 0.000$). In conclusion, the analysis confirmed revisit intention as the dimension of TDI.

Table 4.32
Revisit Intention is a Dimension of TDI

Variable	Dimension	Std	Items	Std	P	Status of Hypothesis
		Regression Weight (β)		Regression Weight (λ)		
TDI	Revisit Intention	0.838	REV1	0.936	***	Asserted
			REV2	0.895	***	Asserted

4.9 Chapter Summary

Overall assessment of this chapter confirmed the results from the hypothesised model by using the suggested procedure based on the SEM illustration and explanation. The overall discussion on the results has a significant contribution to be interpreted in the next chapter. A reflection on the goodness-of-fit can be observed through the fit indices, which are known as GFI, TLI, CFI, and RMSEA. This chapter also exercises on the overall conclusion of the CFA contribution from the previous chapter. It reflected on how the analysis was deposited in the context of full model and re-specified model development. After a thorough analysis of the model, the researcher found that there were two hypotheses that need to be rejected due to the negative value in the estimation

and the P-value exceeding the acceptable threshold. HC was reported as insignificant to the hypotheses; however, it has a huge gap that can be discussed in the next chapter. On top of that, the discussion will cover the significant contribution of asserted hypotheses to the theoretical implications and practicality. These results are crucial for the researcher to have an overall perspective on the study, which can be summarised in the next chapter. Therefore, the next chapter will be the continuation of the results to be discussed in a critical manner so that the impactful meaning can be discovered.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, FUTURE RESEARCH, AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Preamble

This chapter will discuss the findings from the proposed model of Human Capital (HC), Perceived Value (PV), Innovation Practices (IP), and Tourist Destination Image (TDI). This chapter will discuss the empirical results that have been reported in Chapter 4 and the evidence and justification from the scholars' view. Relatively, under section 5.2, the discussion will focus on the research objectives and research questions. Furthermore, section 5.3 will cover the contribution of the study, which discusses the theoretical and practical contributions. Then, section 5.4 outlines the limitations of the process and indicates the crucial directions for future research. Finally, section 5.5 provides conclusions based on the discussion in this chapter.

5.2 Discussions and Findings

Specifically, the discussion and findings in this current study revolve around the research objectives and hypotheses that have been emphasised. The study, methodology, and analysis brought insight into the possibility and perspective toward tourist destination image in the context of Malaysian food tourism. This research has identified its objectives earlier to investigate the relationship between HC, PV, IP, and TDI. Consequently, this research has addressed several research questions based on the study in the context of food tourism in Malaysia:

- i. What is the relationship between HC and IP?
- ii. What is the relationship between PV and IP?
- iii. What is the relationship between IP and TDI?
- iv. What is the relationship between HC and TDI?
- v. What is the relationship between PV and TDI?
- vi. Is there any significant mediating effect on TDI?
 - a). To what extent does IP mediate the relationship between HC and TDI?

b). To what extent does IP mediate the relationship between PV and TDI?

The detailed discussions on how these empirical results provide answers to the research questions are elaborated in the following sub-topics:

5.2.1 Research Objective 1: To Investigate the Relationship Between HC and IP

The overall result for research objective 1 has indicated that HC does not have a significant direct relationship with IP in the context of food tourism in Malaysia with the value estimation ($\beta = 0.127$, $p > 0.05$). Human capital theory (Becker, 1996; Schultz, 1961; Nafukho et al., 2004), posits that individuals with strong skills, education, knowledge, and cultural competence contribute significantly to innovation which they have the right factor for the development. However, based on the results of this current study shows how insignificant HC was to IP. This remarks the suggestion that HC did not fully apply in informal or semi-structured tourism sectors, especially in the food tourism sector. To support the statement, Jotabá et al. (2021) and Song et al. (2013) found that innovation in tourism enterprises is mostly driven by external factors, which include technological access and customer expectations, rather than internal factors.

According to RBV, human capital is considered a strategic resource capable of enhancing organizational capabilities and innovation outcomes (Barney, 1991; Wright et al., 2001). The non-significant finding suggests that innovation practices in Malaysian food tourism may not be primarily driven by individual employee competencies. Food tourism is deeply embedded in cultural traditions and inherited culinary knowledge, where innovation is often incremental and tradition-preserving rather than skill-intensive (Giamporcaro et al., 2025; Som et al., 2020). Therefore, while RBV predicts a positive relationship, the findings suggest that the strategic role of human capital in fostering innovation may be an important context in tourist sectors.

Food operators are relying heavily on tradition, heritage, culture, and custom rather than on formal innovation planning (Raji et al., 2017; Som et al., 2020). This may explain why the result of HC was not statistically significant on IP in this current study. Based on the rejection of the hypothesis, it can be concluded that the efforts to improve the relationship of HC on IP may not require solely skills and cultural competence, but the process of structural procedure and market-based intervention from authorities is

needed. In a simpler understanding, in the context of food tourism in Malaysia, innovation can be fostered by a good structural organisation (Hjalager, 2010), which involves strong financial ability, technological support and processes. It is not aiming for the individual, but it is for the organisation to capture (Gretzel et al., 2015). Hence, it was insignificant when the food tourism in Malaysia is mostly operated by small business entities that preserve authenticity, traditional culture, and heritage, the organisational structure claimed by the previous scholars become insignificant.

5.2.2 Research Objective 2: To Investigate the Relationship Between PV and IP

The result for PV and IP shows a very strong, significant relationship as the analysis revealed a significant positive indicator between PV and IP ($\beta = 0.779$, $p < .001$). The indication may have several implications in suggesting that tourists' perception of value might include social, emotional, functional, and monetary values. It also gives a very strong suggestion that these values are strong predictors of innovation efforts in the food tourism sector in Malaysia. Zeithaml (1988) believed that the theory of perceived value has the potential to revise the whole hypothesis as it posits consumers' expectations of higher value in the experience of services. The business showcases the effective innovation practices to meet customer expectations and to experience the taste and services. John and Supramaniam (2024) suggested that tourism providers or technological used such as social media often enhance service quality, including in finding a better food destination in Malaysia, as tourists craved for a traditional and authentic experience. In Malaysia's food tourism context, innovation is included in food presentation, service delivery, and storytelling culture that provides an extra unique value to the culture (Selamat et al., 2025).

5.2.3 Research Objective 3: To Investigate the Relationship Between IP and TDI

After a thorough discussion and statistical analysis, the study found a significant relationship between IP and TDI with the value $\beta = 0.321$, $p < .001$. The result implies a very useful implication on the perspective of IP in innovative efforts, including service innovation, process innovation, and organisational innovation. However, as the previous statement on the deletion of two dimensions of IP (product innovation and

marketing innovation), it stems from the statement on the food tourism sector in Malaysia, it differs from other regions' food tourism sectors as it is more towards preserving traditional, authentic, and cultural (Ellis et al., 2018). They elaborated on the factors which concluded that tourist travel to Malaysia to experience the uniqueness of the taste that has been preserved for decades; however, the innovativeness of the product is more towards business structure, which produces food products in bulk, such as packaged foods, fermented foods or any other related foods. Meanwhile, the decision to delete the marketing innovation dimension is that tourists is not directly involved in innovative ideas as they travel to experience the tangible and intangible quality in the destination (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016). Marketing innovation should only be involved by the business organisation, such as branding and promotional campaigns. Based on the theory of destination image, which provides an insight from motivation theory, experiential elements such as novelty and service uniqueness are two factors that are commonly discussed on how destinations are perceived (Sthapit et al., 2021; van Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011). Hjalager (2010) also indicated that innovation may provide a strategy to strengthen the culture in food-related experiences. By referring to Malaysia, the food tourism sector is the main core for tourism industry expansion as it shapes memorable experiences and positive impressions in tourists' minds.

5.2.4 Research Objective 4: To Investigate the Relationship Between HC and TDI

Although the investigation on the relationship between HC and TDI showcases a statistically significant negative direction in the value indicates a weak level of the relationship between HC and TDI ($\beta = -0.189$, $p = 0.016$). This suggests that higher levels of perceived human capital are associated with lower evaluations of destination image within the Malaysian food tourism context. Based on the human capital theory (Becker, 1993), he suggested that individuals with strong factors such as skills, knowledge, competency, and education will contribute more to the progress of the organisation, including destination branding. One possible explanation lies in the culturally embedded nature of food tourism, where authenticity and heritage related with the primary drivers of destination appeal (Som et al., 2020). Tourists seeking traditional culinary experiences that value informal and locally served by the

interaction. In such contexts, upraised perceptions of human capital may signal commercialization or modernization, which could weaken the authenticity of the experience. Furthermore, destination image in food tourism is often constructed around cultural elements rather than employee competencies (Tapia et al., 2017). Thus, the negative association may indicate that the strategic importance of human capital works differently in heritage destinations. These findings do not invalidate the RBV, it is rather, suggest that its assumptions regarding the universal positive value of human capital may require contextual refinement in culturally intensive tourism settings.

However, in the food tourism context, especially in informal settings, the image of the destinations is probably shaped by cultural image, environment, and authenticity that have been preserved for decades. Akgunduz et al. (2018) mentioned that destination perception could not integrate just with human capital (workforce) but is often experienced-driven, especially in the food tourism sector. Hence, the relationship between HC and TDI is insignificant because of these factors that revolve within the organisation and tourists are not influenced by the factors.

5.2.5 Research Objective 5: To Investigate the Relationship Between PV and TDI

The results show the positive relationship between PV and TDI based on the significant value that has been reported during statistical analysis. PV has a strong indication and impact on TDI with a value of ($\beta = 0.783$, $p < .001$). This is consistent with the customer-perceived value theory (Zauner et al., 2015; Zeithaml, 1988), which argues that perceived value may influence customers' behaviours and perceptions. Tourists who find a connection and relation between social, emotional, functional, and monetary values in a destination will leave a positive perception of the destination's image. Empirical studies confirmed that whenever tourists perceived high value of experience in terms of food, service, cultural, and authenticity, they are more favourable to that particular destination (Pike & Ryan, 2004; Chen & Tsai, 2007). In the context of food tourism in Malaysia, the diverse cuisine with cultural diversity and affordability has made a significant impact on the perceived value. Furthermore, emotional satisfaction after tasting the long-rooted history of traditional cuisines in Malaysia likely contributed to the strong influence of PV on TDI.

5.2.6 Research Objective 6(a): To Test the Mediating Effect of IP on HC and TDI

In relation with other contribution, the results indicate that IP do not mediate the relationship between HC and TDI as the value received after statistical analysis of IP on HC and TDI was not significant ($\beta = 0.127$, $p > 0.05$). The result from the analysis can be interpreted as no mediation effect, whether partial or full mediation. Based on the previous scholar, for mediation to occur, the independent variable must significantly influence the mediator (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This is aligned with the findings from Song et al. (2014), where they discovered perceived value happens only within the informal tourism settings and does not involve human capital, as it involves formal or workforce capability. In addition, previous sub-sections have mentioned the insignificance of HC towards other variables in the context of food tourism in Malaysia, as the food sector in Malaysia is more in informal settings, and the focus area is towards authenticity and traditional value. Therefore, IP could not serve as a bridge of mediation between both HC and TDI in this context.

5.2.7 Research Objective 6(b): To Test the Mediating Effect of IP on PV and TDI

From the results, the findings of objective 6(b) can be interpreted as partial mediation. This is referring to the mediation effect of IP between PV and TDI, where the condition of the mediator being recognised as the mediator is where both direct and indirect paths are significant (Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2010). Based on the significant result, it can be interpreted that tourist's perceived value influences businesses to evolve and innovate, and by practising innovation, it would turn the contribution in shaping the overall image of the destination. Lee et al. (2016) have similar results on the effect, where the study on tourism entrepreneurship makes use of perceived value and affects innovation. The impact of perceived value seems strong, which enhances satisfaction and image perception. In the current study, IP is a bridge and the pathway through which PV could enhance TDI.

5.2.8 Research Objective 7: To Identify the Dimension of HC in the context of Food Tourism in Malaysia

Hypothesis 7(a): Skill is a Dimension of HC

Hypothesis 7(b): Cultural Competence is a Dimension of HC

From the beginning of the statistical analysis procedure, the results have provided a preview of the dimension of HC. The analysis confirmed that skill and cultural competence are significant for HC in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. After the analysis, both dimensions have projected high factor loadings ($>.80$), strong composite reliability (>0.70), and satisfactory AVE (>0.50). These values resemble the presence of convergent validity as stated by Kline (2016) and Garver and Mentzer (1999). By referring to the human capital theory (Becker, 1996), the values indicated that the dimensions are aligned with what the theory posits, where skillsets and cultural awareness as important elements in service-oriented sectors such as tourism. Technically, skilled employees in the food sector may contribute to high-quality cuisine, hygiene, and customer satisfaction (Wong & Ladkin, 2008). Meanwhile, cultural competence provides an interaction between tourists and the food sector, which enables differences in diverse backgrounds and enhances their experience. Recent studies on human capital suggested that both competency and entrepreneurial elements significantly influence innovation performance in the tourism and hospitality industry. Therefore, the elements; skill and cultural competence, are confirmed as the dimensions of HC.

5.2.9 Research Objective 8: To Identify the Dimension of PV in the context of Food Tourism in Malaysia

Hypothesis 8(a): Social Value is a Dimension of PV

Hypothesis 8(b): Emotional Value is a Dimension of PV

Hypothesis 8(c): Functional Value is a Dimension of PV

Hypothesis 8(d): Monetary Value is a Dimension of PV

Based on the statistical analysis that has been conducted, all four dimensions of PV were validated. Referring to the analysis, the standardised loadings for all dimensions exceeded 0.70, with CR and AVE within the acceptable thresholds. This indicates that the dimension is very important to PV. These results support the statement by Sweeney and Soutar (2001) whereby projected the PV as a multidimensional construct, which captures all values from the tourists, social value, emotional value, functional value, and monetary value. In the sector of food tourism in Malaysia, travellers tend to feel an unconditional experience of tasting local food and its heritage. The travellers derive their emotion, social bonding, practical utility as functional value, and price affordability in experiencing traditional cuisine in Malaysia (Jaafar et al., 2022). For example, local food in Malaysia is rich with cultural interaction and memory creation, where it comes from the value in experiencing local food sampling or street food adventures that are affordable. This may lead to the perception and acceptance, as well as revisit intention in the future, as the value creation contributes to the experience. Recent studies found that social value, emotional value, functional value, and monetary value are significantly impactful on the tourists' destination image and revisit intention (Qiu et al., 2024), particularly in the context of food tourism in Malaysia.

5.2.10 Research Objective 9: To Identify the Dimension of IP in the context of Food Tourism in Malaysia

Hypothesis 9(a): Service Innovation is a Dimension of IP

Hypothesis 9(b): Process Innovation is a Dimension of IP

Hypothesis 9(c): Organisational Innovation is a Dimension of IP

The earlier result suggested that product and marketing innovation were rejected due to tourists' preference for traditional and authentic food experiences. However, this interpretation requires further explanation. Product innovation in contemporary tourism does not exclusively refer to altering traditional recipes or modifying core culinary elements. It may also encompass halal-friendly certification, improved hygiene standards, packaging enhancement, and branding refinement (Som et al., 2020). Authenticity literature indicates that tourists seek cultural value in culinary experiences (MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999; Timothy, 2013). The findings confirmed the

dimension of IP, with only three dimensions remaining. This is due to the evidence from statistical analysis, whereby the deletion of the two dimensions is necessary to get strong factor loadings and fit indices (Garver & Mentzer, 2009; Hair et al., 2006). The original model included product innovation and marketing innovation; however, due to the poor empirical support, these two dimensions need to be deleted from the construct. The removal aligned with the context of food tourism in Malaysia, where innovation discussed is more operational rather than customer convenience (Bhuiyan et al., 2016). Tourists in Malaysia value the food preparation process and staff coordination to experience the real-time value rather than packaging or branding innovations. A recent study shows that service and experiential innovation would impact revisit intentions in tourism (Yeh et al., 2019; Lyu et al., 2023). Service innovation (Gallouj, 2002) emphasises that innovation in tourism often occurs in delivery procedure and customer interfaces rather than in tangible product transformation. These forms of innovation may enhance perceived value while preserving authenticity. This highlights the process and organisational process as effective strategies in innovation application. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted as a preference to preserve the authentic character of traditional cuisine, while remaining open to improvements that do not change its identity and value. Innovation that preserved cultural identity while improving service quality and accessibility may remain highly valued within Malaysian food tourism contexts.

5.2.11 Research Objective 10: To Identify the Dimension of TDI in the context of Food Tourism in Malaysia

Hypothesis 10(a): Intention to Travel is a Dimension of TDI

Hypothesis 10(b): Revisit Intention is a Dimension of TDI

This current study showcases the best representation of TDI, whereby two-outcome oriented have been proposed in the initial development of the study. After the study has operationalised, the analysis has indicated that two dimensions of TDI, intention to travel and revisit intention, are aligned with the theory of customer-perceived value (CPV) and motivation theory (Zauner et al., 2015; Zeithaml, 1988). The loadings recorded were high in value, CR (>0.70), and AVE (>0.50), resulting in

construct and dimension validation. Referring to the food tourism sector, the positive outcome from TDI came from memorable food experiences while visiting the destination. This has been a very strong indicator of the tourist's willingness to revisit the destination because of every factor possible, including food experience (Prayoga et al., 2023). This emotional attachment and behaviour make these two dimensions crucial for tourism branding and marketing strategies. A recent study indicated that food-related experience is one of the sources that significantly contribute to destination affection, which could enhance revisit intention (Li et al., 2023). Therefore, the dimensions of TDI are very important to the food tourism sector in Malaysia, as it is one of the aspects that could provide a strategy for improvement. Hence, the dimension, namely intention to travel and revisit intention, is confirmed as the dimension of TDI.

5.3 Contribution of the Study

This section will discuss the contributions of the study consists of two major elements: theoretical contribution and practical contribution. These contributions are believed as the most crucial for improvement in the context of the food tourism sector in Malaysia.

5.3.1 Theoretical Contributions

In the context of theoretical contribution, referring to the beginning of the study, this study contributes by proposing two independent variables: human capital and perceived value, a mediating variable: innovation practices, and a dependent variable: tourist destination image. The initial idea is that, when innovation practices provide a bridge between human capital and perceived value for tourist destination image, hence, the contribution to the development of the food tourism sector in Malaysia as the improvement is needed for the upcoming Visit Malaysia Year 2026 (VMY2026) and as a long-term factor. This will clearly benefit Malaysia's economy, as well as the local economy in terms of promoting traditional cuisine, with full of heritage, history, culture, and tradition. The structure of the initial proposal is consistent with the previous empirical evidence, which promoted the significant relationship between human capital and tourism development (Lombardi et al., 2021) and perceived value on destination

image (Reza Islamy et al., 2022). However, this current study focuses on tourist destination image, whereby it limited assessment and research on the topic of human capital, perceived value, innovation practices and tourist destination image in the context of food tourism in Malaysia.

Furthermore, the study on human capital, perceived value and innovation practices provide a significant result on tourist destination image improvement as it is the biggest factor for development. However, the analysis concluded that human capital is not significant and does not have any relationship, as it is more towards formal organisation and not for informal settings (Song et al., 2014). Furthermore, this study enhances the theory underpinnings within the setting, which RBV theory is the main theory (Barney, 1991; Peteraf, 1993; Wernerfelt, 1984), innovation theory (Hall, 2009; Hjalager, 2010; Varis & Littunen, 2010), motivation theory (Sthapit et al., 2021), and CPV theory (Zauner et al., 2015; Zeithaml, 1988). Moreover, this study provides a wide range of contributions, specifically in theoretical as it gives a new perspective on the significant improvement and development of the food tourism sector in Malaysia. As mentioned in the theoretical contribution and literature section, a limited study on a similar field in the context of food tourism in Malaysia should serve as a new perspective for the improvement and development. Therefore, the adoption of the previous studies linked up to fill in the gaps by the current study in analysing the relationship between HC, PV, IP and TDI as the novelty of this study related to the theoretical contributions after filling in all possible gaps as mentioned in the literature in chapters one and two. Sub-sections below will discuss on the contribution:

5.3.1.1 Expansion of Food Tourism Literature

Food tourism in Malaysia is one of the important sub-sectors that contributes more towards the economy and tourism development. As mentioned in the literature review in chapter two, there has been an important hike for the sector to expand as the world has recognized Malaysian food to be one of the best in the world (Sanip et al., 2021). Recent studies show that a comprehensive development has undertaken the view on Malaysia heritage cuisine and its identity (Ahmad Shariff et al., 2024). This has been an excellent momentum towards VMY2026 and for a long-term projection. The study on HC, PV, IP, and TDI directly adds to the growing literature on food tourism by

establishing a theoretical model, which analyses the specific relation of the multidimensional influence of HC, PV, and IP in shaping TDI. Although food tourism has been widely discussed in different dimensions such as destination branding (Qu et al., 2011; Ruiz-Real et al., 2020) and gastronomic appeal (Ibrahim et al., 2025), however, the integration between human capital and innovation dimensions remains limited in current literature. The model discussed offers a novel contribution to academic understanding as it serves as an understanding of how TDI will be influenced by the other factors. Therefore, based on the findings, the food tourism sector in Malaysia could flourish with the influence of other factors that may lead to the TDI and contribute to the development of the sector.

5.3.1.2 Validation of Multidimensional Construct

In the early stage of the analysis, HC, PV, IP have a reliable value on TDI, which can be seen as a positive implication for the model. The study has gone through the first phase of the analysis by measuring the reliability of each of the constructs; reliability test of Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, Skewness and Kurtosis, first-order of CFA, second-order of CFA, and SEM. All analyses have indicated a valid value for each of the dimension in the construct, hence, the skills and cultural competence validated as the dimension of HC, social value, emotional value, functional value, and monetary value as the dimension of PV, service innovation, process innovation, and organisational innovation as the dimension of IP, and intention to travel and revisit intention as the dimension of TDI. The analysis has confirmed that all dimensions contribute significantly and reliably to future research in similar cultural or regional tourism contexts.

However, through the analysis, the results have demonstrated a theoretical insight from insignificant relationships between constructs where HC is notably insignificant and does not have a direct relationship with IP and TDI, contradicting several assumptions from previous studies (Elsharnouby & Elbanna, 2021; Ambarwati et al., 2023). This finding is important as it suggests that human capital alone could not drive innovation and influence destination image directly in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. The non-significant mediating effect of innovation practices in the relationship between human capital and tourist destination image provides an important

theoretical implication. Mediation theory suggests that for an indirect effect to exist, the predictor must significantly influence the mediator (Baron & Kenny, 1986). However, the present findings reveal that human capital does not significantly predict innovation practices, hence, structurally weakening the mediation pathway. From a RBV perspective, human capital is expected to enhance organizational capabilities, which subsequently generate competitive outcomes. The absence of such capability transmission mechanism suggests a contextual boundary condition in food tourism settings. In Malaysian food tourism, destination image may be shaped more strongly by symbolic authenticity and cultural embeddedness than by innovation capabilities (Som et al., 2020). Furthermore, the significant negative direct effect of human capital on destination image indicates that its influence may operate through alternative mechanisms unrelated to innovation practices. These findings refine RBV assumptions by suggesting that the strategic value of human capital and its capability, may not operate simultaneously across food tourism sectors.

This indicates the high possibility of disconnection between employee competencies and tourist's perceived innovation, as tourists are not involved in the business, and the business alone needs to equip itself with proper innovation to influence destination image. Other than that, this is probably due to service delivery limitations and a lack of empowerment by the restaurant in Malaysia. Consequently, the result provides a better understanding of the theory by emphasising that not all resources can be used directly for perceived destination value; thus, this may influence scholars to examine other mediators or moderators such as technology adoption, leadership, and interaction quality.

In addition, this study provides ample findings where IP contributes significantly between PV and TDI but is insignificant between HC and TDI. This suggests that tourists' perceived value is more towards the offerings of food tourism experiences rather than internal competencies that aligned with the recent study of customer-centric strategy, where it contributes more towards customer relationships by acquiring customer needs and wants (Reijonen et al., 2023). As reported from the statistical analysis, the removal of product innovation and marketing innovation dimensions was due to the poor model fit, which implies a significant reason in food tourism, particularly in daily meals, affordability, tradition, and cultural values. This showcases that innovation in the context of food tourism in Malaysia is best represented

by operational and service-level enhancement, rather than packaged product creation or marketing and promotional campaigns. This provides a very useful indicator for innovation practices that portrays a contextually grounded framework in the food tourism sector in Malaysia.

5.3.2 Practical Contributions

The main implication of the current study mainly focuses on the determinants that have been proposed, which are HC, PV and IP on TDI. Based on the literature review that has been discussed, the contribution that HC provides in terms of support was initially discussed in the early stage of the study. In addition, PV is seemingly a strong factor that may contribute to the improvement of the food tourism in Malaysia, while IP acts as a bridge to gain recognition and influence TDI. This section will provide a discussion on practical contributions to the development of human capital in promoting value-based innovation strategies, as well as to emphasise the process and service over the destination image. It offers several practical implications for stakeholders in Malaysia's food tourism, sector including policymakers, tourism authorities, food businesses, destination marketers, and tourism operators. The insights drawn from the findings will contribute massively to the real world:

5.3.2.1 Targeted Policy and Training Recommendations

The study shows that IP significantly influences TDI through every aspect, specifically through service innovation, process innovation, and organisational innovation. These dimensions are confirmed as key drivers in shaping perceptions and experiences. Based on the findings, this suggests that tourism operators and food vendors need to collaborate to be more systematic and creative in managing their offerings, such as developing unique concepts, improving service quality and kitchen, reorganising operations to be better as tourists come to Malaysia to taste and experience the uniqueness and flavourful cuisines. The review is supported by the previous findings where innovation practices improve service quality and attract customers and revisit customers (Hjalager, 2010; Thomas & Wood, 2014). Although HC was not statistically significant, however, the analysis was then confirmed the dimension of HC as skills and

cultural competence as the dimension of HC. These dimensions remain crucial to policymakers and tourism agencies, where these organisations may invest in cultural training programmes for vendors to be aware of the strategy in sustaining the image of the destination. Other than that, it will enhance the communication and service delivery skills of the employees to match the expectations of diverse tourists from different demographics, domestic tourists and international tourists. The strategy may encourage a beneficial initiative for human resource development, focusing on customer interaction or social interaction between employees and customers. Moreover, it emphasises the need for structural and cultural support for innovation (Elsharnouby & Elbanna, 2021). The validation of skills and cultural competence as reliable dimensions confirms that human capital remains a necessary component within food tourism operations (Elsharnouby & Elbanna, 2021). The findings suggest that human capital may function as a threshold capability rather than a differentiating strategic resource. In culturally embedded food tourism contexts, tourists may not consciously interpret formal skills or cultural training as “innovation” or as direct contributors to destination image. Instead, such competencies operate as baseline expectations that ensure service credibility, authenticity preservation, and experiential coherence. Therefore, while human capital may not directly enhance innovation practices or destination image, it remains an important foundation upon which perceived value and service sustainability are built.

5.3.2.2 Focused on Value-Based Innovation

The dimensions of IP have been affirmed as three main dimensions involved as the key aspects in the study: service innovation, process innovation, and organisational innovation. Since PV is strongly significant with IP and TDI, stakeholders should elevate their focus on the dimensions of PV, social value, emotional value, functional value, and monetary value in food tourism. The relation should be well-versed with IP as stated in the previous elaboration on the tourist crave for the experience and uniqueness rather than packaging and promotional campaigns, as the value should come from what tourists perceive the most, including social interaction, emotional affection, functional value, and affordability of the cuisines (Jaafar et al., 2022). Tourism authorities should collaborate with food stakeholders on affordable food trails, as well

as prepare relevant training for the employees in terms of enhancing storytelling around cultural dishes in Malaysia. This will help tourists to know the tradition, heritage, and culture of the food rather than eating without knowing the history behind the cuisine. In addition, by referring to the findings, stakeholders can offer an interactive dining experience, such as a study in the dining experience, where customer satisfaction increases while tasting the street food culinary experience (Omar et al., 2022). This is also aligned with the previous study on the interactive dining experience, which focuses on the value-based innovation (Ishak et al., 2020).

By confirming service, process, and organisational innovation as key IP dimensions, this study provides insight for food tourism operators on how their business should focus on the streamlined food delivery process to enhance the quality of the service. Other than that, food operators will be aware of the importance of hygiene improvement and service consistency as mentioned by the recent study on the impact that would happen if hygiene and quality service are not practised (Berybe et al., 2023). In terms of process innovation, food providers following the development of food tourism in Malaysia should introduce digital ordering or queueing systems for a better and organised process. It has been widely discussed in previous studies whereby the introduction of a digital ordering system may have a significant impact on restaurant operations (Yang et al., 2024; Alshurideh et al., 2022). In relation to the smooth process, this will empower employees to be more flexible and flatter organisational structures. These factors should be impactful to the process and operation for most of the restaurants or even to the street food vendors, as Malaysia is moving towards giving a better experience to the domestic and international tourists in the upcoming VMY2026 and also for a long-term projection.

5.3.2.3 Framework for Future Destination Branding

Intention to travel and revisit intention have been confirmed as dimensions of TDI in the analysis in the previous chapter. This has confirmed how important these dimensions are according to the previous literature on TDI, as one of the factors that may contribute to the destination improvement and development. Consequently, PV and IP have a significant impact on TDI based on the significant positive value obtained. Other than that, intention to travel and revisit intention may allow tourism authorities

in Malaysia, especially Tourism Malaysia develop brand loyalty campaigns and promote emotional connection through food heritage. This may be attractive to domestic and international tourists to come and experience the environment as well as learning the culture. The final model provides a holistic guide for branding Malaysia as one of the food tourism hubs in the region, suggesting that it be included in the upcoming event Visit Malaysia Year 2026, and also to gain sustainable efforts in exposing Malaysian cuisines to the world. It aligns with the other constructs, which are HC, PV, and IP, toward gaining recognition as a favourable destination for tourists. This is also one of the keys to competing in global tourism. Moreover, the strong influence of PV and IP indicates that stakeholders should participate to promote the destination as well as lift up the destination branding. They need to focus on the innovative food experience and diverse culture while travelling in Malaysia, as Malaysia offers different culinary values from different heritages and cultures. This may include food festivals, food trails, chef collaborations, Malaysian cuisine competitions, and food events related to showcasing authentic offerings. For the practical suggestion, the national tourism board should collaborate more with the local and international content creators, local chefs, and food vendors for a promotional campaign that shows Malaysian food heritage, innovative ideas, and value propositions (Okumus et al., 2007).

5.4 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

While this research contributes to the tourist destination image, however, as in any other study, the current research has its own limitation by several factors. In order to get refinement of the proposed framework, several limitations need to be addressed for further theoretical and empirical research. Thus, to highlight the limitations mentioned, it will be interpreted together with the findings and directions for future research.

5.4.1 Key Findings

The study's findings offer a comprehensive study into the role of human capital and perceived value on innovation practices and on tourist destination image in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. Initially, the criteria to become a respondent in this research were that the respondent must come from both domestic and international

tourists. As the journey acquired the statistical analysis and measurement model, the research has assessed a structural model that incorporates all variables in food-based travel experiences. The study has obtained a desirable key finding for every construct that has been accumulated. In this study, perceived value plays a vital role in influencing both innovation practices and tourist destination image. This may confirm that tourists' social, emotional, functional, and monetary values are essential in shaping their travel motivation and perception as well as to achieve travel satisfaction. The values-driven should be integrated by the pivotal factor, such as innovation practices. As innovation practices have confirmed their dimensions, such as service, process, and organisational innovation, they strongly predict a significant positive relationship with tourist destination image. The findings showcase that the idea of innovation applied in the sector may improve the overall travel experience. Hence, the context of food tourism in Malaysia could be improved.

The initial construct of the framework involving human capital was expected to make an impact due to its important role in IP and TDI, however, it shows an insignificant relationship between IP and TDI, thus, the expectation was void. The findings suggest that employees' competencies and skills alone do not promise any attraction or success in destination appeal without progressive systems for innovation. On the other hand, mediation analysis has confirmed that innovation practices mediate the relationship between perceived value and tourist destination image, but not between human capital and tourist destination image. This indicates that perceived value can influence destination image if innovations are applied strategically. However, human capital needs a more systematic approach to influence the outcomes. Eventually, the confirmatory factor analysis has confirmed and supported the dimensionality of all constructs confirming the relevancy of the dimensions; (1) skills and cultural competence as dimensions of human capital, (2) social value, emotional value, functional value, and monetary value as dimensions of perceive value, (3) service innovation, process innovation, and organisational innovation as dimensions of innovation practices, (4) intention to travel and revisit intention as dimensions of tourist destination image.

5.4.2 Study Limitations

There are several limitations that can be highlighted in the current study. Firstly, the current study is limited to a construct-scope level, whereby only two predictors of human capital and perceived value are involved. While these predictors are important to be studied, these constructs have not fully captured the range of motivational and behavioural aspects in food tourism. However, future research should enrich the current model by integrating constructs such as gastronomic experience, culinary satisfaction, destination authenticity, and place attachment. These factors may integrate well in the new model and may contribute to the food tourism studies in Malaysia.

Secondly, the study was conducted by using convenience sampling; however, the researcher found that the sampling challenge occurred throughout the process. Initially, 650 respondents were proposed by using the rule of thumb of 10 set by Hair et al. (2017). From the number and by using convenience sampling, the researcher has made a simpler task to collect the data. On the contrary, the researcher has faced some difficulties where the data collection was hindered by scepticism from potential respondents, especially in public spaces (KLIA1 and KLIA2). Many participants assumed that the researcher was a scammer or involved in data fraud, which resulted in hesitation to participate. Additionally, domestic respondents may have interpreted the “revisit intention” items differently than international tourists, as the phrasing implies to international tourist. However, given that the items still capture domestic tourist’s willingness to revisit regions or recommend Malaysia as a food tourism destination, this does not invalidate the analysis. While the sample size (N=653) is robust, the scepticism encountered may limit the representation of certain tourist segments. Future studies could consider to refine the instrument for domestic tourists to enhance clarity.

Thirdly, generalisability of the study may provide a better scope in the tourism industry. This study was conducted by focusing on the food tourism sector in Malaysia and does not generalise to other sectors such as ecotourism, heritage tourism, or adventure tourism. Similarly, it may not reflect the dynamism of food tourism of other countries or regions, but for future research, the comparison from the generalisation might provide a general result for the tourism industry.

Finally, the limitation of this study revolves around the construct measurement context, whereby all constructs were analysed only at the perceptual level using Likert

scales. The scope of this study needs to be widened for future research, as it may benefit from triangulating the method with qualitative research to improve accuracy. This may provide a better understanding of the study and could bring insight to the food tourism sector in Malaysia.

5.4.3 Future Research Directions

Future research should explore new constructs that may bring the model into better measurement, as it might explain tourist behaviour better in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. For example, the new construct that may have a significant impact on the food tourism sector is social media influence (influencer effect and visual appeal impact), sustainability orientation in food options, and food-related personality traits. This has been a better option to be explored. Other than that, future research may extend the context into rural versus urban food tourism destinations, food festivals, or popular food destinations in Malaysia that may benefit in terms of the local economy. In terms of the study, future research might also understand the diversification through a comparative study, such as a cross-cultural study, aiming to compare Malaysian tourists and international tourists on the same construct. The study may reveal a valuable cultural difference in terms of perception of innovation and cultural understanding (Lin et al., 2011; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016). Moreover, the study might use a mixed-method approach to integrate the application of quantitative SEM with qualitative thematic analysis. This will provide an integration of two methods and will have a better validation of the construct in terms of in-depth conversion.

While the current study frequently references Visit Malaysia Year 2026 (VMY2026) as a practical target to enhance tourist arrivals, there is potential for more initiatives that related with the research findings. Based on the significance of service, process, and organizational innovation that have been identified in this study, nation should implement a model for the development of a national food tourism framework. The Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture Malaysia (MOTAC) could adopt a structured framework that integrates innovative practices of the food tourism experience. This framework would provide a clear roadmap for culinary product development and standardization, incorporation of technology to enhance tourist experiences, and coordination between local authorities, stakeholders, and food

operators to maintain quality and consistency. The establishment of this framework would ensure small food operators to operate. It would provide training and resources for implementing service, process, and organizational innovation, mentorship initiative, technological support, and marketing assistance to local culinary entrepreneurs. Furthermore, it would serve as a platform for experimentation, pre-programs, and the feedback could be collected to enhance the food tourism experience. By implementing these recommendations, Malaysia could move to a sustainable, innovative driven in food tourism sector, aligning with both national tourism goals and the foundational potential highlighted in this research.

5.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study examines the relationship between HC, PV, IP, and TDI in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. Although the findings indicate that the PV, IP and TDI have a significant relationship, HC still plays a role by demonstrating its value when the skills and cultural competence are confirmed as HC dimensions. Every construct has its own indicator, which provides an impactful understanding of the findings. Learning more about the conditions under which tourists perceived value while tasting Malaysian cuisines might help future research to understand the projection. Nonetheless, future research will have the perspective as this research provides an understanding of TDI, which comes from different determinants. As such, the findings have drawn attention to the need for a comprehensive model of TDI.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire



SURVEY FORM

Modelling the Predictors of Tourist Destination Image and the Mediating Effect of Innovation Practices in the Context of Malaysian Food Tourism

Dear respected tourists,

I am inviting you to participate in my research study titled, “**Modelling the Predictors of Tourist Destination Image and the Mediating Effect of Innovation Practices in the Context of Malaysian Food Tourism**”. I am currently enrolled in the Doctor of Philosophy (Hotel and Tourism Management) Programme at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Pulau Pinang Branch, Malaysia. The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain a clear picture of the influence or correlational effect of human capital, perceived value, innovation practices, and tourist destination image among domestic and international tourist in Malaysia in food tourism context.

Please read all instructions given in each part carefully and answer every question sincerely. Your honesty in answering them will be helpful for the tourism management in examine the destination image effectiveness in the context of food tourism in Malaysia. Please note that your responses will remain confidential and be used for the purpose of this research only. If you have any questions about this research, you are encouraged to contact me.

Thank you for your assistance in this important endeavour and I truly appreciate your time.

Mohd Syaifuddin Mohd Alias

Mobile No: [REDACTED]

Email address: syfdnalias@gmail.com

INSTRUCTIONS:

I would like to assess how strongly you agree or disagree with every statement provided in this survey. You are free to indicate your response between ONE [1] to TEN [10].

Your score of ONE [1] would indicate that you strongly disagree with the given statement while the score of TEN [10] would imply that you strongly agree with the given statement. Hence, you may tick or mark your response clearly everywhere between 1 to 10. There is no right or wrong answer.

PART 1: HUMAN CAPITAL (10 ITEMS)

This section explores the construct of human capital with TWO (2) dimensions – skills and cultural competence.

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning the human capital. For each of the item below, select the answer that best represents your belief about human capital and the value being a tourist in Malaysia. You may mark your sincere response anywhere from 1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE) to 10 (STRONGLY AGREE). Please remember that there are no right or wrong answer and your response will be kept strictly confidential.

No	Item	Strongly Disagree → Strongly Agree									
1.	Employees in the food tourism industry have the necessary skills to deliver quality Malaysian food experiences to tourists.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
2.	Employees are able to handle unexpected or challenging situations that may arise during food-related tourist activities.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
3.	Employees communicate clearly and effectively with	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]

	both local and international tourists about Malaysian food culture.										
4.	Employees are friendly, approachable, and make communication with tourists enjoyable and engaging.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
5.	Employees can quickly and effectively solve problems related to food services or tourist needs.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
6.	Employees are flexible in adapting to the cultural preferences of tourists when presenting Malaysian food.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
7.	Employees adjust their communication style to suit tourists from different cultural backgrounds.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
8.	Employees are able to adapt to various cultural expectations during food-related tourism interactions.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
9.	Employees adjust their behavior to respect and accommodate tourists' cultural values while delivering food experiences.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
10.	Employees show openness to learning and respecting food-related customs from other cultures, even if different from their own.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]

PART 2: PERCEIVED VALUE (22 ITEMS)

This section explores the construct of human capital with FOUR (4) dimensions – social value, emotional value, functional value, and monetary value.

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning the human capital. For each of the item below, select the answer that best represents your belief about human capital and the value being a tourist in Malaysia. You may mark your sincere response anywhere from 1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE) to 10 (STRONGLY AGREE). Please remember that there are no right or wrong answer and your response will be kept strictly confidential.

No	Item	Strongly Disagree → Strongly Agree									
1.	The food tourism experience made me feel socially accepted.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
2.	The food tourism experience improved how others perceive me.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
3.	The food tourism experience helped me feel accepted by others.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
4.	The food tourism experience allowed me to impress others.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
5.	The food tourism experience made me perceive the unique culinary style of people, which reflects their culture.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
6.	I enjoy eating Malaysian food.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
7.	I often crave Malaysian food.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
8.	Malaysian food lifts my mood when I eat it.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
9.	Eating Malaysian food makes me feel content.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
10.	Malaysian food gives me a pleasurable eating experience.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
11.	Eating Malaysian food reminds	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]

	me of my cultural roots and traditions.										
12.	Sharing Malaysian food with others enhances my overall travel experience.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
13.	The food tourism destination offered activities that suited my travel needs.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
14.	The food tourism destination provided resources that met my travel requirements.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
15.	The food tourism destination had modern facilities that satisfied my needs.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
16.	Compared to other destinations, visiting Malaysia for food tourism offers a worthwhile experience that meets tourists' needs and expectations.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
17.	I received a high-quality experience in Malaysia as a food tourism destination for the cost of my travel expenses.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
18.	Compared to other destinations, visiting Malaysia as a food tourism destination offers good value for money.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
19.	I found great deals during my food tourism experience.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
20.	The food tourism activities were reasonably priced.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
21.	The tourism package was a worthwhile purchase for the price.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
22.	The tourism package I bought was fairly priced.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]

PART 3: INNOVATION PRACTICES (27 ITEMS)

This section explores the construct of human capital with FIVE (5) dimensions – product innovation, service innovation, process innovation, organisational innovation, and marketing innovation.

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning the human capital. For each of the item below, select the answer that best represents your belief about human capital and the value being a tourist in Malaysia. You may mark your sincere response anywhere from 1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE) to 10 (STRONGLY AGREE). Please remember that there are no right or wrong answer and your response will be kept strictly confidential.

No	Item	Strongly Disagree					→	Strongly Agree				
1.	Malaysia offers creative food tourism experiences for travellers.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]	
2.	Malaysia provides tourists with unique and memorable food tourism experiences.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]	
3.	Malaysia offers a wide variety of food tourism options at reasonable prices.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]	
4.	Malaysia has a complete and diverse range of food tourism offerings.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]	
5.	Malaysia has developed innovative food tourism products and experiences.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]	
6.	I have experienced unique or creative ways of serving food that differ from traditional practices.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]	
7.	Some food outlets I visited offered interactive dining experiences, such as live cooking or personal dish	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]	

	customization.										
8.	I noticed that technology (e.g., tablets, QR codes, ordering kiosks) was used to improve the dining experience.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
9.	I noticed that some food-related services or concepts I experienced were not commonly found in that local area.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
10.	I understand that the new food services require employees to learn new skills.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
11.	Digital tools were used to make ordering or payment faster and more convenient during my food tourism experience in Malaysia.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
12.	I observed that staff members had been trained to use new service techniques or technologies to serve tourists better.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
13.	The staff in the Malaysian food tourism industry are well-trained.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
14.	Information about food tourism in Malaysia is easily accessible.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
15.	Making food tourism arrangements in Malaysia is simple.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
16.	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia work well together.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
17.	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia provide excellent services.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
18.	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia are well-managed.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
19.	Food tourism organizations in	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]

	Malaysia are easy to reach.										
20.	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia use innovative information systems.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
21.	Food tourism organizations in Malaysia are creative in helping tourists.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
22.	New food tourism practices introduced are mostly new to the local destinations.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
23.	Food tourism marketing strategies in Malaysia are well-planned.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
24.	Food tourism marketing strategies in Malaysia are implemented in creative ways.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
25.	New media techniques, like TV ads, internet ads, and smartphone apps, are used for promotion.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
26.	Food tourism marketing activities in Malaysia are appealing.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
27.	Information about food tourism in Malaysia is helpful.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]

PART 4: TOURIST DESTINATION IMAGE (10 ITEMS)

This section explores the construct of human capital with TWO (2) dimensions – intention to travel and revisit intention.

Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning the human capital. For each of the item below, select the answer that best represents your belief about human capital and the value being a tourist in Malaysia. You may mark your sincere response anywhere from 1 (STRONGLY DISAGREE) to 10 (STRONGLY AGREE). Please remember that there are no right or wrong answer and your response will be kept strictly confidential.

No	Item	Strongly Disagree → Strongly Agree									
1.	The quality of food and service in Malaysia is excellent.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
2.	Malaysia has well-known food brands.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
3.	Malaysia is innovative in its food offerings.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
4.	I have authentic food experience in Malaysia.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
5.	I experience a new and different lifestyle through food tourism in Malaysia.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
6.	I plan to visit Malaysia again in the near future.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
7.	I am willing to revisit Malaysia soon.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
8.	I would recommend Malaysia to others for a visit.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
9.	I will share positive things about Malaysia as a tourist destination.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]
10.	My decision to visit Malaysia for halal-friendly travel was a good choice.	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[8]	[9]	[10]

PART 5: RESPONDENT'S PROFILE

1.	Gender	Male	
		Female	
2.	Nationality	Malaysian	
		Non-Malaysian Please specify:	
3.	Age	18 – 21 years old	
		22 – 26 years old	
		27 – 30 years old	
		31 – 35 years old	
		36 – 40 years old	
		Above 40 years old	
4.	Purpose of visit:	Leisure	
		Business	
		Education	

		Visiting Family and Friends (VFR)	
5.	Main Activities During Visit:	Sightseeing	
		Shopping	
		Cultural and Heritage Exploration	
		Trying Local Food and Cuisine	
6.	What Attracts you the most to Malaysian Food Tourism?	Variety of Cuisines (e.g. Malay, Chinese, Indian, etc)	
		Street food culture	
		Unique dishes (e.g. Nasi Lemak, Laksa, Satay)	
		Cultural and Historical significance of food	
7.	Length of Stay	Less than a day	

		1-3 days	
		4-7 days	
		More than 7 days	
8.	Sources of Information About Malaysian Food Tourism?	Social Media (Tiktok, Youtube, Instagram)	
		Friends and Family Recommendations	
		Tourism Board or official websites	

APPENDIX B

Expert Invitation Letter

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 UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA	Cawangan Pulau Pinang Kampus Permatang Pauh
Rujukan	: 100-UiTMPP(FPHP.30/5)
Tarikh	: 01 Januari 2025
Dr Nor Asmalina Bt Mohd Anuar Profesor Madya Fakulti Pengurusan Hotel dan Pelancongan, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Kampus Puncak Alam, Selangor	
Salam Sejahtera,	
Prof Madya Dr,	
PERMOHONAN BANTUAN UNTUK MENYEMAK SOAL SELIDIK BAGI <i>INSTRUMENT PRE TEST</i>	
Saya menulis untuk memohon bantuan pihak tuan dalam menyemak soal selidik bagi ujian pra yang dibangunkan oleh pelajar PhD saya, Mohd Syaifuddin Mohd Alias, untuk kajian PhD beliau yang bertajuk " <i>Modelling the Predictors of Tourist Destination Image and Mediating Effect of Innovation Practices in the Context of Malaysian Food Tourism</i> ".	
Pre Test ini bertujuan untuk menilai soal selidik dari aspek berikut:	
i. Kejelasan Bahasa: Memastikan soalan dirumuskan dengan jelas dan berkesan. ii. Relevansi Subjek Kajian: Mengesahkan kandungan selaras dengan objektif kajian dan merangkumi aspek-aspek berkaitan dengan menyeluruh.	
Kepakaran pihak tuan diperlukan untuk menilai kejelasan bahasa serta kesesuaian kandungan soal selidik tersebut. Maklum balas yang diberikan akan memastikan soal selidik ini selaras dengan objektif kajian dan bersedia untuk pengumpulan data.	
Pandangan berharga pihak tuan sangat membantu dalam meningkatkan ketelitian kajian ini.	
Segala perhatian dan kerjasama yang diberikan amat saya hargai dan didahului dengan ucapan terima kasih.	
Yang benar,	
	
Prof. Dr. Hashim Fadzil Ariffin Penyelia Utama	
Fakulti Pengurusan Hotel & Pelancongan Tel: +604-382 2942 Faks: +604-382 2812	Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Pulau Pinang Kampus Permatang Pauh 13500 Permatang Pauh Pulau Pinang, MALAYSIA Tel: +604-382 2888 Fax: +604-382 2776
 UiTM di hatiku	



Cawangan Pulau Pinang
Kampus Permatang Pauh

Rujukan : 100-UiTMPP(FPHP.30/5)
Tarikh : 01 Januari 2025

Dr Siti Aishah Bt Edros
Pensyarah Kanan
Pusat Pengajian Pengurusan
Pelancongan, Hospitaliti, dan Acara
Universiti Utara Malaysia
06010 Sintok, Kedah

Salam Sejahtera,

Dr,

PERMOHONAN BANTUAN UNTUK MENYEMAK SOAL SELIDIK BAGI *INSTRUMENT PRE TEST*

Saya menulis untuk memohon bantuan pihak tuan dalam menyemak soal selidik bagi ujian pra yang dibangunkan oleh pelajar PhD saya, Mohd Syaifuddin Mohd Alias, untuk kajian PhD beliau yang bertajuk "*Modelling the Predictors of Tourist Destination Image and Mediating Effect of Innovation Practices in the Context of Malaysian Food Tourism*".

Pre Test ini bertujuan untuk menilai soal selidik dari aspek berikut:

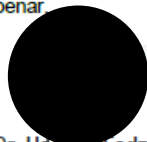
- i. Kejelasan Bahasa: Memastikan soalan dirumuskan dengan jelas dan berkesan.
- ii. Relevansi Subjek Kajian: Mengesahkan kandungan selaras dengan objektif kajian dan merangkumi aspek-aspek berkaitan dengan menyeluruh.

Kepakaran pihak tuan diperlukan untuk menilai kejelasan bahasa serta kesesuaian kandungan soal selidik tersebut. Maklum balas yang diberikan akan memastikan soal selidik ini selaras dengan objektif kajian dan bersedia untuk pengumpulan data.

Pandangan berharga pihak tuan sangat membantu dalam meningkatkan ketelitian kajian ini.

Segala perhatian dan kerjasama yang diberikan amat saya hargai dan didahului dengan ucapan terima kasih.

Yang benar



Prof. Dr. Hashim Fadil Ariffin
Penyelia Utama

Fakulti Pengurusan Hotel & Pelancongan
Tel: +604-382 2942 Faks: +604-382 2812

Universiti Teknologi MARA
Cawangan Pulau Pinang
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Cawangan Pulau Pinang
Kampus Permatang Pauh

Rujukan : 100-UiTMPP(FPHP.30/5)
Tarikh : 01 Januari 2025

En. Sivananda Sundralingam
Pensyarah Kanan
UCYP University,
2nd Floor, Kompleks Yayasan Pahang
Tanjung Lumpur
Kampung Anak Air
26060 Kuantan
Pahang Darul Makmur

Salam Sejahtera,

En. Sivananda,

PERMOHONAN BANTUAN UNTUK MENYEMAK SOAL SELIDIK BAGI INSTRUMENT PRE TEST

Saya menulis untuk memohon bantuan pihak tuan dalam menyemak soal selidik bagi ujian pra yang dibangunkan oleh pelajar PhD saya, Mohd Syaifuddin Mohd Alias, untuk kajian PhD beliau yang bertajuk "*Modelling the Predictors of Tourist Destination Image and Mediating Effect of Innovation Practices in the Context of Malaysian Food Tourism*".

Pre Test ini bertujuan untuk menilai soal selidik dari aspek berikut:

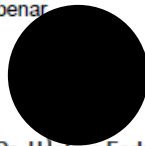
- i. Kejelasan Bahasa: Memastikan soalan dirumuskan dengan jelas dan berkesan.
- ii. Relevansi Subjek Kajian: Mengesahkan kandungan selaras dengan objektif kajian dan merangkumi aspek-aspek berkaitan dengan menyeluruh.

Kepakaran pihak tuan diperlukan untuk menilai kejelasan bahasa serta kesesuaian kandungan soal selidik tersebut. Maklum balas yang diberikan akan memastikan soal selidik ini selaras dengan objektif kajian dan bersedia untuk pengumpulan data.

Pandangan berharga pihak tuan sangat membantu dalam meningkatkan ketelitian kajian ini.

Segala perhatian dan kerjasama yang diberikan amat saya hargai dan didahului dengan ucapan terima kasih.

Yang benar,



Prof. Dr. Hashim Fadzil Ariffin
Penyelia Utama

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Universiti Teknologi MARA
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APPENDIX C

Research Ethics Committee

Approval Letter

www.uitm.edu.my	
 UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA	Pejabat Timbalan Naib Canselor (Penyelidikan dan Inovasi)
Reference : UiTM.800-1/1/9	
Our reference : REC/04/2025 (PG/MR/254)	
Date : 1 ذوالقعدة 1446هـ	
29 April 2025	
Mr Mohd Syaifuddin Mohd Alias – 2023615828 (Supervisor: Professor Dr Hashim Fadzil Ariffin) Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management UiTM Pulau Pinang Branch Permatang Pauh Campus 13500 Permatang Pauh, Seberang Perai PULAU PINANG	
والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته and Greetings	
Mr	
APPROVAL LETTER - UiTM RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE	
Thank you for submitting your research proposal to the Research Ethics Committee (REC). After considering your application, the Committee approved your proposal titled "Modelling the Predictors of Tourist Destination Image and The Mediating Effect of Innovation Practices in The Context of Malaysian Food Tourism" at the Kuala Lumpur International Airports 1 and 2 (KLIA 1 & 2). Details of the approval are as follows:	
Ref. number:	REC/04/2025 (PG/MR/254)
Approval Period:	29 April 2025 until 31 October 2025
Authorised personnel:	1. Mohd Syaifuddin Mohd Alias 2. Professor Dr Hashim Fadzil Ariffin
The UiTM Research Ethics Committee operates in accordance with ICH Good Clinical Practice Guidelines, Malaysian Good Clinical Practice Guidelines and the Declaration of Helsinki. The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with these guidelines and declaration.	
We draw to your attention the requirement that a report on this research, must be submitted every 12 months from the date of the approval or on the completion of the project, whichever occurs first. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of consent for the project to proceed. Amendments, if any, to the study documents are to be submitted to the REC for approval.	
If you require further information, please contact the REC Secretariat at 03-55442846/03-55442737 or email at recsecretariat@uitm.edu.my.	
أوسها، تقوى، موليا "MALAYSIA MADANI" "BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"	
Yours sincerely,	
	
(EMERITUS PROFESSOR DATO' DR RAYMOND AZMAN ALI) Chairman UiTM Research Ethics Committee	
c.c.: Deputy Rector (PJIM&A), UiTM Pulau Pinang Branch	
Universiti Teknologi MARA Aras 3, Bangunan Wawasan 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor, MALAYSIA Tel: (+603) 5544 2004/2255 Faks: (+603) 5544 2070	
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AUTHOR'S PROFILE



Mohd Syaifuddin Mohd Alias obtained Bachelor of Science (Hons.) in Tourism Management in 2017 from University Teknologi MARA, MSc in Foodservice Management (2022) from Universiti Teknologi MARA, and PhD in Hotel and Tourism Management (2026) from the University Teknologi Mara, Selangor Malaysia. His PhD thesis involves the measuring effect between several predictors of Tourist Destination Image among domestic and international tourists in Malaysia in the context of food tourism. Currently he is active in publishing articles and joining innovation competitions.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS:

- Alias, M. S. M., Rani, Z. M., & Ariffin, H. F. (2025). Unlocking Destination Appeal: A Scale Validation of Innovation Practices in Food Tourism Contexts. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality and Environment Management*, 10(42), 183-196. <https://doi.org/10.35631/JTHEM.1042012>
- Edros, S. A., Ilwan, L., & Alias, M. S. M. (2025). Negative Leadership, Workplace Environment, and Job Satisfaction: A Conceptual Model of Employee Performance in Malaysia's Fast-Food Industry. *Journal of Advanced Research in Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 39(1), 67-76. <https://doi.org/10.37934/jarsbs.39.1.6776>
- Alias, M. S. M., Ariffin, H. F., & Rani, Z. M. (2024). Leveraging Food Tourism to Shape Malaysia's Destination Image for Visit Malaysia Year 2026 (VMY2026). *TEAM Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 21(1), 19-26.

- Mohd Alias, M. S., Rani, Z. M., & Ariffin, H. F. (2024). Tourism Destination Image: Towards a Better Performance on Malay Restaurant by Reflecting Competitive Advantage in Business Organization. *Information Management and Business Review*, 16(3(I)S), 16-22. [https://doi.org/10.22610/imbr.v16i3\(I\)S.3953](https://doi.org/10.22610/imbr.v16i3(I)S.3953)
- Alias, M. S. M., Ariffin, H. F., & Abdullah, R. P. S. (2021). Restaurant Performance from the Perspective of Top Management of Malay Restaurant: A Construct Validity Study. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(13), 178-187. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v11-i13/8515>