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The Mediating Effect of Customer Attitude towards Perceived Luxury Value and the Intention to Stay at Luxury Hotels

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ABSTRACT

Customers' purchase of luxury brands reflects their lifestyle, personality and mindset rooted in their financial power, individual values, and social status. Luxury brand intention is reflected by the prestige consumption mind-set backed by the high financial power, their personal values, consumption attitudes, social value systems, individual personalities, and customer's lifestyle. Further, these dimensions have been researched in different socio-cultural settings, and it has been found that there are situations where these factors differ in different contexts. Along with these factors, many scholars argue that different factors are associated with consumer attitude towards luxury. However, in an emerging country like Malaysia, such research studies have been very minimal. In this research it has been found that consumer attitude is affected by factors such as perceived luxury consumption value, social influence, general life values, self-identity, experiential value, brand consciousness and brand love. Further, it is found that the consumer attitude affects the intention to stay of Luxurious Branded Hotels.

1. Introduction

Customer behaviour reflects the distinction of the society among various customer segments and their symbolic ownership of customer brands (Batra et al., 2000; Akram et al., 2011). According to Sukla and Purani (2012), the ongoing monetary advancement in the developing markets fills the development of luxury brand support that would stand out, making more open doors for brands. Malaysia is a nation where worldwide luxury products or services get a noteworthy interest sponsored by the expanding buying intensity of the development of the High Net Worth Individuals. The word 'Luxury' is derived from the word 'luxus' in the Latin language, and as indicated and

defined in Latin Oxford Dictionary, it alludes to "delicate or indulgent living, overindulgence" and "richness, solace, plenitude" (Christodoulides et al., 2008). This luxury alludes to the most significant number of prestigious brands that incorporate different physical and mental qualities (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Explained by Godey et al., (2013) luxury could increase the prices in most parts of the world. From another point of view, luxury merchandise is the items 95% of which are just accessible to 5% of the populace and have a restricted supply (Savitha & Sathyanarayan, 2014). With this background, luxury items trigger the social separation. The traditional view on customer behaviour is identified as the way the customers act rationally selecting goods that will provide the maximum value at the lowest cost for the customer (Altunisik, 2007). According to Altunisik (2007), the studies do not always suggest that customers act rationally, and they get emotional when they select products for pleasure, happiness, and esteem etc. Generally, people want to obtain excellent, quality, and exciting goods, and from the same preference, they experience rational and hedonic appeals as well.

Dubois et al. (2005) built up an idea with the customary luxury see which expresses that luxury ought to be just accessible for elitist (marked elitist) and they accept, present day luxury visionaries accept that everybody needs to approach luxury. In contrast to that the non-traditional luxury customers (labeled democratic) held a modern vision of luxury, that everyone should be able to have access to luxury products. There is another difference in the agreement on attitude between these two groups centered on price. The elitists indicated it was inevitable that the price of luxury good was very high; however, the democratic believed that luxury did not have to be expensive usually (Dubois et al., 2005). Elitists accept that luxury ought not be created either at mass scale or made them broadly accessible in grocery stores. Nonetheless, the assessment of the fair is unique. They accept that these luxury brands could be made accessible in markets and delivered at mass scale. This slow developing business sector for luxury merchandise has brought up the issue regarding what degree the brand character view of the advantage of a brand is compelling for the buyers. As noted, if luxury decreases, so does the brand value. To forestall this rot in value, notoriety organizations face a predicament as they must control brand dissemination to improve eliteness while simultaneously keeping up a significant level of mindfulness (Phau and Prendergast, 2000). The aim of this study is to examine the factors affecting the customer attitudes towards intention to stay at global Luxurious Branded Hotel of those who aspire to stay at global Luxurious Branded Hotels.

2. Literature Review

Customer Behaviour and Luxury
Customer behaviour is comparatively a new field of study that has been evolving after the since few decades especially with the emergence of technology. Marketing concepts have been ever evolving from the production concept to customer-oriented marketing and it is now in the holistic marketing era. Kotler (2015) discussed on the Marketing 3.0 and emphasized Marketing

4.0 along with the growth of digital marketing. Customer behaviour is a field of study that analyses how people make decisions with their limited available resources to fulfil their needs and wants. (Berman and Evens, 2010). Thus, marketers in the technology era as it is today, must make decisions within the framework of available resources such as money, time which is highly competitive to decide what to buy, how much to buy, and when to buy etc. The customer behaviour as a subject discipline has been fostered by different fields such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology. This has involved with areas such as learning, remembering, thinking, perception, beliefs, attitudes, motivation, and emotions (Britt, 1970). These factors have been identified as critical for customer decision making.

Perceived Unique Value
Uniqueness alludes to an individual's yearning to separate themselves from others (Prendergast and Wong, 2003). Individuals look for uniqueness in an offer to improve their self and social picture by attesting their own taste or keeping away from the utilization of things like others (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). As indicated by hypothesis (Brock, 1968), the image or attractive quality of an item increases as it turns out to be rare. Lynn (1991) tried this hypothesis and found that shortage of an item emphatically influenced image. Shortage increases perceived uniqueness as being uncommon (Giacalone, 2006). Past analysts additionally found that uniqueness is a center segment of distinction brands inspiring their utilization (Leibenstein, 1950). Customers are desired to have an esteem brand which is seen to be novel (Groth & McDaniel, 1993; Verhallen & Robben, 1994). Perceived uniqueness depends on the belief that when the products are made in smaller quantities and the interest from the customer towards the item increases. They may attempt to utilize the item with the desire for improving their economic wellbeing and social character separating from others (Prendergast and Wong, 2003). Uniqueness infers an individual's desire to segregate themselves from others (Prendergast and Wong, 2003). Individuals who search for uniqueness in an idea to improve their self and social image by confirming their own taste or keeping away from the utilization of things like others (Vigneron and Johnson, 2004). Further, uniqueness to be brilliant it is one-of-a ruler or remarkable (Giacalone, 2006).

Perceived Hedonism
The hedonic effect of the perceived emotional value was researched by Ditchter (1960) with an upgraded view of customer preference is driven by non-cognitive and unconscious motives. Further, some products have been known for emotional value in addition to the functional utility of the product (Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Sheth, Newman, and Gross 1991). Dubois and Laurent (1994) showed that emotional value of a product or service is an important and essential feature of the perceived utility of the luxury products. This has been further supported by the argument that luxury has been identified with an emotional response associated with preference such as sensory pleasure, excitement, or aesthetic beauty etc. (Alleres 1990; Benarrosh-Dahan

1991; Fauchois and Krieg 1991; Roux and Floch 1996). Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) clarified about the customer's preference experience that includes multisensory and passionate action which is constantly centered around what is more to be picked up. For instance, Berry (1994) proposed that luxury goods please individuals as opposed to just lighten a condition of distress as is the situation of necessities. Kapferer, (1997) referenced excitement as a part of luxury items. Dubois and Czellar (2002) uncovered the comfort and greatness as the characteristics of luxury things. Dhar and Wertenbroch, (2000) called attention to luxury utilization as brimming with feeling just as well as tangible snazzy experience or an action that stimulates delight. Perceived hedonism clarifies the passionate estimation of buyers towards the items. It tends to be the customer's joy or delight with the experience they get from the utilization.

Perceived Extended Self
Perceived social value or the personality of buyers or customers wins as they will in general devour the extravagance merchandise that they partner with images characteristically related to the extravagance brands and that will separate the customers from the others. The purchasers will in general be related to a specific renowned shopper gathering and they anticipate the social acknowledgment while at times they will in general break the relationship with the non-esteemed gatherings. Belk (1988) proposed the concept of extended-self and prescribes that an individual's having a place is a help of an impression in our characters. The things that individuals have can be utilized to depict their character to others through the regular consequences that the things contain (Levy, 1959). Utilization of noticeable prominent brands is routinely enlivened by the limit. Differentiation concerned purchasers will in general adjust the acquisition of greatness related brands for their characters (Holt, 1995). Different clients longing to be related with others seen as prosperous and famous. Taking into account that specific regarded concerned brands are associated with a wealthy way of life (Dittmar, 1994; Hirschman, 1988), people's utilization of differentiation brands might be driven by their aching to meet and fit in with their wants (Leibenstein, 1950; McCracken, 1986; Mick and Worobey, 1986; Solomon, 1983). These qualities were viewed as key pieces of well-known brands and how the estimations are seen by the Brand Luxury Index (BLI) scale created by Vigneron and Johnson (2004).

Experiential Value
There has been a growing importance on the concept of experiential value, and it appears fragmented in the academic literature (Verhoef et al., 2009; Wu & Liang, 2009). Yuan and Wu (2008) the value the customer derives form a piece of experience is identified as experiential value.Pine and Gilmore (1999) explained that the transformation of the business environment towards an experience economy from agrarian, industrial economy, service economy with a shift of the customer demand shift from commodities, products, services and experiences. Varshneya, Das and Khare (2017) define experiential value as

customer's interaction and relative experience that characterize the interactive experience with a product or service (p. 343-344). Mathwick et al. (2001) conceptualized as the value that customers derive experience through several interactions that involve direct usage, or an appreciation made in distance, which is indirect observation, with respect to goods or services. Luxury brand preference is characterized by three worlds of customer experience (Berthon et al., 2009). Accordingly, the world one is identified as the functional value, in which the customer exhibits the actual quality perceived with respect to luxury goods and services. The quality is identified as an important variable as it can indicate what and how these goods could perform (Berthon et al., 2009; Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). When the customers preferences on luxurious goods or services is concerned, the experiential value includes the thoughts of the individual and the feelings regarding the luxury goods as something usually perceived subjectively that they are unique, precious, and rare. Further, this could be identified as hedonism and uniqueness seeking customer motivation in the purchase. This unique motivation consists of the symbolic value what indicates the conspicuousness, expensiveness, and wealth with respect to the luxury goods.
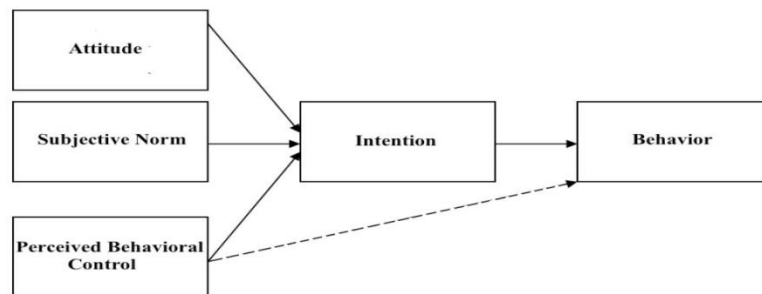

Figure 1: Theory of Planned Behaviour
Source: Ajzen (1991)
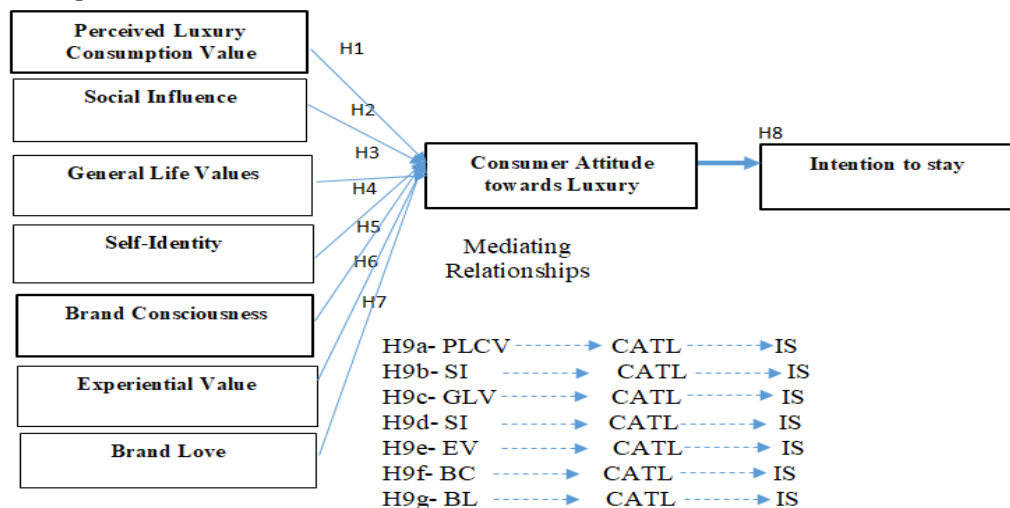
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

3. Methodology

This quantitative research used the convenience sampling and the role of thumb regarding the unknown population as mentioned by Sekaran and Bougie (2016) and Hair et al., (2010) the items in the questionnaire was 48 therefore the sample size was determined as 240. Accordingly, the researcher gathered data from 523 respondents and 456 respondents were valid for analysis. A Google questionnaire was developed and forwarded to 40 identified aspirants and a focus group discussion was conducted in the pilot survey too. The data analysis was done with the SPSS 19 package.

4. Results And Discussion

Customer demographics are presented below in table 1.

Table 1 Demographic Analysis

	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	249	54.6
	Female	207	45.4
Age	18-35	233	51
	36-45	174	38.2
	46-55	46	10
	56<	3	0.7
Occupation	Professional Executive	281	61.6
	Entrepreneur	111	24.3
	Consultant	37	8
	Government official	27	6
Monthly Income (RM)	5,001-10,000	136	29.8
	10,001-15,000	131	28.7
	15,001-20,000	111	24.3
	20,001-25,000	18	3.9
	Over 25,000	60	13.2
Education	Vocational degree	24	5.3
	Bachelor's Degree	153	33.6
	Master's Degree	173	37.9
	Doctoral Degree	28	6.1
	Other	78	17.1
Living Area	Rural Area	147	32
	Semi-Urban Area	160	35
	Urban Area	149	33

The largest group in the sample was Males which accounted 54.6% (249) and female accounted 45.6% (207) of the survey. The age group 18-35 years of age was 51% (233) and followed by the 36-45 years of age which accounted 38.2% (174). 10% (46) of the sample was in the age group of 46-55 and only 0.7% (3) was above 56 years of age. 61.6% (281) of the sample were the professional

executives and it was followed by the entrepreneurs in the segment with 24.3% (111). While 8% (37) of the sample were consultants and 6% (27) were the government officials. Most of the sample in the indicated average monthly income was RM5,000 to RM10,000 (29.8%) (136) and 28.7% (131) of the sample were in the income group of RM10,001to RM15,000. 24.3% (111) of the sample were in the income group of RM15,001to RM20,000 and 3.9% (18) respondents of the sample were in the group RM20,001 to RM25,000. 13.2% (60) of the respondents in the sample were in the income over RM25,000. While 38% (173) of the respondents in the sample were having master's degree 33.6% (153) were having bachelor's degree. In the sample, 6% (28) of the respondents were having Doctoral degree. 5.3% (24) of the respondents in the sample was having vocational degree. When the living area is concerned, 35% (160) of the sample live in Semi-urban area and 33% (149) represented the urban areas. 32% (147) of the sample live in the rural areas.

Dimensions of the Variables
Summary from Exploratory Factor Analyses
The summary for the 7 constructs EFA is provided in table 2.

Table 2 Summary for EFA

		Descriptive Statistics		Inter-Item Correlation					
	Mean	SD	BC	SI	PLCV	EV	GLV	SIN	BL
BC	3.7198	.81389	1.000						
SI	3.9293	.73944	.504	1.000					
PLCV	3.9789	.59311	.486	.740	1.000				
EV	3.8536	.69581	.634	.612	.614	1.000			
GLV	3.7316	.81786	.440	.577	.661	.568	1.000		
SIN	3.2385	.95100	.290	.376	.372	.369	.497	1.000	
BL	3.9852	.69510	.429	.809	.681	.522	.475	.280	1.000

Based on table 2 there is moderate level of agreement in all seven constructs. The factors affecting for the customer attitude correlate adequately. The highest correlation between each factor (0.809) does not exceed 0.9, as such there is no Multi-collinearity between seven factors identified for the effect between factors affecting for the customer attitude.

Reliability Analysis
Table 3 shows the Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis.

Table 3 Reliability Analysis

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Perceived Luxury Preference Value (PLCV)	10	0.832
Social Influence (SI)	04	0.854
General Life Values (GLV)	05	0.871

Self-Identity (SI)	04	0.920
Experiential Value (EV)	04	0.742
Brand Consciousness (BC)	04	0.764
Brand Love (BL)	04	0.802
Customer Attitude Towards Luxury (CATL)	09	0.856
Intention to stay (PI)	04	0.768

While Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) shows in table 4

Table 4 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)

Variable	KMO	Variance	Items
Brand Consciousness	0.670	52.74%	04
Self-Identity	0.758	55.68%	04
Preference Value	0.862	44.70%	10
Experiential Value	0.684	38.86%	04
General Life Values	0.832	68.27%	05
Social Influence	0.794	60.23%	04
Customer Attitude Towards Luxury	0.880	48.11%	09
Intention to stay	0.699	43.97%	04
Brand Love	0.774	649.63%	04

Direct Relationships

Customer Attitudes towards Luxurious Branded Hotels objective was to examine the factors affecting the customer attitudes towards global Luxurious Branded Hotels. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Customer Attitude Towards Luxury (CATL)

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p-value	
Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta			VIF
(Constant)	.111	.160		.691	.490	
Brand Consciousness	.062	.029	.042	2.168	.031	1.011
Self-Identity	.087	.031	.109	2.844	.005	3.919
Perceived Luxury Preference Value	.939	.033	.938	28.323	.000	2.936
Experiential Value	.093	.023	.109	4.102	.000	1.884
General Life Value	.063	.021	.087	3.040	.003	2.169
Social Influence	-.044	.014	-.070	-3.100	.002	1.364
Brand Love	.078	.029	.092	2.708	.007	3.061

Table 5 depicts that out of the seven constructs, the p-value of Perceived Luxury Preference Value (PLCV), Social Influence (SIN), and rest are less than 0.005. Therefore, they are significant predictors of Customer Attitude Towards Luxury (CATL).

Hypothesized Relationships

In this research the dimensions were analysed, all the items correlated adequately in the construct, as the highest correlation for each item, whilst at least one other item in the construct is between 0.3 and 0.9. Further when performing factor analysis all dimensions indicated that there exists a strong relationship between the antecedents of luxury and customer attitude towards luxury.

Table 6 Conclusions of Hypotheses of the Study

H(x)	Hypothesis	Finding	Reference and/or Justification
H1-	There is a relationship between preference value and the customer attitude towards global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Supported	p-value<0.05
H2-	There is a relationship between social influence and the customer attitude towards of global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Supported	p-value<0.05,
H3-	There is a relationship between general life value and the customer attitude towards global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Supported	p-value<0.05
H4-	There is a relationship between self-identity and the customer attitude towards global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Supported	p-value<0.05
H5-	There is a relationship between experiential value and the customer attitude towards global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Supported	p-value<0.05
H6-	There is a relationship between Brand consciousness and the customer attitude towards global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Supported	p-value<0.05
H7-	There is a relationship between Brand Love and the customer attitude towards global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Supported	p-value<0.05
H8-	There is a relationship between preference value and the customer attitude towards global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Supported	The p-value 0.000<0.05.

Table 7 Mediating Effect of Customer Attitude Towards Luxury (CATL)

	Hypotheses	Findings	Reference and/or Justification
H9a-	Customer attitude mediates the relationship between perceived luxury preference value and the customer intention to stay of global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Not Supported	1.96.P [Z<1.043]
H9b	Customer attitude mediates the relationship between social influence and the customer intention to stay of global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Partially mediated	1.96.P [Z>4.826]
H9c	Customer attitude mediates the relationship between general life value and the customer intention to stay of global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Partially mediated	1.96.P [Z>5.577]
H9d	Customer attitude mediates the relationship between self-identity and the customer intention to stay of global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Partially mediated	1.96.P [Z>3.634]
H9e	Customer attitude mediates the relationship between experiential value and the customer intention to stay of global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Partially mediated	1.96.P [Z>4.765]
H9f	Customer attitude mediates the relationship between brand consciousness and the customer intention to stay of global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Partially mediated	1.96.P [Z>5.721]
H9g	Customer attitude mediates the relationship between brand love and the customer intention to stay of global Luxurious Branded Hotels.	Partially mediated	1.96.P [Z>4.147]

5. Conclusions And Implications

The research identified the factors associated with the customer attitude towards global luxurious branded hotels and explored the association between the key antecedents and the attitude of the customers towards luxurious branded hotels. Further, it investigates the mediating effect of customer attitude towards the intention to stay. The results of this study elucidate the aspirants' motivation behind the intention to stay at luxury hotels in Malaysia. Academia could use this model to develop survey instruments that could be given in a particular emerging market to understand that market's propensity to purchase or consume luxury brands. the research contributed to academia on a framework of consumer perceived luxuriousness of luxury hotel brand usage

behaviour. The policy makers could encourage the policies to target right customers both locally and globally. Ultimately, it could create employment opportunities and contribute to the national GDP by developing entrepreneurships.

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