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# COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM RE-VISIT INTENTION: TOURISTS' PERSPECTIVE

**Teck-Weng Jee**[♣]
*Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak Campus*

**Hui-Bun Ting**
*UCSI University Sarawak Campus*

**Md. Abdul Alim**
*University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh*

## ABSTRACT

This study attempts to determine tourists' re-visit intention towards community based tourism destinations in the context of a developing country. Atmosphere, cultural environment, destination brand, and destination attachment towards community based tourism destinations in a developing country are investigated to determine what contributes to tourists' re-visit intention. In this study, a causal research design was adopted, and employed descriptive and Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). This study surveyed 114 tourists from different community-based tourism destinations in Sarawak, Malaysia. Findings of this study provide partial supports towards the effect of atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand on tourists' re-visit intention towards community-based tourism destinations, mediated by destination attachment. The study suggests to practitioners that it is crucial to understand the impact of atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand of community-based tourism destinations, as well as destination attachment and re-visit intention, especially, in developing effective marketing strategies for better market segmentation and targeting. Thus, the outcome of this study will help to expand the current knowledge on similar areas of community-based tourism destinations, and contributively effect of atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand on re-visit intention towards community-based tourism destination in a developing country context.

***Keywords:*** Atmosphere; Cultural environment; Destination brand; Destination attachment; Re-visit Intention; Community-based tourism destination.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is well-recognised as one of the largest and fastest growing industries today (Daniloska & Hadzi Naumova-Mihajlovska, 2015). This industry has gained exciting progress to emerge as a key contributor towards the overall economic development. The World Tourism Organization-UNWTO (2014) reported that tourism industry is responsible for 9% of total GDP in the world. It is also estimated that the global tourism industry is backing for over 1050 million international,

♣ Corresponding author: Faculty of Business, Design and Arts, Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak Campus. 93350 Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. Tel:+60 82 260 979 Email:tjee@swinburne.edu.my

and over 5 billion domestic tourists visited several tourism destinations in different countries in 2013.

Furthermore, the South East Asian countries also had witnessed significant growth of tourism over the last couple of decades both locally and internationally (Turner & Freiermuth, 2016). Tourism as an important industry in South East Asia, it anticipates of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with 15,510,000 employment opportunities as direct contributions or over USD 528 billion by 2025. This growth of tourism industry has also contributed to the welfare of local communities and tourists' experiences in South East Asian countries (Chin & Lo, 2017). After the manufacturing and agriculture industry, the tourism industry is ranked as one of the most major industries among most developing countries in South East Asia particularly in Malaysia and Thailand (Bhuiyan, Siwar, Ismail, Islam, & Ehsan, 2011).

Like others developing countries, tourism is also one of the rapidly growing industries in Malaysia (Shariff & Abidin, 2013). It greatly contributes to improve the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by earning foreign currencies, ensuring employment opportunities, increasing tax revenues, and expanding economic opportunities to local communities (Ibrahim, 2010; Jalis, Zahari, Izzat, & Othman, 2009). The government of Malaysia has been taken realistic measures to promote this industry (Siti-Nabiha, Abdul Wahid, Amran, Haat, & Abustan, 2008). The government has formed Tourism Policy in 1992 to be enhanced the development of tourism industry in Malaysia. However, the significance of the development of tourism industry towards local economies differs across Malaysia as the country belongs a heterogeneous society. The country has enormously developed tourism in its main cities, but the remote areas like Sarawak may lag behind (Lo, Ramayah, & Yeo, 2016). Thus, focusing on community based tourism in the remote areas in Malaysia can be an opportunity to be successfully implemented the government's tourism plan as community-based tourism destinations are a growing segment of tourism in developing countries especially in Malaysia (Chin & Lo, 2017).

Community based tourism (CBT) is a latest form of tourism product in which most of the tourism activities are managed and organised by the local communities (Kaur, Jawaid, & Othman, 2016). The inhabitants of the local communities are solely accountable to be executed each aspect of tourism management as CBT does not allow external parties to be involved (Osman et al., 2010). The main purpose of CBT is to produce and deliver the tourism services to tourists in an organised manner. Tourists are also provided with the learning process through community based tourism about the lifestyle of the community, its culture and customs (Kaur et al., 2016). Although the acceptable development of community based tourism has been established in Sarawak, the destination images of tourists' and their re-visit intention still to be researched (Abdul & Lebai, 2010).

Re-visit intention is a well-known contributed factor towards the increases of tourism spending in most developing countries (Promsivapallop & Kannaovakun, 2017). Prior studies have repeatedly offered re-visit intention as the results of visitor experience and satisfaction as the antecedent of tourists' re-visit intention or behavioural intention (Cole & Chancellor, 2009). The studies also have looked into the potential mediating and moderating effect of destination attachment on behavioural intention towards community-based tourism destinations (Ramkissoon & Mavondo, 2015). It is also evident that community-based tourism destinations in developing countries into the cognitive attributes of destination images of tourists' and their re-visit intention is inadequate,

particularly in Malaysia (Abdul & Lebai, 2010). Therefore, this study raised the issues whether the different cognitive attributes of destination images towards community-based tourism destinations have any effect on re-visit intention, and mediating role of destination attachment between destination images and re-visit intention? The rest of the paper is developed through the discussion of relevant literature and methods of the study. The analysis and findings of the study is also discussed followed by the discussion of the study. Finally, the study is decided to inform the conclusions and the implications of the study at the last part of the paper.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *2.1. Community-Based Tourism*

Community Based Tourism (CBT) is related to host community involvement in sustainability through planning and development (Hall, 1991). The business of selling goods and services, job creation, and enhancement of the relationship between the community and the tourists directly benefit the tourism industry and economy (Chin & Lo, 2017). Hence, CBT is based on the creation of tourist products characterized by community participation in their development (Russell, 2000).

Community Based Tourism (CBT) is an effective way of implementing policy coordination, avoiding conflict among different tourism stakeholders, and obtaining synergies based on the exchange of knowledge, analysis and ability among all members of the community (Kibicho, 2008). In this regards the study of Salazar (2012) stressed that the aims of the CBT is to create a more sustainable tourism industry both formally and informally which focused on the planning and maintaining tourism development by the participation of the communities.

CBT is recognized as a viable rural development strategy, emphasizing active community participation in all tourism activities such as- hosting tourists in their homes, and managing activities of interest to tourists to ensure economic and social returns (Tolkach & King, 2015; Zapata, Hall, Lindo, & Vanderschaeghe, 2011). Studies further acknowledged that community-based tourism provides greater economic benefits to the residents of the local community, provides visitors from tourism activities with high-quality experiences and greater environmental awareness (Lepp, 2007), it helps to provide employment opportunities to the local communities of tourism destinations (Mbaiwa & Stronza, 2010), community-based tourism also contributes in alleviating poverty from the destination community as well as promotes host destinations (Boo & Busser, 2006). Therefore, community-based tourism is considered as one of the development options for local community and tourism industry as well.

### *2.2. Destination Images*

Destination image has long been getting wider attention in the domain of tourism, particularly in the community-based tourism literature to be anticipated its consequences, formation, and antecedents (Tapachai & Waryszak, 2000). Destination image is an influential factor to the tourists in selecting a tourist destination over other, and it plays a crucial role to be attained different positioning relative to rivals (Pike, 2017). Subsequently, destination image is commonly accepted as an important aspect in successful tourism development and destination marketing (Agapito, Valle, & Mendes, 2014).

Destination image is widely used as a construct in marketing and behavioural sciences research to be demonstrated the perceived beliefs, feelings, and impressions of clients on a product, object, behaviour and event (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997). However, various scholars of destination marketing for example; Fakeye and Crompton (1991) defined destination image as a comprehensive set of mental representation of knowledge, feelings, and perceptions of an individual toward a particular destination. In other words, destination image is *"an interactive system of thoughts, opinions, feelings, visualizations, and intentions toward a destination"* (Tasci & Gartner, 2007).

Destination image is primarily composed by three dimensions such as- cognitive, affective, and conative (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Prayag, 2007). However, the cognitive and affective dimensions are widely recommended by various scholars to be studied destination image in order to gain basic understanding on it (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Sonmez & Sirakaya, 2002). Cognitive dimension is the beliefs and knowledge of an individual about the attributes of a destination image, while affective dimension is the emotion or feelings of an individual involved to a destination (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). However, cognitive dimensions of destination image is the key focus of this study in particular, which directly affects tourists' destination attachment (Veasna, Wu, & Huang, 2013) and behavioral intentions for re-visit in the future (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Chi & Qu, 2008; Choi, Tkachenko, & Sil, 2011; Ramkissoon, Uysal, & Brown, 2011). Such cognitive dimension of destination image will influence tourists in the process of selecting and evaluating a specific destination for leisure or recreation.

In this paper, atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand is involved as the key antecedents of destination images. Atmosphere refers as the peaceful environment and the appropriate to rest and relaxing the destination, while studies in community-based tourism explained that cultural environment and its values is closely associated with destination image (Frías, Rodríguez, Alberto Castañeda, Sabiote, & Buhalis, 2012), which is considered as one of the important antecedents of destination image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). A more recent study conducted by Michael, James and Michael (2018) suggested that the image of a destination can be strengthen by the cultural environment of a particular tourist destination. Furthermore, destination brand also identified as another antecedent of destination image (Qu, Kim, & Im, 2011). Such destination brand contributes to build image of the destinations that positively influence to the potential tourists for selecting a destination (Blain, Levy, & Ritchie, 2005; Pike & Page, 2014; Qu et al., 2011; Zenker, Braun, & Petersen, 2017). In fact, destination brand are mainly used as a process to communicate the distinctive identity of a destination which differentiate itself from its competitors (Morrison & Anderson, 2002).

Prior studies acknowledged that cognitive image have a significant influence on destination image, and intention to visit the destination in future which is considered as re-visit intention (Qu et al., 2011; Wang & Hsu, 2010). A strong destination image is considered as the foundation in forming the tourists' positive attitudes towards a tourist destination (Oh, 1999; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). The community-based tourism studies also reported that destination image influences both tourists' intention to re-visit the destination and their preparedness to recommend it to others (Chi & Qu, 2008; Choi et al., 2011; Ramkissoon et al., 2011).

### *2.3. Destination Attachment and Re-visit Intention*

Destination attachment is formed between people and buildings, environments, homes, objects, landscapes, neighborhoods, towns, and cities (Cresswell, 2015). In the domain of tourism, destination attachment is defined as *"the strength of the cognitive, emotional, functional and autobiographical bonds connecting the tourist with a destination"* (Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010). These components of destination attachment comprises destination dependency as functional attachment, destination identity which is also treated as tourist identity in relation to the destination development, affective bond refers as positive emotion, and automatic prominence that is positivity of thoughts and feelings for a destination (Huang, Qu, & Cao, 2016).

On the other side, re-visit intention is the readiness of an individual to make a visit to the same destination in future in order to purchase a vacation package (Han & Kim, 2010). The greater impression of a tourism destination and its associated attributes plays an important role to be formed an individual's intention to re-visit towards a particular destination (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, & Wanhill, 1993). Moreover, Zhang, Fu, Cai, and Lu (2014) argued that repeat visitation is considered to the most destination marketing organizations as a cost-effective and desirable market segment. Thus, destination marketers should consider the antecedents of a destination that influence re-visit intention of tourists towards community-based tourism destinations for successful tourism development.

Previous studies proposed that destination attachment connects both the tourists' cognitive and affective engagement with tourism activities at a particular destination (Williams & Vaske, 2003). It is formed as a sign of affective attachment to those places through the process on which individuals form affective connections to these places (Yuksel et al., 2010), and affective connections comprised through positive, or negative or mixed feelings of tourists about a destination (Kil, Holland, Stein, & Ko, 2012), which in turn create re-visit intention towards a particular tourism destination (Cheng & Kuo, 2015). Past studies in this line constantly argued that destination attachment influence visitors to be repeatedly visits the same destination (Song, Kim, & Yim, 2017; Stylos, Bellou, Andronikidis, & Vassiliadis, 2017).

### *2.4. Conceptual Framework*

The conceptual framework of this study is built on extant of destination attachment and re-visit intention. This study proposes that destination images (atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand) may or may not affect destination attachment and re-visit intention towards community-based tourism destinations. Destination attachment is also proposed as the mediating construct between destination images (atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand) and re-visit intention towards community-based tourism destinations. The relational paths are illustrated in a conceptual framework for destination attachment and re-visit intention towards various local community tourism destinations in the context of Malaysia.

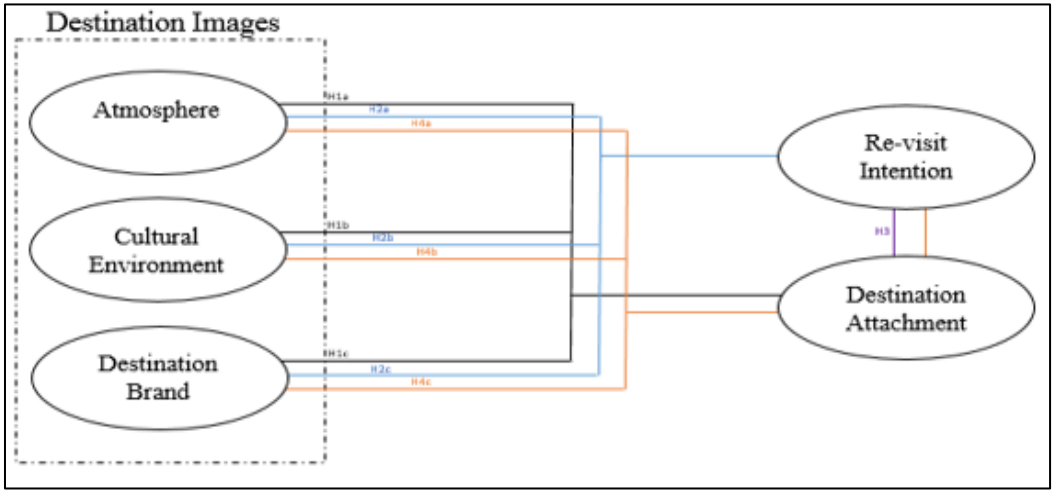
In particular, the framework contended that the proposed three antecedents (e.g. atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand) of destination images affect both destination attachment and re-visit intention. This proposition received support from the studies in similar areas (Cheng & Kuo, 2015; Kil et al., 2012; Williams & Vaske, 2003). In this regard, Song, Kim and Yim (2017) explained that cognitive image is an influential antecedent of destination

attachment, and destination image has a significant influence on destination attachment (Prayag & Ryan, 2011). However, as presented in Figure-1, it can be anticipated that destination images (atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand) have direct impact on destination attachment (Veasna et al., 2013). Therefore, it is expected that the strong destination image of a destination positively influences to the destination attachment. On the other hand, studies on community-based tourism claimed that destination images has a direct and positive effect on tourists' re-visit intention (Chew & Jahari, 2014; Chi & Qu, 2008; Choi et al., 2011; Ramkissoon et al., 2011). Moreover, scholars also argued that destination attachment has a direct effect on re-visit intention (Moore & Graefe, 1994; Song et al., 2017; Stylos et al., 2017).

The framework also revealed that destination attachment is suggested to mediate the relationship between destination images (atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand) and re-visit intention (Moore & Graefe, 1994). The rationale behind such a relationship can be explained through the lenses of place attachment which is predicted by the activity involved and place characteristics (Gross & Brown, 2008). In particular, sense of belonging and being identified with a place contributes to attachment that could clearly promote re-visit intention (Wickham, 2000). The above discussions and arguments leads to the following hypotheses:

H1: Destination images ([a] atmosphere, [b] cultural environment, and [c] destination brand) positively affect destination attachment towards community based tourism destination.
H2: Destination images ([a] atmosphere, [b] cultural environment, and [c] destination brand) positively affect re-visit intention towards community based tourism destination.
H3: Destination attachment positively affect re-visit intention towards community based tourism destination.
H4: Destination images ([a] atmosphere, [b] cultural environment, and [c] destination brand) positively affect re-visit intention, mediated by destination attachment towards community based tourism destination.

**Figure 1**: Cognitive Attributes of Destination Images and Destination Attachment Influence on Re-visit Intention



## 3. METHODS

### *3.1. Study Site*

With an aim to generalize the findings on tourists' perspection on community based tourism in Malaysia, the population of the present study consists of tourists who visited the various community based tourism destinations in Sarawak, Malaysia. Sarawak been chosen to represent Malaysia due to the popularity of Sarawak state for its nature tourism and diverse culture heritage attractions as compare to other states in Malaysia (Weaver, 2010). A total of 200 questionanires were distributed in 34 sites of rural tourism destinations in Malaysia (Lo et al., 2013) community based tourism destinations in Sarawak, Malaysia. From 124 completed questionaires, 114 sets of questionnaires were collected back from 14 community based tourism in Sarawak, Malaysia. Among these, near to 90% of the survey was taken from site of Kampung Santubong, Kampung Anas Rais, Borneo Heights, Gunung Gading, and Kampung Bako. The sites are the important topical area with a high potential for effective strategic market differentiation for local community-based tourism destinations that still remains unexplored in Malaysia. The destinations have been gained popularity among local and international tourists as community-based tourism destinations in the country. The destinations are surrounded by unpopulated natural environment and resources which shared the most common and unique features for tourism activities. These community-based tourism destinations are owned and operated by the local communities.

### *3.2. Survey Measures*

The survey was carried out to collect data to be tested the significance of the relationships between the constructs as proposed in the conceptual framework (also see Figure 1). The survey instrument is developed through using observed variables followed by demographic questions such as gender, age, nationality of the tourists, and visited destination of the tourists. Items used to measure the various constructs under study were derived from existing tourism literature. Cognitive attributes of destination image were adopted from the study of Baloglu and McCleary (1999), Beerli and Martin (2004), and San Martin and Del Bosque (2008), cultural environment and atmosphere San Martin and Del Bosque (2008), destination brand Chen and Tsai (2007), destination attachment (Yuksel et al., 2010), and re-visit intention was adopted from the study of (Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002).

### *3.3. Sampling procedures and data collection*

The judgmental and snowball sampling approaches were applied to meet the aim of this study and respondents were selected purposefully to be confirmed the intended respondents (Newby-Clark, McGregor, & Zanna, 2002). The study was obtained 124 completed questionnaires where 10 questionnaires were removed due to a large proportion of incomplete responses during the screening process. Finally, 114 usable questionnaires were used for data analysis as the sample size meets the requirements of the minimum sample size to be employed Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)[1] (Akter, D'Ambra, & Ray, 2011; Hair, Hollingsworth,

[1] The sample size of cases in the current study meets the required sample sizes of 30 cases (i.e. 10 cases × maximum of three arrows [i.e. from atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand] pointing at a latent research construct [i.e. destination attachment]), 96 cases (i.e. based on power analysis using G*Power), and 100 to 200 cases for a meaningful structural (or path) analysis, as suggested by Hair et al. (2017), Akter et al. (2011), and Hoyle (1995), respectively.

Randolph, & Chong, 2017; Hoyle, 1995). However, no incentive was offered to the respondents for their participation in this study, it was completely voluntary and prior to their participation an informed consent was obtained.

### *3.4. Data Analysis Techniques and Procedures*

This study used partial least squares SmartPLS-3.0 software as analytical tool and employed structural equation modeling to assess the proposed relationships in the conceptual model under study. The data analysis technique is suitable for exploratory and confirmatory research that aims to investigate the extent to which exogenous or independent latent constructs which predict the endogenous or dependent latent constructs (Hair et al., 2017; Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015). PLS-SEM is preferred to avoid bias estimation due to the unknown nature of the data, which may results in Type I and Type II errors (Sarstedt, Hair, Ringle, Thiele, & Gudergan, 2016). PLS-SEM was considered most appropriate to explain the complexity of the tourists' behavior in the present study. This is because most of the constructs applied in the social sciences field are design constructs (Henseler, 2017), thus leads to the applicability of a composite measurement model as the case of the present study.

In PLS-SEM procedures, three steps were used to be assessed the conceptual model of this study. The first step commenced with the test for common method bias using Harman's (1976) single-factor test and collinearity of indicators by computing the variance inflation factor (Hair et al., 2017). The second step strives to establish convergent and discriminant validity in the measurement model by conducting confirmatory factor analysis and correlation analyses. Moreover, factor loadings, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) were tested against the recommended threshold values (Byrne, 2010; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair, Anderson, Babin, & Black, 2010; Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015; Sarkar, Echambadi, & Harrison, 2001). HTMT with a threshold of 0.85 was used in the present study to indicate any multi-collinearity issues between the construct items (Henseler et al., 2015). Finally, the significance and the effect size of the path relationships in, variance explained by, and predictive relevance of the structural model was examined through using bootstrapping and blindfolding procedures (Hair et al., 2017; Ringle et al., 2015).

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### *4.1. Manipulation Checks*

This study performed Common method variance (CMV) using the Harman's (1976) single-factor test for testing the common method bias. In this test, all research constructs are entered into one principal component factor analysis, and thus the extraction method of a principal component of one fixed factor with no rotation is applied (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2012). Results of the factor analysis has shown that the largest variance explained by the first factor was 45.26% of the total variance. Moreover, no correlation between research constructs was more than the cut-off point of 0.90; the highest correlation between constructs under study was 0.611 (correlation between cultural environment and destination brand) (Bagozzi, Yi, & Phillips, 1991). Thus, common method bias was not a concern in this study.

In addition, this study was tested the collinearity of indicators, determined by the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), was below the critical value of five (Hair et al., 2017). Thus, there is no issue of collinearity of indicators in both the measurement model and structural model of this study. Next, a two-step procedures were employed to be assessed the measurement model of the constructs under study and discriminant validity. Finally, the proposed hypothesizes of the study were tested in structural model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

### *4.2. Profile of the Respondents*

As mentioned earlier the study investigated tourists who recently visited at different community-based tourism destinations in Sarawak, Malaysia and consists of a total of 114 tourists as respondent for final analysis. Table 1 illustrates that the ratio of female respondents is higher than the male respondents which is 58.8 and 41.2 percent respectively, while in terms of range of age, the dominant respondents are 20 to 29 years of age which is 69.3 percent followed by 30 to 39 years which is 21.9 percent. However, respondents with the range of age 19 years and below and 40 years and above is less than 10 percent in total. On the other side, most of the respondents of this study are Malaysian nationals and a very few are internationals which are 95.6 and 4.4 percent respectively, while the most common destination they visited was Kampung Santubong (50.9%) and Kampung Anas Rais (12.3%).

**Table 1**: Summary of Respondent's Demographic Information

| **Variables** | | **Frequency** | **Percentage (%)** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 47 | 41.2 |
| | Female | 67 | 58.8 |
| Age | 19 years and below | 2 | 1.8 |
| | 20 to 29 years | 79 | 69.3 |
| | 30 to 39 years | 25 | 21.9 |
| | 40 to 49 years | 4 | 3.5 |
| | 50 years and above | 4 | 3.5 |
| Nationality | Malaysian | 109 | 95.6 |
| | Non-Malaysian | 5 | 4.4 |
| Destination | Kampung Santubong | 58 | 50.9 |
| | Kampung Anas Rais | 14 | 12.3 |
| | Borneo Heights | 10 | 8.8 |
| | Gunung Gading | 10 | 8.8 |
| | Kampung Bako | 10 | 8.8 |
| | Hot Spring Panchor | 2 | 1.8 |
| | Kampung Semadang | 2 | 1.8 |
| | Kampung Semban | 2 | 1.8 |
| | Bung Bratak | 1 | 0.9 |
| | Kampung Benuk | 1 | 0.9 |
| | Kampung Bisira Rayang | 1 | 0.9 |
| | Kampung Giam | 1 | 0.9 |
| | Kampung Telian Mukah | 1 | 0.9 |
| | Mount Singai, Bau | 1 | 0.9 |

### *4.3. Assessment of Measurement Model*

In assessing the measurement model, convergent validity was evaluated by examining factor loadings, composite reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As presented in Table 2, standardize factor loadings in the measurement model were above 0.70, which exceeds the recommended threshold value of 0.60 (Byrne, 2010; Hair et al., 2010). The Composite Reliability (CR) of all constructs under study were above 0.80, which exceeds the recommended threshold value of 0.70 (Sarkar et al., 2001). Likewise, according to the suggestions of Fornell and Larcker (1981), the AVE values of all research constructs were above the recommended threshold value of 0.50. Therefore, this study satisfactorily met all the three conditions of convergent validity.

**Table 2**: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

| Constructs | Items | Factor Loading | AVE | Composite Reliability |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Atmosphere | AT1 | 0.910 | 0.808 | 0.926 |
| | AT2 | 0.942 | | |
| | AT3 | 0.842 | | |
| Cultural Environment | CE1 | 0.895 | 0.743 | 0.896 |
| | CE2 | 0.904 | | |
| | CE3 | 0.780 | | |
| Destination Brand | DB1 | 0.891 | 0.806 | 0.926 |
| | DB2 | 0.915 | | |
| | DB3 | 0.888 | | |
| Destination Attachment | DA1 | 0.937 | 0.892 | 0.961 |
| | DA2 | 0.962 | | |
| | DA3 | 0.934 | | |
| Re-visit Intention | RI1 | 0.941 | 0.852 | 0.945 |
| | RI2 | 0.908 | | |
| | RI3 | 0.920 | | |

a. Average variance extracted (AVE) = (summation of the square of the factor loadings) / ([summation of the square of the factor loadings] + [summation of the square of the error variances]).

b. Composite Reliability (CR) = (square of the summation of the factor loadings) / ([square of the summation of the factor loadings] + [square of the summation of the error variances]).

However, in assessing the discriminant validity of this study, the criterions recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Henseler et al.'s (2015) HTMT were used. Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggests that the square root of the AVE should exceed the correlation values between the constructs of the study. As seen in Table 3, the square roots of the AVEs were greater than the correlation values for each research constructs pairing. Discriminant validity of the constructs under study is established based on the suggestions of Henseler et al. (2015) as the threshold value of the HTMT is below 0.90. Therefore, results of the test of discriminant validity were met.

**Table 3**: Fornell-Larcker and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Criterion Results

| | **Fornell-Larcker Criterion*** | | | | | **Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Criterion** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Atmosphere** | **Cultural Environment** | **Destination Brand** | **Destination Attachment** | **Re-visit Intention** | **Atmosphere** | **Cultural Environment** | **Destination Brand** | **Destination Attachment** | **Re-visit Intention** |
| Atmosphere | **0.899** | | | | | | | | | |
| Cultural Environment | 0.418 | **0.862** | | | | 0.497 | | | | |
| Destination Brand | 0.458 | 0.611 | **0.898** | | | 0.531 | 0.720 | | | |
| Destination Attachment | 0.533 | 0.501 | 0.529 | **0.944** | | 0.589 | 0.569 | 0.581 | | |
| Re-visit Intention | 0.556 | 0.334 | 0.294 | 0.481 | **0.923** | 0.616 | 0.386 | 0.327 | 0.520 | |

***Note:*** Bold diagonals represent the square root of the AVE while the off-diagonal represent the correlations.

### *4.4. Assessment of Structural Model*

The structural model of this study was assessed using SmartPLS-3.0 and bootstrapping procedures were used. The analytical technique was utilized to estimate the precision estimates and significance of path relationships between the constructs under study (Hair et al., 2017; Ringle et al., 2015). This was done by generating the T-statistics for significant testing through the bootstrapping procedures (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014). A total of 5,000 cases of sub-samples in bootstrapping procedures were drawn to allow the procedure in estimating the model of each of the sub-samples (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011).

Table 4 depicts the path coefficients findings for the structural model and the results show that atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand have significant positive impacts on destination attachment as the t-values of their relationships were 4.424, 2.103, and 2.085 respectively which met the threshold values. Thus, the hypotheses H1a-H1c are supported. In contrary, only atmosphere have significant positive impact on re-visit intention as its t-values was 4.239, while cultural environment, and destination brand do not have significant impact on re-visit intention as the t-values were 0.535, and 0.653 respectively. Therefore, only the hypotheses H2a is supported, and H2b, and H2c did not supported the hypotheses. However, the study found the result of t-value of the relationship of destination attachment on re-visit intention was 6.077, thus H3 is supported. Consequently, it can be concluded that destination attachment has a positive relationship on re-visit intention. Further post hoc (mediation) analysis of the structural model shows that destination attachment mediates the relationship between atmosphere and re-visit intention as its t-value met the threshold value (2.093), while destination attachment did not mediate the relationship between cultural environment, destination brand, and re-visit intention as the t-values for both the relationships was 1.485, which did not meet the threshold value. Hence, only the hypotheses H4a is supported, while H4b, and H4c did not support the hypotheses.

In the structural model, the study further assesses the predictive capability or predictive relevance of the structural model through using blindfolding procedures followed by the assessment of the cross-validated redundancy. The study was used Stone-Geisser's predictive relevance ($Q^2$) to estimates and co-efficient of determination ($R^2$) values to indicates the levels of predictive accuracy of the model (Hair et al., 2014). As seen in the table 4, the value of $R^2$ for destination attachment, and re-visit intention is 0.749, and 0.671 respectively. The results suggested that atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand explain 74.9%, and 67.1% of variance in destination attachment, and re-visit intention respectively which is considered as strong in both the cases. Moreover, the results also show that the $Q^2$ values of destination attachment, and re-visit intention is 0.358, and 0.283 respectively which suggests that there is a predictive relevance as both the results are larger than 0. Thus, given the findings of $R^2$ and $Q^2$, it can be concluded that the model has a predictive quality in explaining the relationships between the constructs in structural model.

Furthermore, based on the suggestions of Hair et al. (2014), this study assessed the collinearity issue in the inner model through using VIF and effect size ($f^2$) of the constructs. As the threshold value of VIF $\geq$ 3.3 indicates a potential collinearity problem (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2006), as the results of all the constructs of the structural model are under the threshold value, thus, the result demonstrated that each constructs of the model is distinguished and suitable for structural equation modeling test. Effect size ($f^2$) is another path coefficient measure. The threshold value of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 interpreted as small, medium, and large effect size (Hair et al., 2014). Table 4 shows that atmosphere had a medium effect size and significant positive relationship to destination attachment ($f^2 = 0.142$, $\beta = 0.331$), followed by destination brand ($f^2 = 0.061$, $\beta = 0.249$), and cultural environment ($f^2 = 0.046$, $\beta = 0.211$). When atmosphere was tested on re-visit intention, it showed a medium effect size and significant positive relationship ($f^2 = 0.186$, $\beta = 0.422$), but a small effect size with no significant relationship was observed for cultural environment and destination brand on re-visit intention. Finally, destination attachment had a medium effect size and significant positive relationship to re-visit intention ($f^2 = 0.063$, $\beta = 0.482$) of the study.

**Table 4**: Results of the Structural Model

| Path Relationship | Beta (β) | S.E. | t-value | Decision | $f^2$ | $R^2$ | VIF | $Q^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1a: AT -> DA | 0.331 | 0.075 | 4.424** | Supported | 0.142 | 0.749 | 1.316 | 0.358 |
| H1b: CE -> DA | 0.211 | 0.100 | 2.103* | Supported | 0.046 | | 1.735 | |
| H1c: DB -> DA | 0.249 | 0.119 | 2.085* | Supported | 0.061 | | 1.732 | |
| H2a: AT -> RI | 0.422 | 0.100 | 4.239** | Supported | 0.186 | 0.671 | 1.505 | 0.283 |
| H2b: CE -> RI | 0.079 | 0.147 | 0.535 | Not supported | 0.006 | | 1.735 | |
| H2c: DB -> RI | 0.086 | 0.132 | 0.653 | Not supported | 0.006 | | 1.838 | |
| H3: DA -> RI | 0.482 | 0.079 | 6.077** | Supported | 0.063 | | 1.705 | |
| **Post hoc (Mediation) Analysis** | **Beta** | **S.E.** | **t-value** | **Decision** | | | | |
| H4a: AT -> DA -> RI | 0.087 | 0.042 | 2.093* | Supported | | | | |
| H4b: CE -> DA -> RI | 0.055 | 0.037 | 1.485 | Not supported | | | | |

| Path Relationship | Beta (β) | S.E. | t-value | Decision | $f^2$ | $R^2$ | VIF | $Q^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H4c: DB -> DA -> RI | 0.065 | 0.044 | 1.485 | Not supported | | | | |

***Note:*** VIF = Variance inflation factor. **p<0.01, *p<0.05 (two-tailed). S. E= Standard errors.
AT= atmosphere, CE= cultural environment, DB= destination brand, DA= destination attachment, and RI= re-visit intention.

### *4.5. Discussion*

The atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand of community-based tourism destinations in a developing country are investigated as the antecedents of destination images and the mediating effect of destination attachment was also investigated between the effect of destination images (atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand) and tourists' re-visit intention. The study revealed a mixed finding, with important implications for community-based tourism studies and practices. The importance of destination image is on the rise and many researchers have used this construct to explain destination attachment (Veasna et al., 2013) and re-visit intention (Stylos et al., 2017). It is noteworthy to explain that tourists' perception of the destination image is subjective and it is influenced by many factors (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Pike, 2017). The current study has shown clearly the significant impact of atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand on destination attachment. This results are similar with the previous study (Veasna et al., 2013). However, tourists of the community-based tourism destinations prefer a suitable atmosphere of the destination such as- peaceful and relaxing environment to visit the destinations, but, cultural environment and the destination brand is not a must requirement to them. This study clearly found that the atmosphere has a significant influence on tourists' re-visit intention of tourists towards the community-based tourism destinations, while cultural environment, and destination brand do not have influence on re-visit intention of the tourists.

On the other hand, the current study has established a strong link between destination attachment of the tourists and their re-visit intention (β destination attachment-revisit intention= 0.482) towards community-based tourism destinations. The findings in this study suggest that an attachment towards a particular tourism destination is a result of the social and cultural environment which it is enticed too (George & George, 2012; Ringer, 2013). In particular, tourists who are immersed in cultural tourism and perceive the destination to be attractive tend to become attached on the destination and tend to adopt the symbolic meanings of the host culture into their own identity. This result suggests that destination attachment of tourists towards the community-based tourism destinations are essential to ensure that they will visit the destinations in future. Furthermore, how does atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand translate into revisit intention? This study has shown that a suitable atmosphere of the community-based tourism destinations leads to the destination attachment of the tourists which in turn leads to re-visit intention. Therefore, analysis of this study demonstrated that destination attachment has a mediating effect between the relationships of atmosphere and re-visit intention. The result suggests that destination attachment is an important issue to the existing and potential tourists of the community-based tourism destinations as they mainly develop a bond with particular community-based tourism destinations, rather than re-visit intention. These findings support previous claims

that tourism can have a role in the development of a national identity in the macro level perspective (Hall, 2002).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study provides valuable insights of the antecedents of destination images and mediating role of destination attachment between destination images and re-visit intention. The study presented a comprehensive framework to study destination images and re-visit intention of the tourists in community-based tourism destinations. The effects of the antecedents of destination images (atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand) on destination attachment and re-visit intention were further examined using structural equation modeling. The findings indicate a partial effect of all the direct and indirect effects (mediated) tested, thus partial support for the hypotheses listed. The findings provide further discussions on the effect of destination image and re-visit intention, as well as the mediating effect of destination attachment towards community-based tourism destinations.

In the study, it is clearly seen that atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand is more likely to the tourists to be formed destination attachment in community-based tourism destinations. Therefore, this study suggested to the policy makers and destination operators to improve more the quality of atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand. On the other hand, planners ought to be aware that tourists consider more attractive atmosphere of the destinations, while, cultural environment, and destination brand is less preferred to them in revisiting the community-based tourism destinations. This study also suggests to focus the destination attachment to attract tourists and to influence their re-visitation tendencies as the study found the significant positive effects between destination attachment and re-visit intention, it translates relationships between the antecedent atmosphere and revisit intention.

However, the study is not without its limitations. First, the variety of places and people taken as samples provide a wide diversity to be considered, but the study also did not take into account the different ethnicities. The tourists with different ethnic groups may have differing perceptions into destination images and their re-visit intention. Second, the samples were also limited to tourists' visiting various community-based tourism destinations in Sarawak, Malaysia. A higher sample could provide more robust results. Third, some conceptual problems arise into the notion of destination attachment and re-visit intention. In fact, the Malaysian tourists may have more opportunities to be repeatedly visited a particular community-based tourism destination, while it is not often easy for international tourists as various constraints are involved over there such as- visa processing, geographical distance, and financial. Thus, this study suggests to look tourists' perceptions on re-visit intention separately for domestic tourists and international tourists.

The findings also provide a window into the impact of re-visit intention and destination attachment as a dual edged sword, getting new and existing tourist coming back to the tourism destinations they visited. This matter needs to be pursued further. Moreover, the present study considered only three antecedents of destination images: atmosphere, cultural environment, and destination brand. Although, the present study tested the structural equation modeling which is an improvement over existing ones. Future studies can expand on the model with the inclusion of other antecedents such as- lifestyle and personality traits of tourists that could have impact on destination images.

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**Appendix A**: Cross Loadings Analysis for Checking Discriminant Validity for Measurement Model

| Constructs | | Atmosphere | Cultural Environment | Destination Brand | Destination Attachment | Re-visit Intention |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Atmosphere | AT1 | **0.910** | 0.341 | 0.324 | 0.488 | 0.487 |
| | AT2 | **0.942** | 0.302 | 0.317 | 0.443 | 0.588 |
| | AT3 | **0.842** | 0.495 | 0.611 | 0.511 | 0.415 |
| Cultural Environment | CE1 | 0.397 | **0.895** | 0.565 | 0.410 | 0.298 |
| | CE2 | 0.397 | **0.904** | 0.584 | 0.444 | 0.263 |
| | CE3 | 0.285 | **0.780** | 0.428 | 0.436 | 0.300 |
| Destination Brand | DB 1 | 0.483 | 0.587 | **0.891** | 0.443 | 0.253 |
| | DB 2 | 0.399 | 0.547 | **0.915** | 0.510 | 0.212 |
| | DB 3 | 0.358 | 0.515 | **0.888** | 0.470 | 0.324 |
| Destination Attachment | DA 1 | 0.498 | 0.461 | 0.546 | **0.937** | 0.444 |
| | DA 2 | 0.497 | 0.488 | 0.487 | **0.962** | 0.468 |
| | DA 3 | 0.514 | 0.470 | 0.465 | **0.934** | 0.452 |
| Re-visit Intention | RI1 | 0.479 | 0.353 | 0.25 | 0.464 | **0.941** |
| | RI2 | 0.546 | 0.229 | 0.276 | 0.448 | **0.908** |
| | RI3 | 0.511 | 0.346 | 0.288 | 0.422 | **0.920** |