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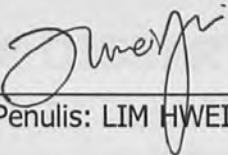
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JUDUL: TOURISTS SHOPPING SATISFACTION IN KOTA KINABALU
CITY: THE SHOPPING CENTRE ATTRIBUTES
IJAZAH: SARJANA PENTADBIRAN PERNIAGAAN (MBA)
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**TOURISTS SHOPPING SATISFACTION IN
KOTA KINABALU CITY: THE SHOPPING
CENTRE ATTRIBUTES**

LIM HWEI JIN

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER
OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH
2008**



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DECLARATION

The materials in this thesis are original except for quotations, excerpts, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.

8 JULY 2008

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ABSTRACT

Shopping is the most common and enjoyable activities undertaken by the people when they are on holiday. It is also acknowledged as a primary means of generating tourism revenue and contributing to economic development. In Malaysia, shopping is the country's second highest contributor where the shopping activities alone accounted as much as 25.7% of the tourist total expenditure in 2006. For that reason, this paper aims to highlight the main shopping centres attributes that affect tourist shopping satisfaction in shopping centres of Kota Kinabalu city; hence, it also provides the explanation of the effects of moderating factors towards the relationship between the shopping centre attributes and tourists shopping satisfaction. The results in this study provide strong support for the propositions of the study that five of the shopping centres attributes (centre- featured oriented, atmosphere, ancillary facilities, variety and level, and cultural factors) have significant influential effects on tourists shopping satisfaction. The study found that tourist shoppers demand for wide varieties of goods as well as the entertainment facilities and eating outlets to be found in shopping centre. Hence, the shopping atmosphere and environment as such the cleanliness, spaciousness, protection of weather and air-conditioning quality are also essential to the shoppers' satisfaction. Furthermore, the availability of culture events and souvenir shops are the extra bonus in tourists' shopping satisfaction generation. Besides that, the age of tourists is reported to have positive moderating effects towards the formation of satisfaction among tourist shoppers. The findings of present study enable shopping centre managers to modify their strategies in order to meet the actual needs of the targeted tourists. Consequently, the tourists shopping satisfaction shall be improved.

ABSTRAK

KEPUASHATAN PARA PELANCONG MEMBELI-BELAH DI BANDARAYA KOTA KINABALU: ATRIBUT PUSAT MEMBELI-BELAH

Membeli-belah merupakan aktiviti umum bagi orang ramai yang sedang bercuti. Ia juga diiktiraf sebagai penjana pendapatan pelancongan dan penyumbang kepada perkembangan ekonomi negara. Di Malaysia, aktiviti membeli-belah mencatatkan sumbangan yang kedua tinggi dalam jumlah pembelanjaan pelancongan tahun 2006 dengan mencatatkan 25.7 peratus daripada jumlah keseluruhan. Oleh demikian, tesis ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan perhubungan antara atribut pusat membeli-belah dengan kepuashatian para pelancong yang membeli-belah di pusat membeli-belah bandaraya Kota Kinabalu. Di samping itu, ia juga membekalkan penjelasan kesan pengaruh faktor penyelaras bagi perhubungan atribut pusat membeli-belah dan kepuashatian para pelancong. Keputusan yang diperolehi mendapati lima atribut (faktor ciri-ciri pusat, faktor suasana, perkhidmatan sampingan, faktor kepelbagaian dan tahap, dan faktor kebudayaan) dapat mempengaruhi kepuashatian pelancong. Kajian ini juga mendapati para palancong meminta kepelbagaian pilihan barangan yang tinggi, pusat hiburan dan persekitaran membeli-belah yang bersih, lapang, pusat membeli-belah dilindungi daripada cuaca luar dan penyaman udara yang berkualiti tinggi. Di samping itu, kesediaan program kebudayaan dan kedai cenderamata juga meningkatkan kepuashatian pelancong. Dalam kajian ini, umur para pelancong ditentukan sebagai faktor penyelaras yang mempengaruhi perhubungan atribut pusat dengan kepuashatian para pelancong. Keputusan kajian ini membolehkan pengurus pusat membeli-belah untuk mengubahsuaikan atau memperbaiki strategi yang sedia ada supaya permintaan para pelancong dapat dicapai. Kesambungannya, kepuashatian membeli-belah para pelancong dapat ditingkatkan.



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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Tourism today has grown significantly in both economic and social importance. The Ninth Malaysia Plan (2006-2010) identified tourism as an important economic growth sector, geared towards making Sabah a developed state in Malaysia by year 2015 (YAB Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, 2006). Tourism is one of the world's largest industries, and shopping is the most popular activity for tourists (Kinley *et al.*, 2002). It carries a higher priority for some tourists than sightseeing, recreation or any other holiday activities (Reisinger and Waryzack, 1996). Tourism is identified as a key sector to attain the Vision 2020 target due to its significant contribution to the state coffer (Sabah Tourism Master Plan, 1996).

Sabah has welcomed 2,478,443 visitors in 2007 and posting a 18.5 percent increase over 2006 (Research Division for Sabah Tourism Board, 2008). International tourist arrivals registered an increase of 31.5 percent from 750,023 in 2006 to 987,660 last year while domestic arrivals grew 11.2 percent from 1.34 million in 2006 to 1.49 million last year (Nam News Network, 2008). Table 1.1 illustrates the growth of tourist arrivals in Sabah from year 2002 to year 2007. The detailed visitors' arrival to Sabah is shown in Appendix A. The visitors' arrival to Sabah has been an increasing trend since from year 2002 to year 2007.

Table 1.1: A Statistical Review of Tourists Arrival in Sabah from 2002-2007

Year	Number of Tourists Arrivals
2002	1,107,356
2003	1,251,454
2004	1,773,271
2005	1,828,771
2006	2,091,658
2007	2,478,443

Source: Sabah Tourism Board (2008)



Shopping is the most common and enjoyable activities undertaken by the people when they on holiday. Furthermore, it is also acknowledged as a primary means of generating tourism revenue and contributing to economic development (Paige and Littrell, 2003). For many visitors, no trip is complete without having spent time shopping (Kent *et al.*, 1983). According to Wong and Law (2003), the shopping expenditure accounts for approximately one-third of total spending. Given the size of this market with the growth in both the tourism industry and tourist destinations, identifying the desires of this consumer segment is increasingly important in the contemporary marketplace (Kinley *et al.*, 2002). Hence, the government of Malaysia has put great effort to promote Malaysia as an international shopping destination to attract tourists and encourage spending.

According to YB Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Bin Tengku Mansor, Former Minister Tourism Malaysia (2007), shopping is the country's second highest contributor where the shopping activities alone accounted as much as 25.7% of the tourist total expenditure in 2006. The expenditure pattern of tourists in Malaysia is supported with the explanation of Turner and Reisinger (2001) which tourist expenditure in shopping was the second most important following accommodation. As such, serious efforts are being put into promoting Malaysia as a leading shopping hub in the region.

Shopping is the number one activity (Kent *et al.*, 1983) and most popular activity (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2006; Timothy and Wall, 1997) while travelling for both international and domestic tourist. Shopping centres have entered an era of destination retailing which has triggered a basic rethinking of what it means to go shopping. Shopping centre as a tourist pursuit is important because they create an inviting environment and incentive to travel, develop an attractive tourist product, a source of pleasure and excitement (Verbeke, 1987). According to the Malaysian Association for Shopping and Highrise Complex Management (2008), Malaysia's shopping centre industry is expected to grow by 20 percent to be worth over RM50 billion over the next two years from the current RM40.4 billion.

The main shopping centres in Sabah are located in Kota Kinabalu city. According to Kota Kinabalu City Council (2008), to date, there are seven major



shopping centres in the city centre which were built between 1985 and 2007. While, there are other four new shopping centres are under construction in the mentioned area (refer Appendix B for the city map and locations of shopping centres). Most shopping centres offer a variety of different retail outlets whereby each shopping centre has its own uniqueness. Tourists compare expectations of important attributes to perceive performance in order to arrive at an evaluation of their experience thus evaluating tourist-destination shopping centre requires a consumer-oriented approach for addressing tourists' perceptions of both importance and satisfaction of the shopping centre attributes (Heung and Cheng, 2000).

1.2 Problem Statement

Shopping centres are not only serving the locals' need but also the tourists who are expected to spend significant amount of money on shopping during their vacation in the city. Tourist shoppers today expect shopping centre to have the right combination of fashion, food, entertainment and services available to meet their needs and desires (Wesley and LeHew, 2002). Thus, according to Kinley *et al.* (2002), tourists continually seek more diverse and rich experience through new adventures and new locations. However, to date, very little research has focused on investigating the shopping centre attributes attractive to the travel customer market especially in Sabah.

The shopping centres in Kota Kinabalu play significant roles in serving as one of the tourist destinations; therefore it is important to equip these shopping centres with the attributes which are able to improve the tourist satisfaction. Hence, shopping centre mall managers are escalating their efforts to attract tourists and increase the number of dollars they spend by specifically marketing shopping centres as tourist destinations (Paige and Littrell, 2003). Many mall developers and managers have focused on making shopping experience more entertaining or amusing that consumers passively view (Wihelm and Mottner, 2005). Therefore, the aim of this research was to identify the significance of the shopping centre attributes that impact tourist satisfactions, also as the pioneer study to overcome the lack of information between the shopping centres available and their customer satisfaction.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions are:

- 1) What are the main shopping centres attributes that affect tourist shopping satisfaction in shopping centre of Kota Kinabalu city?
- 2) To what extent of the shopping centre attributes (centre-feature, atmosphere, ancillary facilities, variety and level, and culture) affect tourists shopping satisfaction in shopping centre of Kota Kinabalu city?
- 3) To what extent the moderators (gender, age and nationality) affect the relationship between shopping centre attributes and tourist shopping satisfaction?

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives are:

1. To identify the shopping centre attributes that affect tourist shopping satisfaction in shopping centres of Kota Kinabalu city.
2. To investigate the relationship between the shopping centre attributes and the tourist shopping satisfaction in shopping centre of Kota Kinabalu city.
3. To determine whether the moderating variables will affect the relationship between shopping centre attributes and tourist shopping satisfaction.
4. To recommend the shopping centres' managers in Kota Kinabalu to improve their shopping centre attributes that influence the tourists' satisfaction and enable the growth of positive competition among supermarkets and shopping centres.

1.5 Significance of Research

The findings of the study will benefit the shopping centre industry especially the shopping centres managements in Kota Kinabalu and retail shop owners as well as the state tourism industry. This research aims to understand the major shopping centre attributes that influence the tourist's satisfaction as well as the services while they do shopping; which would have direct positive impacts on future improvement



for the services and facilities provided. As a result, tourist's expectation could be fulfilled, consequently increase their satisfaction level and intension of revisiting. In a greater view, the satisfaction will turn into positive word-of-mouth of the tourists; indirectly promote Kota Kinabalu as a tourism and shopping paradise.

1.6 Scope of Study

This study looks into the shopping centres attributes that will affect the tourist's satisfaction when tourists do shopping. Thus this study will focus on 7 major shopping centres in Kota Kinabalu city area, namely Center Point Sabah, Karamunsing Shopping Complex, Warisan Square, Wisma Merdeka, Wawasan Plaza, KK Plaza and Asia City Shopping Complex. The respondents are the tourist shoppers who do shopping in those shopping centres.

1.7 Key Variables

For the purpose of this study, the following terms may need to be further clarified to avoid confusion and on what it means in the context of this study.

1.7.1 Shopping Centre

There are many types of retail outlet in the world that would result in different forms of entertaining shopping experience for shoppers. According to McGoldrick and Thompson (1992), many marketing scholars have commented on the ambiguity of the term "shopping centre". Dawson and Lord (1985) defined shopping centre as a group of establishments which is "designed, planned, developed, owned, marketed and managed as a unit". In essence, one or more shopping centres can be located in a shopping district or the shopping centre can stand on its own.

1.7.2 Tourist Shopping

Shopping may not be the primary or sole allure of most vacation destination but it is a universal tourist activity that adds to the overall attractiveness of almost every region of the world (Reisinger and Turner, 2002). Heung and Qu (1998) defined tourist shopping as the expenditure of tangible goods by tourists either for consumption in the destination (excluding food and drink items) or for export to their home countries or regions.

1.7.3 Tourist Shopping Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction (tourist satisfaction) is the consumer's response to the evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations and the actual performance of the product or service as perceived after its consumption (Tse *et. al*, 1988). This definition is further explained in tourism industry by Turner and Reisinger (2001) as the authors found the positive attributes of retail shops directly increased the tourist shopping satisfaction. Hence, Ibrahim and McGoldrick (2003) have found similar findings as the latter where the positive shopping centre attributes have the direct influences on tourist shopping satisfaction.

1.8 Organization of Thesis

Chapter 1: The background of this study has been discussed and the significance of the study also explained to justify the study. Clear objectives also constructed and the current issues involved as well as the scope of the study are stated clearly. This is to facilitate the understanding of the readers.

Chapter 2: This chapter reviews the concept and synthesis the relevance the various past researches that had been done previously. It examines previous researcher's discussion and the type of theories and concepts that have been previously used as well as arguments and discussion that have been done. This will give the readers more information on what has been done in this particular field. Besides that, this

chapter is also taken as the foundation in formulating the research questions, objectives and theoretical framework.

Chapter 3: This chapter explains research methodology will be used to conduct the research. This includes the theoretical framework, hypothesis assumptions, instrument (design of the questionnaire) of the research. Besides that, it explains the data collection method and technique, the size and group of the sample as well as the method for data analysis.

Chapter 4: This chapter reviews the statistical result of the study. The data collected will be analysed by using the SPSS and the results would be interpreted and reported.

Chapter 5: This chapter discusses the finding of the analyses in chapter 4 whether the result support or oppose the hypotheses. It also discusses the limitation of the research which causes the result to vary, conclusion and recommended suggestions of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, literature review from a number of academic journals, books and other sources that is relevant to the purpose of this study is presented. The key reviews focus on the shopping activity and tourism, shopping centre attributes, previous researches, customer satisfaction, shopping satisfaction as well as the tourist shopping satisfaction. This chapter also provides the argument and descriptions over the issues which are closely related to present study, in order to serve as the foundation in building up readers' basic understanding of the topic.

2.2 Shopping as a Form of Tourism

Shopping is among the most common and enjoyable activities undertaken by people on holiday and, in many cases, it provides a major attraction and basic motivation for travel. With recent growth of more efficient transportation systems, increased technology, and widespread use of credit cards, people have been able to travel further a field to shop (Timothy, 2005). In many instances, new found levels of mobility have resulted in increased shopping in places far away from people's home communities. On a relatively small scale, this form of outshopping has existed for centuries but with new innovations and, as societies have become more mobile and affluent, many more opportunities have opened up for people to travel considerable distances, often even overseas, to shop (Timothy, 2005).

Butler (1991) noted that the relationships between shopping and tourism could be divided into two categories. The first is where the primary purpose of the tourist trip is to shop. The second is where shopping is done as a secondary activity



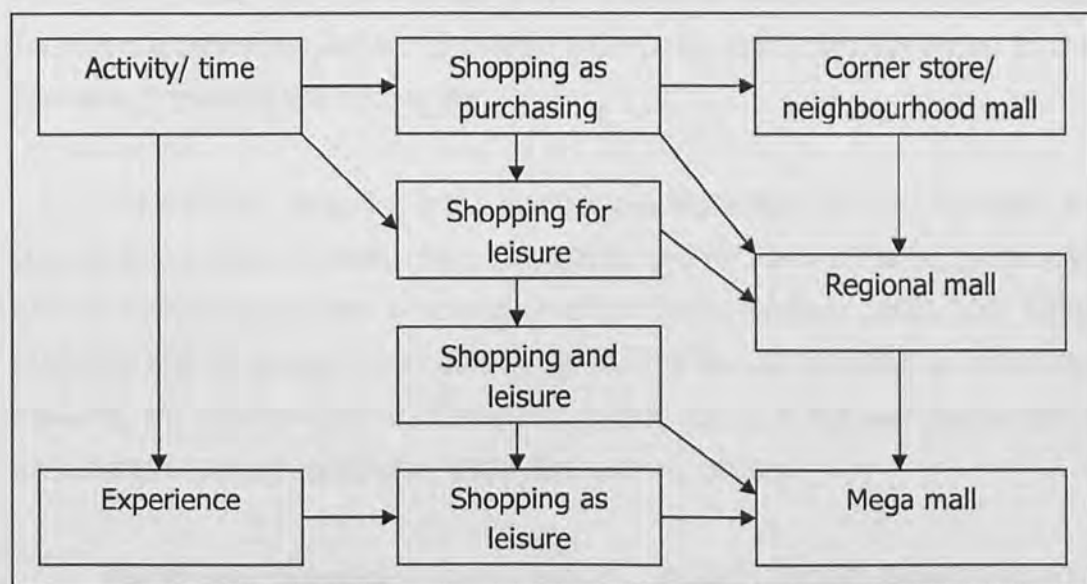
during a trip which might be motivated primarily by something other than shopping (e.g. sunbathing, ecotourism, etc.). Of the two forms of tourist shopping noted by Butler (1991), shopping as an added attraction to the destination being visited probably accounts for the majority of tourist expenditures on retail items. Nonetheless, shopping as the primary reason for taking a trip is an important factor for millions of travelers each year (Timothy and Butler, 1995). Paige and Littrell (2003) study found that 51% of travelers surveyed said shopping was the primary or secondary purpose of one or more trips during the previous year. Similar results were found by the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) (2001), which estimated that 47% of all shopping person-trips were taken by travelers who claimed shopping as their primary or secondary reason for traveling.

2.3 Leisure Shopping in Tourism

It is necessary to reiterate the difference between buying and shopping prior further reviewing the literature on leisure shopping. In precise term, buying refers to obtaining a specific item from a seller, while shopping more broadly entails sorting, comparing checking prices, selecting styles, browsing, walking and meeting with other people (Bussey, 1987; Roberts, 1987). Shopping is therefore, not always about acquiring new merchandise. Instead, its purpose also include servicing needs that are unrelated to product acquisition, including a desire to meet people, feel wanted, exercise, or spend leisure time with friends and relatives (Tauber, 1995). According to Hirschman (1984), a significant part of the shopping experience is novelty-seeking and innovativeness. Individuals seek out novel stimuli through the total shopping experience, which may be particularly enhanced when new venues are visited, new environments are introduced, new friends made, and new merchandise examined. Thus, shopping is a multidimensional activity that involves social interaction, economic exchange, and very often, their participation in non-purchasing activities. Indeed, it is argued that shoppers' quest for a leisure experience is more substantial than the acquisition of objects (Christiansen and Snepenger, 2002; Jones, 1999; Babin *et al.*, 1994). For many leisure shoppers, shopping represents an important outlet for social interaction and provides temporary relief from routines and monotonous environments. It may also confirm one's status and provide opportunities for self-evaluation (Verbeke, 1991).

Recreational shoppers are consumers who enjoy shopping as a leisure-time activity. In general, recreational shoppers are less likely to have an idea of what they will purchase and less concerned about distance to travel. They will also tend to make more spontaneous buys, shop more often, spend more time shopping per trip, shop with others, and continue shopping after making a purchase (Swanson and Horridge, 2002; Roy, 1994). In simple terms, this is because people who are interested in shopping are prone to spend more time doing what they enjoy (Wakefield and Baker, 1998). In addition to these specific behaviours, recreational shoppers are more affected by store environment, and extra amenities play an important role in their decision to return. Recreational shoppers are less task-oriented, have more fun, and enjoy the lucid and playful aspects of shopping (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). They are more inclined to enjoy the complete process of retail consumption – ‘looking, trying, and buying’ (Graham *et al.*, 1991).

Figure 2.1: Linkages between Shopping, Leisure, and Venue



Source: Timothy, 2005

Timothy (2005) presented a three-part typology of the relationships between shopping, leisure and venue as shown in Figure 2.1. His first linkage is shopping for leisure. This relationship refers to individuals purchasing goods that can be used later during leisure time. In line with the explanation earlier, Bussey (1987) includes vacation holiday as well in this type of category. Second is shopping and leisure, which denotes shopping which is done in conjunction with recreational activities

along the way or at the retail establishment. Shopping malls are good examples of this as they provide many opportunities for other forms of leisure, such as movie theatres, video arcades, and dining out (Yuskel, 2007; Bussey, 1987). Finally, shopping as leisure refers to the act of shopping itself as a recreational pastime. Filling time, browsing, and watching other people are just a few of the ways in which shopping is seen as a leisure-time activity. As a result, the shopping centre and retail industry place increasing emphasis on leisure shopping and tourism (LeHew and Wesley, 2007).

2.4 Tourism and Tourist Shopping Behavior

The travel industry defines persons who travel as visitors (Paci, 1992). These visitors are persons who travel outside their usual environment for leisure, business, or other purposes, at which point the act of traveling becomes tourism. Tourism is the activities of people who travel to and stay in places outside their usual environment. Tourists are temporary visitors to a destination (Paci, 1992) and will return to their permanent residencies after traveling.

For travelers, shopping is the number one trip activity for both domestic and international tourists (Yuksel, 2004; TIA, 2003), and for many a trip is not complete without having spent time shopping (Hudman and Hawkins, 1989). TIA (2003) estimates that 34 percent of all trips by US tourists include shopping as an activity. However, the importance of shopping as a tourist activity is not well represented in the literature (Heung and Cheng, 2000; Law and Au, 2000).

As traveling increases, so does shopping. In 2001, General Growth Properties, one of the US' largest shopping center owners, reports an estimated 31 percent of its annual sales came from tourist customers (PR Newswire, 2001). Similarly, a study by the Travel Industry Association of America and Taubman Centers (TIA, 2001) finds that for more than half (51 percent) of US adults traveling named shopping as their primary or secondary reason for travel. Moving the focus point into Hong Kong, the shopping paradise in Asia Pacific, in 1996, 49.5% of total tourist spending or equal HK\$40.1 billion fell into the category of shopping expenditure (Heung and Cheng, 2000). On the other hand, tourist shopping activities in Malaysia alone

accounted 25.7% of the tourist total expenditure in 2006 (YB Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Bin Tengku Mansor, Minister Tourism Malaysia, 2007).

Tourists like to take something home from the trip (Kim and Littrell, 2002), and therefore, they go shopping. A tourist's shopping behavior is very different from his/her normal shopping activity. "They spend money on small foolish items because it is not an ordinary time" (Gordon, 1986). As a tourist, a person does not have to think about their job or any other obligations they have at home. The tourist also gains satisfaction from the shopping experience, separate from the purchase of the product (Christiansen and Snepenger, 2002). Tourist shopping is not only limited to souvenirs but also includes purchases of clothing, jewelry, books, arts and crafts, and electronics (Timothy and Butler, 1995). Typically, tourists do not go shopping with a specific list; rather shopping becomes a by-product of their travel experiences (Reisinger and Turner, 2002). Tourists spend approximately one-third of their total expenditures on shopping purchases after accommodation (Turner and Reisinger, 2001).

When shopping, tourists base their purchase decisions on several factors. Research finds that tourists look for high-quality, well-designed products (Paige and Littrell, 2003; Reisinger and Turner, 2002; Littrell *et al.*, 1994). Many tourists will spend more money on purchasing an item while they are away from home, so they want to secure the highest quality item possible. Tourists feel that purchasing an item by a well-known manufacturer is very important (Littrell *et al.*, 1994), and therefore, look to find well-known brand names or logos when shopping (Gee, 1987). These well-known products are brands with which they are familiar; thereby they feel confident in their purchase decisions.

Research shows that tourist shoppers look for unique products unavailable at home or unique to the tourist destination (Paige and Littrell, 2003; Reisinger and Turner, 2002; Littrell *et al.*, 1994). The unique quality of the product enhances the tourism experience by giving the tourist a special memory about their trip (Turner and Reisinger, 2001), allowing them to positively reminisce about the experience they had while traveling. However, whether or not this characteristic is generalizable to all shopping formats is questionable. The researchers finding uniqueness to be important to tourist shoppers were looking at shopping in local retail areas versus

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