



UNIVERSITI  
TEKNOLOGI  
MARA

Cawangan Kedah  
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# Voice of Academia

*Academic Series of Universiti Teknologi MARA Kedah*

**VoA 2021**  
*Volume 17 Issue 2*



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**e-ISSN: 2682-7840**



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## PREFERENCE TO PURCHASE ENTRANCE TICKETS ONLINE: A CASE STUDY OF ESCAPE PARK, PENANG

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received Feb 2021  
Accepted May 2021  
Published June 2021

#### Keywords:

Sports theme park and water park, online transactions, website image, website routine, website knowledge, website innovativeness

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### ABSTRACT

Today, websites are the heart and core of every modern business. It has developed into a typical source of information on data, communication, and shopping. It is increasingly used to gain information and understanding of a topic. Understanding the web surfers' behavior and preferences allows the sports tourism providers to strategize their e-retailing businesses effectively. This study determines the sports tourist's preference to purchase ESCAPE Park entrance tickets online, specifically between the gender groups. Questionnaires were distributed randomly to a total of 192 male and 192 female sports tourists at the ESCAPE Park, Penang. Data collected was statistically analysed using Descriptive Analysis and Independent Sample T-Test. Basically, the sports tourist's decision to purchase entrance ticket online was influenced by the website image, website routine, website knowledge, and website innovativeness. The website image and website routine were described as the utmost influencers on the choice to purchase the e-entrance ticket. Specifically, both male and female sports tourists were equally influence by the factors of website image, website routine, website knowledge, and website innovativeness. These findings can be of reference to e-retail sports tourism researchers and practitioners in planning the upcoming strategies to improve their website page to encourage e-retail sports tourism business. Future studies could consider the customer's satisfaction and loyalty for a better understanding of sports tourists' consumer behaviour and focusing on the other demographic elements could benefits comparison purpose.

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## **1. Introduction**

Sports tourism is a fast-growing global travel industry in the country. As stated by the World Tourism Organization (n.d.), sports tourism is listed as the fastest growing sector in global tourism. Many destinations can boast of having the appropriate infrastructure from sports facilities, diversity of sports activities, to accommodation on this global opportunity. However, it will be the host destinations that foster the 'inner sport tourism entrepreneur' that will win by developing events and activities that could deliver sustainable economic, social, and promotional benefit to the nation for current and future benefits.

Among the destination that provides adventurous indoor and outdoor sporting events is the theme park and water park. A theme park is a large outdoor area that offer paid activities based on a particular idea or theme. It allows the participants to explore the world in the process of entertainment. Currently, Malaysia has over 20 theme parks and water parks. Among the ones located at northern states in Malaysia is the ESCAPE Park. The ESCAPE Park has been rated the number one theme park in Malaysia with approximately 185,000 visitors in 2018, and continues to see rising numbers of visitors. Located in Penang, the ESCAPE Park is an adventurous fun destination with exciting rides and games organized in a natural environment, with the theme of re-introduction of the sporting activities and values of yesteryear, aiming to inject reality into a world overdependent on an isolation-inducing electronic lifestyle to the sports tourists. The activities focus on self-directed and self-powered play, whereby tourists can experience low tech and high fun activities. Besides that, the ESCAPE Park provides no age limit fun as the exciting and challenging sporting activities are designed for participants of a wide range of age groups, abilities, and energy levels. ESCAPE Park is a host to a total of 40 fun rides and attractions, namely rope and obstacle courses, ziplines, rock climbing, diving towers, and the Guinness World Records Longest Tube Water Slide, located in the rich rainforest of Teluk Bahang, Penang.

Sports tourist could purchase entrance ticket to the ESCAPE Park either online or over the counter. The ability of an event to charge admission is dependent, to a large extent, on the location of the event and how well the event manager can control entry to the event. For the e-entrance tickets, individuals will purchase tickets with their own understanding about the process. This is because, buyers will access the website and purchase the ticket. They need to pay either full price or half price depending on the organization pricing fee regulation.

## **2. Literature Review**

As the Internet has been widely and globally used, many researchers have paid attention to its role as an information system, a communication tool, and a distribution channel (O'Cass & Carlson, 2012). The web has changed dramatically over the last two decades. Two decades ago, seeking information or data was performed by referring to books or magazines or making calls or messaging message, and individuals will be charged per message and for each seconds of voice calls. This online approach for correspondence and exchanges has presented critical changes in everyday lives. The good point of Internet is that it provides simple and efficient method of seeking and contrasting data. For instance, audits recorded an inevitable shoppers' approach to buy online (69% of worldwide buyer), and these buyers clarified the detail of the item, for example, the advantages and element of the item before selecting which item of choice (Deloitte, 2013). The fast development of cell phones and tablet clients, and the huge scope of rate that ascent in web-based life, according to Deloitte (2013) is just a couple of

indications of the major advanced insurgency presently encountered. According to Brashear et al. (2009), information seeking across the Internet is a normal activity among individuals. Internet advantages consist mostly of the new way of searching and comparing information on product and services as it is easier and time saving of buying them. It is also stated that Internet assisted clients on deciding choices before doing purchasing (Nielsen, 2012). The rise of social media is also one of the reasons why individuals prefer to purchase tickets online. This need is related to the major digital revolution that individuals are currently experiencing.

Website image includes graphics, color, and links that have a positive impact for attracting attention of sports tourist. The presentation of the products website layout and design can increase customer's loyalty towards the products and services (Koo & Ju, 2010). Furthermore, using an attractive feature in a website such as graphics, text, and advertising content which have a strong correlation between image and environment can increase the customer's willingness to repeat purchases on the Internet (Danaher et al., 2006).

Consumer's loyalty and commitment has been considered as one of the principal components in every aspect of business, particularly in the travel industry because of the higher level of desires from customers with respect to the experience (Aminu, 2012). Customer's loyalty could be observed by how often they visit the website. According to Polites and Karahanna (2012), there is a significant evidence which showed that website routine is an important role in consumer choice and satisfaction. This is because consumer loyalty and satisfaction are linked strongly. Satisfaction is a necessary step in getting loyalty formation. Usually, customers will continue to repurchase a product or service once they are in favor of the item. This statement could be explained by the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen, 2001), whereby a person's former behavior can be explained by his or her current action towards the current situation. As so, customers will make a bookmark of their favorite e-retail websites, and most likely they will visit this site compared to the others. These customers will be visiting the bookmarked websites often than usual rather than by conscious determination based on perceived benefits.

Meanwhile, website knowledge can be explained by the level of understanding from the information or data that a customer need. Usually, customer's experience as well as brand familiarity, have been researched as antecedents of customer satisfaction and brand loyalty (Ha & Perks, 2005). According to Casaló et al. (2008), knowledge of experience with the website may contribute to customer's satisfaction and loyalty, specifically concerning online tourism product. Website knowledge increases the level of familiarity and comfort of the potential buyer, which encourages positive feeling. Furthermore, customers cannot be faithful to a website unless they have information about it that goes well beyond what one learns from a simple display.

As revealed by Ioakimidis (2010), technology advancement has provided opportunities for web designers to create innovative website in attracting the number of internet users. The current website innovativeness is no longer relying on text per se, but it contains media and can provide live broadcast of various sporting events worldwide. As the function of media become more sophisticated, it promotes huge interaction between online consumer and strengthens consumer needs. Furthermore, multimedia and consumer interaction are the main fundamental in assessing the success of online marketing. If an e-retail website can deliver an innovative experience, it influences positive overall e-service quality perceptions, higher trust levels, as well as website loyalty and positive word-of-mouth behavior (O'Class & Carlson, 2012). According to Radzliana et al. (2013), individuals aged between 20 to 30 years old grew up with innovation and the Internet, and they are most likely to shop through electronic business (web-based business) retailers or online destinations or site. These Millennials impacts on spending amounted between

\$50 billion to \$196 billion every year. This happened because individuals consistently wanted simple and the quicker method to get the item they wanted. Today, there is an expanding of open enthusiasm for online correspondence and the web showcasing for sports events in the travel industry. The increasing number of Internet clients show that the Internet has grown faster than some other types of electronic innovation correspondence.

The customers of the travel industry consist of various ages, interests, and choice of travel. Most the travel industry associations used website as a component to upgrade their services, besides for promotion purpose. A few specialists expressed that most of the information provided at the travel industry sites is overwhelming as it does not consider the needs of the customers in association with their travel interest (Lim et al., 2010). Hence, staffs who oversee developing advertisement must develop a technique to guarantee that sports tourists could effectively purchase the ticket on the web (e-ticketing). Thus, this study conducted a survey to determine the sports tourist's preference to purchase ESCAPE Park entrance tickets online. The understanding of the sports tourist's preference to purchase-entrance tickets would be beneficial to the organizers of sporting events and others sports tourism agencies in planning strategies to improve the components in their websites for promotion of online ticket purchase. Also, this study which focuses on gender groups can be of reference for future researchers in their studies on online purchase of sports related products and services.

### **3. Estimation Method**

The sample size selected was based from Krejcie and Morgan (1970). A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed to 192 male and 192 female tourists (population of more than 185,000 per year) visiting the ESCAPE Park throughout the month of December, 2019. These 384 samples were sports tourists of Malaysia citizen who travelled to either observing or participating in sporting events at the ESCAPE Park while staying apart from their residential environment. Sports tourists who did not purchase purchase e-entrance ticket to the ESCAPE Park were excluded from this study. The sports tourists were randomly approached at the events sites. Once a qualified sample is identified, he or she was given a questionnaire to complete. Prior to that, related information and instructions were provided.

The questionnaire was developed by Pereira et al. (2016). Part A focused on the demographic variables of the respondents while Part B focused on the factors that influence sports tourists preference to purchase ESCAPE Park entrance tickets online. The 23 questions were categorized into four components, namely website image (four items), website knowledge (five items), innovativeness (seven items), and website routine (seven items). Results of pilot study shown that the Cronbach's Alpha value for each of the four components was above 0.70, and the inter-item reliability value was more than 0.45. The Likert Scale varied from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) for each question. All statistical analyses were performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The research hypotheses were statistically tested using the Independent Sample t-Test, at the significance level  $p < .05$ .

### **4. Results and Discussion**

This study aims to identify the sports tourist's preference to purchase ESCAPE Park entrance tickets online. It confirms earlier findings that Internet facilitates individuals in seeking and comparing information (E.g., Ali et al., 2018; Deloitte, 2013; Koo & Ju, 2010). Today, most organizations promote their official websites as a tourism marketing medium (Wu, 2018) and according to Nisar et al. (2018), this effort provides opportunity to attract participants, if used appropriately. Table 1 to Table 4 indicates that tourists' decision to purchase the online entrance ticket were influenced

by website image, website routine, website knowledge, and website innovativeness. These components were identified as the main reasons tourists visited the ESCAPE Park website to purchase the entrance ticket online rather than at the counter. The website image and website routine were accounted as the greatest influencers that encourage sports tourists' decision to purchase the entrance ticket online as compared to website knowledge and website innovativeness.

Table 1 shows the attributes related to website image that affected sports tourist's decision to purchase online entrance ticket to the ESCAPE Park. The website image is an important dimension of the online relationship, and it is a key element with the ability to influence customer satisfaction and brand loyalty (Koo & Ju, 2010). Sports tourists were attracted to the ESCAPE Park website as it was developed with advance technology, easy to access, easy to locate the information needed, and the appealing presentation of website information.

Technology advancement has encouraged the increase of internet users. The ESCAPE Park's website which adopts multimedia technology is an example of effective online marketing, whereby sports tourists could interact with the management from anywhere. Sports tourists could easily purchase the entrance ticket without going to the counter. Ioakimidis (2010) revealed that the current website innovativeness equipped with sophisticated media sources which can provide live broadcast of various sporting activities globally promotes interaction between online consumer and strengthens consumer needs. This access friendly website attribute could facilitate tourists in understanding the flows of the website's features.

As discovered by Nisar et al. (2018), tourists prefer website which is easily accessed and easy to find what is needed on the website. Bilgihan and Bujisic (2015) claimed that the feature of the website is the main aspect that customer will keep accessing in seeking information before purchasing the products or service. Sports tourists are easily attracted by the website with informative, interactive contents, and attractive contents. Sports tourists' preference to purchase tickets online is related to the graphics, color, and links as attractive website provides pleasurable feelings for individuals to purchase tickets. Infographics are an eye-catching type of innovative websites. An interesting and easy-to-read infographic will be clicked on, shared, and even linked to. Website designer could adopt nice sets of features such as advertising content to influence the sports tourists' preference because of its well-recognized and consistent content, both in the literal and intangible context (Koo & Ju, 2010). This will bring up pleasurable images in the minds of sports tourist. The technologically innovative image of ESCAPE Park's website was able to promote and provide convenient transaction of e-ticket to its customers.

Table 1: Statistic of The Website Image That Influences Sports Tourists in Purchasing Online Entrance Ticket to The ESCAPE Park

	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
The website is technologically advanced	3.49	3.00	.501
The website is easily accessed	3.48	3.00	.500
Easy to find what you are looking for on the website	3.48	3.00	.500

The website information is presented in an appealing way	3.47	3.00	.500
Overall	3.69		

Table 2 presents the factors related to website routine that encourage tourist's choice of purchasing e-entrance ticket to the ESCAPE Park. Website routine describes the occurrence of repeat purchase of online entrance ticket to ESCAPE Park. This action is normally related to customers' satisfaction and loyalty. Majority of sports tourists prefer using website in purchasing products and services (Eurostat, 2013). Aminu (2012) relates that individuals including the first timers need to take chances in deciding on purchase of products and services. They make their decisions based on the other customers' feedbacks or reviews at the website page. Finding of this study clearly disclosed that sports tourists trusted the ESCAPE Park website, as according to Javed and Wu (2019), sports tourists are likely to revisit a website to repurchase goods and services when they have a trust towards the website. As ESCAPE Park website was developed with the best and easiest steps to explore its features and contents, it will be a waste of time and effort for tourists to switch to another website. Positive perceptions of website page effect website revisitation, reduced likelihood of switching behaviour and intention to purchase (O' Cass & Carlson, 2012). The presentation of a website positively perceived by surfers is an important cause of loyal behavioural intentions. For instance, earlier studies have shown that consumers' preference to shop at a website and future revisit is affected by website attributes including information content, entertainment, usability, transaction capabilities, and design aesthetics (e.g., Hausman & Siekpe, 2009; Loiacono et al., 2007). Other related studies also realized that customers with high positive attitude towards a website are more likely to engage in transactions at the site (Ha & Stoel, 2009), especially those who had a more positive perception of online store environments (Childers et al., 2001) like the sports tourists who purchased online entrance tickets to the ESCAPE Park.

In addition, this study disclosed that loyal sports tourists have no doubt to recommend the ESCAPE Park website to friends and relatives. They were happy to share their routine experience of the website page with others. As stated by Hanna et al. (2014), tourist satisfaction on a website page will create continuance intentions to recommend the website to friends and relatives. This action proved that sports tourist is impossible to be disappointed by this website. As sports tourists felt happy with the ESCAPE Park website, they frequently access to the website page and developed a long-lasting relationship with ESCAPE Park website. This ESCAPE Park website will be their first choice over others in the same business area. This is an advantage to the business of services settings such as the ESCAPE Park, as word-of-mouth (WoM) is believed to play an even more important role than in goods related business. Generating positive recommendations is one of the key marketing tools and it has been recognized for its great influence on consumers' preference than other methods of communication (Godes & Mayzlin, 2004). The information from other customers acts as important referral in the evaluation of services business since service consumers strongly count on the views of other consumers when developing expectation about the service and its assessment of the service gained.

Table 2: Statistic of The Website Routine That Influences Sports Tourists in Purchasing Online Entrance Ticket to The ESCAPE Park

	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
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Unless I have reasons to be unhappy with the website, I will not bother to change	3.49	3.00	.501
The time and effort to change to another website is extremely high	3.49	3.00	.500
I have no doubt to recommend this website to friends and relatives	3.49	3.00	.501
The website information is presented in an appealing way	3.47	3.00	5.01
This website is my first choice when I intent to purchase tourism product	3.49	3.00	.501
I prefer this website over others in the same business area	3.49	3.00	.501
This website will not disappoint me	3.48	3.00	.500
Overall	3.48		

Table 3 presents the attributes related to website knowledge which encourage tourist's intention to acquire online entrance ticket to the ESCAPE Park. Being developed as a hedonic environment website, the ESCAPE Park could attract online transactions, as according to Yoo (2014), sports consumers are unique as hedonic in terms of online shopping of sports products and services. As revealed by Abdella et al. (2019), the six dimensions of customer purchasing tickets online are reliability and fulfilment, responsiveness, ease of use, privacy and security, web design, and information quality and content.

Tourists acknowledged that familiarity with the ESCAPE Park website's functionalities facilitate online purchase of entrance ticket. Website familiarity positively affects the relationship between e-satisfaction and e-loyalty (Kaya et al., 2019). In the context of today's intensively competitive e-retail industry, achieving customer's loyalty is extremely important for a company's survival. Customers loyalty towards e-tailers website contributes to the sales volumes, besides favorable electronic word-of-mouth (Hyrynsalmi et al., 2015). The influence of website familiarity on the aspect of website knowledge may be especially relevant in emerging sports tourism industry, where e-retailing is currently in a growth stage. Familiarity with a product or service can influence the consumer's decision-making process. Shoppers prefer to engage in online transactions on sites with which they are familiar in terms of usage, website design, payment, and delivery (Johnson et al., 2003). Familiarity has been considered as a subjective mechanism that can help consumers to manage risk and uncertainty in online transactions. Blanco et al. (2010) stated that website familiarity controls the influence of diverse information presentation modes on information recall and perceived information quality. The familiar website knowledge of the ESCAPE Park site enhances sports tourists to navigate the online transactions of the e-retail sports service.

Consumers' knowledge towards a website has an encouraging effect on the development of online trust. When consumer is familiar with the website, e-retailers gain an advantage from increasing the user's likelihood of satisfaction, intention to purchase, and loyalty (Abumalloh et al., 2020). The knowledge can increase website loyalty, given that consumers are reluctant to spend energy, time, and effort to explore new websites (Balabanis et al., 2006). If sports tourists must purchase entrance ticket at the ESCAPE Park website, they do not have to gather much information to make the right choice. As the consumers' knowledge of a website increases, they may be more satisfied and confident when it complies with its service requirements. This, in turn, leads to a stronger online trust link between the e-retailer and consumers. Casaló et al. (2012) revealed that consumer's familiarity moderates the relationship between perceived usability and loyalty thus making its total impact greater. Therefore, website knowledge may increase the impact of online service quality and satisfaction on online trust.

Table 3: Statistic of The Website Knowledge That Influences Sports Tourists in Purchasing Online Entrance Ticket to The ESCAPE Park

	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
I am familiar with this website's functionalities	3.48	3.00	.500
I am confident with my ability to differentiate between this website and others	3.48	3.00	.500
I can navigate on this website easily and find the products and services I am looking for	3.48	3.00	.500
I am familiar with the design and layout of this website	3.48	3.00	.500
If I must make any purchase in this website, I do not have to gather much information to make the right choice	3.47	3.00	.500
Overall	3.47		

Meanwhile, Table 4 shows the attributes related to website innovativeness that inspire tourists to purchase online entrance ticket to the ESCAPE Park. In an e-retail setting, innovative website is crucial for an e-retailer because dull website will cause customers to click away. It should be noted that a website surfer's purchase intention is usually made just after 3 seconds on a website, so it is the first impression that counts.

Sports tourists prefer to visit trusted website which they are familiar and satisfied with. In an e-retail setting, consumers trust the e-retailer in providing precise information, fair pricing policies, and non-violation of privacy and unauthorized use of credit card/purchase information. They build their trust based on their website knowledge, including the website capability in providing innovative and relevant content, security measures, and competent purchase service (Chen & Dibb, 2010), not to mention the website delivering affective responses (enjoyment and fun) that create trust on the website (Hwang & Kim, 2007). Tourists believed that the ESCAPE Park website has many desirable characteristics which they are accustomed to. A well-established website enables virtual communications between the retailer and consumers leads to "flow opportunities" whereby a consumer is fully involved with his or her interaction with the computer. These loyal website surfers could be categorized as followers, as according to Ioakimidis (2010), Internet is the most appropriate mechanism for sports providers to create followers. Innovative website attracts loyal surfers. An innovative tourism website is positively related to the frequency and density of website visits, downloading of information brochures, use of the online purchasing mode, and the volume of online purchases, hence consumer who highly perceived website innovativeness maintains active communications with the tourism provider (Couture et al., 2015).

Tourists trusted the ESCAPE Park website and are always cautious in surfing new related website to engage in any online transaction. They leave the website only to experience something different. Besides the aspect of feature's exclusivity, functionality, and practicality, Berry (2000) identified consumers' perceptions of website innovativeness to include the retailer's brand and its value to consumers. Brand image is a key influencer of consumers' intention and actual purchase. The brand's "value" reflects customers' main perceptions of the brand and the customer's snapshot impression of the brand, and its associations. Keller and Lehmann (2003) stated that customers' mindset embraces everything that is in the mind of customers in related to a brand, such as opinions, outlooks, understandings, imageries, insights, views, and approaches. For the sports tourists who purchased e-entrance ticket to the ESCAPE Park, "brand meaning" represents the consequence of their service consumption experience via their communications with specific attributes of the ESCAPE Park website service. In an e-retail setting, developing a positive service brand image is a strategy in e-retailing without the presence of service personnel, and tangible products (Pavlou et al., 2007), with the website platform acting as the brand stimuli delivered to consumers. In this context, the website plays a key function in providing the service experience online by interacting the service attributes and symbolic meaning in this "moments of truth" (Cho & Menor, 2010).

Website innovativeness is positively related to website loyalty. In this context, according to Lee and O'Connor (2003), consumers' perspective is crucial because the status of whether a product or service is innovative, is judged by the customer as being so. Innovativeness assessment includes perceived exclusivity of the features, functionality, and usefulness in related to the product or service as compared to current products or services. In this study, perceived website-service innovativeness can be described as the degree to which the service processes embedded in the ESCAPE Park website interface are perceived as innovative to sports tourists when they purchased entrance ticket at the website. The development in information and communication technologies brought by the website interface have allowed the formation of new service experiences which provide better interaction, control, and individualization in the e-retail transaction setting (Cho & Menor, 2010). These innovative experiences could be derived in terms of website visual appeal, functionality, layout, product information, and transaction efficiency. Website innovativeness is considered a key competitive weapon in marketing. When an e-retail website is perceived to deliver an innovative experience, this scenario will

influence positive overall perceptions of e-service quality, higher trust levels and website loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth behavior (O' Cass & Carlson, 2012).

Table 4: Statistic of The Website Innovativeness That Influences Sports Tourists in Purchasing Online Entrance Ticket to The ESCAPE Park

	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.
I prefer to visit a website I already know than one I have no familiarity with	3.49	3.00	.501
I am satisfid with this website's services	3.49	3.00	.501
My choice for this website was correct	3.49	3.00	.500
I am extremely cautious regarding using new websites to make any purchase	3.48	3.00	.500
I believe this website has many desirable characteristics	3.48	3.00	.505
Purchasing through this website exceeded my expectations	3.47	3.00	.500
If I like a website, I rarely leave it only to experience something different	3.38	3.00	.584
Overall	3.46		

As seen in Table 5, the Independent Sample T-Tests did not identify any significant mean differences between both the male and female sports tourists on the effects of website image, website routine, website knowledge, and website innovativeness towards preference to purchase e-entrance ticket to the ESCAPE Park.

In this context, sports tourists irrespective of gender groups have no reason to change to other website and the ESCAPE Park website is always their first-choice e-retailer. They were happy with the ESCAPE Park website image as the applications on the website assist them in making secured online transactions. The ESCAPE Park has proven its website security, whereby action has been applied to ensure website data is not exposed to cybercriminals or to prevent exploitation of website in any way. For instance, ESCAPE Park's website promotes online transfer, online banking, and e-wallet application. These secured methods have a few steps to complete each purchase. Initially, purchaser needs to fill the payment bank's information, followed by verification of the OTP code. The ESCAPE Park website also provides a segment on the pricing list, the combo set, and the school trip package, with offer price for early bookings. Furthermore, the provision of a quality and good service ESCAPE Park website image discouraged switching to other websites of same business. The consequence of website switching will involve sports tourists' monetary, psychological, effort-based, and time-based costs. With a good website image and offering of memorable sporting experience of outdoor sporting activities with exciting play and values of yesteryear rides hosted in a natural environment, the ESCAPE Park is creating its status as an icon of sports tourism destination. The ESCAPE Park also proves that there is no age limit to having fun as the rides and games are designed for a wide range of age groups, abilities, and energy levels.

The ESCAPE Park website is user friendly designed. Sports tourist finds it easy to access the website easily. The layout of the website enhances the sports tourist of both gender groups to navigate the website without difficulty in searching for the products and services of interest. The ESCAPE

Park website offers unique features to enhance effective communication with its users, whereby every query will be personally attended by the management. This website service reinforces the user's confidence of the ESCAPE Park website compared to other websites of same business. It promotes online marketing of the ESCAPE Park in attracting and retaining customer.

When determining to engage in online purchase, customers usually will evaluate the capability of a website in providing the necessary information, engagement in two-way communication, and quick responses to their special requirements (Le et al., 2020). The ESCAPE Park website has these desirable features. It offers both gender groups satisfaction on the website services, whereby sports tourists significantly acknowledged that the experience of purchasing entrance ticket at the website exceeded their expectations. Unlike most web users who are extremely cautious in engaging online purchase at new website, sports tourists' trust of the EXCAPE Park website encourage them to purchase online entrance ticket without security fear.

Table 5: Independent Sample T-Test for Differences Between Gender Groups on the Influence of Website Image, Website Routine, Website Knowledge, and Website Innovativeness Towards Sports Tourist's Preference to Purchase Online Entrance Ticket to the ESCAPE Park (N= 384)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-Test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)
The website is technologically advanced	Equal variance assumed	.094	.759	.212	382	.832
	Equal variance not assumed			.212	379	.832
The website is easily accessed	Equal variance assumed	4.054	.045	1.386	382	.166
	Equal variance not assumed			1.387	379	.166
Easy to find what you are looking for on the website	Equal variance assumed	.020	.886	.072	382	.942
	Equal variance not assumed			.072	379	.942
The website information is presented in an appealing way	Equal variance assumed	.399	.528	.382	382	.702
	Equal variance not assumed			.382	379	.702
Unless I have reasons to be unhappy with the website, I will not bother to change	Equal variance assumed	.029	.866	.089	382	.929
	Equal variance not assumed			.089	379	.929
The time and	Equal variance	.459	.499	.489	382	.625

effort to change to another website is extremely high	assumed Equal variance not assumed			.489	379	.625
I have no doubt to recommend this website to friends and relatives	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	.073	.787	.195	382	.845
The website information is presented in an appealing way	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	.399	.528	.382	382	.702
This website is my first choice when I intent to purchase tourism product	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	.293	.588	.391	382	.696
I prefer this website over others in the same business area	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	.293	.588	.391	382	.696
This website will not disappoint me	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	.399	.528	.382	382	.702
I am familiar with this website's functionalities	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	.901	.343	.684	382	.494
I am confident with my ability to differentiate between this website and others	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	.661	.417	.586	382	.558
I can navigate on this website easily and find the products and services I am looking for	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	1.495	.222	.881	382	.379
I am familiar with	Equal variance	1.495	.222	.881	382	.379

the design and layout of this website	assumed Equal variance not assumed			.880	379	.379
If I must make any purchase in this website, I do not have to gather much information to make the right choice	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	2.242	.135	1.077	382	.282
I prefer to visit a website I know than one I am no familiarity with	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	.073	.787	.195	382	.845
I am satisfied with this website's services	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	.165	.685	.293	382	.770
My choice for this website was correct	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	.589	.443	.531	382	.596
I am extremely cautious regarding using new websites to make any purchase	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	1.117	.291	.676	382	.499
I believe this website has many desirable characteristics	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	.038	.845	.948	382	.344
Purchasing through this website exceeded my expectations	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	3.444	.064	1.279	382	.202
If I like a website, I rarely leave it only to experience something	Equal variance assumed Equal variance not assumed	1.795	.181	.007	382	.994

different

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## **5. Conclusion**

This study provides an overall description of the sports tourist's preference to purchase online entrance ticket to the ESCAPE Park. Regardless of gender groups, sports tourists decided to acquire e-entrance ticket due to the characteristics of the ESCAPE Park website, such as the website image, website routine, website knowledge, and website innovativeness. These major attractions were the key explanations of tourist's preference to visit the ESCAPE Park website and confidently participate in e-purchase transactions. The website image and website routine were described as the utmost influencers on the sports tourist's choice to purchase e-entrance ticket.

On the Internet, websites are used for in ad displays, and to present products or services. Website with outstanding image can attract surfers. So were the website image features provided by the ESCAPE Park website. The features of interest were advance technology, easy access, easy information search, and appealing presentation of information. Sports tourist's preference to re-purchase e-entrance ticket was also related to satisfaction and trust towards the service provided by the website. The knowledge about the ESCAPE Park website causes the creation of online trust among sports tourists, especially those who are reluctant to spend energy, time, and effort to explore new related websites. The ESCAPE Park website innovativeness that positively assessed by sports tourists included the exclusivity of the website features, functionality, and usefulness in related to the website service. In the light of these website characteristics, it is recommended that these features especially the website image and website routine should be considered in designing and developing website for e-retailing.

The findings of this study provide new lights to better understand the website characteristics that contribute to customers' e-loyalty in a retail tourism business and facilitate sports tourism marketers of e-retail industry to implement effective strategies to maintain long-lasting relationships with customers. The growing reputation and influence of website-enabled service experiences in today's tourism economy has developed serious focus in industry, government, and academia around the globe. The major contribution is that the findings provide additional reference to e-retail sports tourism researchers and practitioners to consider important ideas of perceived website image, website routine, website knowledge, and website innovativeness when developing website page of e-retail sports tourism business. These issues should be seriously focus on strategic planning as one of the underlying features of most successful e-retail businesses is taking into consideration the customer's perspective. Thus, this study contributes to the growing understanding of e-retail sports tourism business as a basis to implement better e-service website strategies, especially during COVID-19 pandemic situation. Future studies could consider the variables of satisfaction and loyalty for a better understanding of sports tourists' consumer behaviour. Other demographic elements besides genders could be used for comparison purpose.

## **Acknowledgment**

We thank the anonymous reviewers for their useful suggestions.

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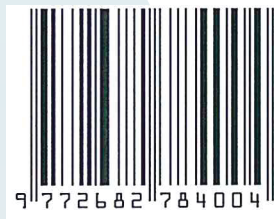
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