

## Exploring the Relationship between Parking Convenience and Customer Decision-Making in the Hotel Industry of Klang, Selangor

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**Abstract:** In Malaysia, parking remains a pressing concern, particularly in urban areas. But yet, hotels must prioritize providing ample parking for their guests. In instances where parking is limited, constructing an underground garage may be a costly yet viable solution, given the potential for increased hotel capacity and the opportunity to offer higher prices for better-quality products. Despite efforts to mitigate this issue, parking remains a significant challenge in urban transportation, particularly in developing countries. The present research investigates the relationship between parking availability, rates, duration, and consumer decision-making. Specifically, this study analyzes data collected from 146 tourists in Klang to shed light on the potential impact of parking convenience on customer retention in the hotel industry.

**Keywords:** Hotel car parking, Customer retention. Parking convenience

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### Introduction

Bardi (2003), the author of "Hotel Front Desk Management," defines a hotel as a business that offers lodging and related services such as reservations, suites, personal service valet, public catering and banquet facilities, specialty stores, and housekeeping services, Concierge service, or laundry service. Hotels can be classified based on price, function, location, and market segment (Barrows & Powers, 2009). The Malaysian hospitality industry has experienced significant growth, in line with its tourism industry, with large and small events organized for local and international communities in the past three years (Hussein, 2018). Therefore, every state in Malaysia must provide hotel facilities to cater to customers' business or leisure needs. In choosing a hotel, tourists consider several factors, including those influenced by the customer or the hotel (Raja Norliana Raja Omar *et al.*, 2020).

Car parking is a crucial issue in infrastructure planning, with implications at both local and strategic levels (W. Young, R.G. Thompson, and M.A. Taylor, 1991). Research has shown that the parking problem primarily arises from individuals' desire to park as close to their destination (Behrendt, 1940; Parmar, 2020). Parking is a significant urban transportation problem, particularly in developing countries (Ismiyati, 2018). This is especially true for hotels in urban areas facing parking availability, parking rates, and duration issues.

Consumer decisions are based on various factors or theories, and decision-making is the process by which

to understand the components that drive consumer decisions, researchers provide controlled conditions that control for other frustrating factors, and decisions are then analyzed to comprehend both the conscious and unconscious components driving consumer decisions (Michael Richarme, Ph. D, 2005). The emergence of the online environment has affected the quality of decisions consumers make as they are exposed to vast amounts of information that influence their decision-making (Alina Stankevich, 2017).

## **Literature Review**

### ***Consumer Decision***

Consumer decision-making is a crucial process for individuals or groups to select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to meet their needs and desires (Belch, 1978). Various factors and theories influence consumer decision-making, and customer satisfaction is one of them. Richarme (2005) suggests that consumers seek to reach which products and services they choose to buy and which brands they prefer or ignore. Consumers usually make decisions based on their reference level of customer satisfaction. In today's digital age, customers can easily access information and refer without feeling the experience of the product or service in the hotel (Stankevich, 2017).

The contemporary online landscape, particularly the platform that governs information dissemination, greatly impacts the effectiveness of users' judgments, recall, comprehension, and attitudes (Chan & Xie, 2017). As we are in a technological era, consumers now have access to information at their fingertips. This advanced technology enables customers to research and examine products or services prior to purchasing without having to experience them first-hand. For instance, by simply reading online customer reviews, individuals can assess a hotel's quality and make an informed decision.

### ***Relationship between parking availability towards consumer decisions***

In making destination decisions, consumers must consider various factors that can affect their overall experience, and parking availability is one of them. Consumers must ensure that parking is available before heading to their destination to prevent inconveniences or problems. Consumers' decision-making process should involve careful consideration of parking availability as the effort put into reaching the destination should be worth it with satisfactory results.

Notably, parking availability has become increasingly essential, particularly in urban areas, due to the development of commercial buildings such as shopping malls and hospitals, which attract a large number of visitors and hence create a demand for parking spaces. According to a Suthanaya (2017) study, parking availability is a critical factor influencing consumer destination decisions. The study found that the availability of parking spaces is one of the top factors influencing consumer behavior when selecting a destination. The findings of the study highlight the importance of considering parking availability as part of the decision-making process, particularly in urban areas with high traffic and limited parking spaces.

### ***Relationship between parking rate and consumer decisions***

If the hotel does not provide parking, consumers should consider parking rates before deciding. This is because consumers who stay in the hotel for more than a day need to consider the fee charged if they park in a paid area. As Cheng and Qi (2019) mentioned Because of that, consumers need to provide the cost of parking as well.

### ***Relationship between duration towards consumer decisions***

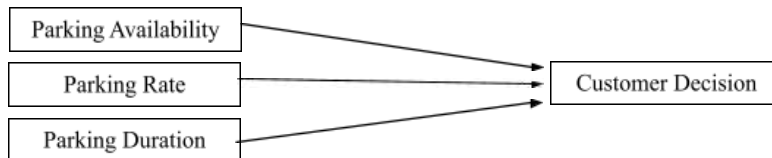
Parking duration will be one of the factors for drivers to choose a destination. This is because some people complain that it sometimes takes up to an hour to find a parking space, and at some point, they cannot find a parking

space (Klassen, Kumar & Trybus, 2010). If the distance between the parking lot and the building to be targeted is far, it will waste the consumer's time and have to use more energy to walk farther. Car drivers prefer if they can make a parking reservation. Because this will make it easier for them, drivers can also wait for the parking turnover near the building to be targeted. However, it will take a long time if the time rate for turnover is long.

### **Research Framework**

Independent Variables

Dependant Variables



### **Methodology**

#### **Sample and Data Collection**

The study focused on tourists who arrived at a hotel in Klang by their vehicles. The sample was collected through online distribution using WhatsApp and generating a QR code for guests to access. Gpower analysis indicated that a sample size of 134 respondents was required for the correlation analysis method, but the study collected 146 respondents.

A quantitative research design was employed in this study to investigate and analyze non-numerical data. This approach involves determining understanding based on examining a social problem that distinguishes methodological traditions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A questionnaire method was utilized to collect data on the topic to accomplish the research objective. The qualitative method was chosen to further support the findings of the study through the distribution of questionnaires and the designing of questions.

Recent studies on this issue have focused on the impact of parking availability on tourist behavior and decision-making. For example, Li, Song and Wang (2022) study examined the impact of parking availability on tourist satisfaction and loyalty in the context of cultural tourism destinations. The study found that parking availability significantly affects tourist satisfaction and loyalty, highlighting the importance of considering parking availability in destination planning and management

#### **Instrument Development**

This research question consists of 6 sections. It consists of Part 1 (screening questions), Section A: Introduction to Consumer Decisions, Section B: Parking Availability, Section C: Parking Rates, Section D: Parking Duration, and lastly, Section E: Demographic Profile. Question part 1 and question section E use multiple choice as a technique to describe respondents' perceptions of statements. Whereas the questions of section A to section D used the Likert 5-point scale. Responses to all items were made on a scaled format ranging from 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

#### **Data Collection**

The research utilized SPSS software to analyze the collected data, employing correlation analysis to examine the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The findings were presented in the form of percentages and frequencies. The data will be further processed using software to generate diagrams and tables, facilitating the presentation and discussion of the study's results.

## Findings & Discussions

### Respondent Profile

The respondents' Demographic characteristics are based on their profile ( $n = 146$ ). Based on the findings, 57 respondents were male, equivalent to 39%. In contrast, the female gender is 89 respondents, also 61 percent. This showed that the percentage of females was much higher than that of males. Amount of 3 respondents aged 50 - 58 years, equivalent to 2.1 percent. Meanwhile, for those aged 42 - 49 years, five respondents amounted to 3.4 percent. Meanwhile, age 34 - 41 is 6 percent, equivalent to 9 respondents. Then, the age of 26-33 years is 41 is 28.1 percent, equivalent to 41 respondents. Most respondents based on age showed more at 18 - 25 years, equivalent to 60.3%. Based on marital status shows that Single is 106 respondents (72.6%) had the highest response to this survey compared to other statuses, such as Married 37 respondents (25.3%) and Divorced three respondents (2.1%). Then a total of 33 respondents were from the same high school, 22.6 percent, Diploma holders were 62 respondents (42%), Degree holders a total of 49 respondents (33.6%) and ended with a Master's level of 1.4 percent. Finally, respondents from urban areas recorded 91 respondents together with 62.3 percent, and respondents from rural areas recorded 37.7 percent.

### Realibility Analysis

Table 1. realibility statistics

Variables	No of Items	Cronbach Alpha	Mean	Std deviation
Parking availability	4	0.208	3.906	0.488
Parking Rate	5	0.456	3.211	0.589
Parking Duration	4	0.394	3.404	0.596
Consumer Decision	5	0.588	4.288	0.436

Based on Table 1, Cronbach's alpha is varies from 0.208 to 0.588, indicating that the reliability results can concluded that all factors were good.

### Correlation Analysis

Table 2. Correlation Analysis

Variables	Parking availability	Parking Rate	Parking Duration	Parking Decision
Parking availability	1			
Parking Rate	0.288**	1		
Parking Duration	0.286**	0.495**	1	
Consumer Decision	0.380**	0.067	0.193*	1
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)				
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

Table 2 presents the results of the correlation analysis between parking availability, parking rate, parking duration, and consumer decisions. The findings revealed a moderate positive correlation between parking availability and parking rate ( $r = 0.288$ ). Additionally, the results indicated a positive correlation between parking availability and consumer decisions ( $r(146) = 0.380, p = .0001$ ), supporting hypothesis number one and confirming a positive relationship between parking availability and consumer decisions.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed a positive correlation between parking rate and consumer decisions ( $r(146) = 0.286, p = .0001$ ), supporting hypothesis number two and confirming a positive relationship between parking rate and consumer decisions. Lastly, the results showed a positive correlation between parking duration

and consumer decisions ( $r(146) = 0.380, p = .0001$ ), supporting hypothesis number three and confirming a positive relationship between parking duration and consumer decisions.

This study's findings align with previous research suggesting that parking availability, parking rate, and duration influence consumer decisions. For instance, a recent study by Peralta *et al.* (2021) found that parking availability was a critical factor in determining consumer destination choices. The current study adds to this body of literature by providing empirical evidence of the positive relationship between parking availability, parking rate, parking duration, and consumer decisions.

## Discussion

The findings of this study have significant implications for hotel management in terms of addressing parking-related problems and improving the overall customer experience. The moderate positive correlation between parking availability and parking rate implies that hotel management should ensure adequate parking spaces and provide parking at a reasonable rate to attract more customers. Furthermore, the positive correlation between parking availability and consumer decision indicates that hotel management should prioritize parking availability as an essential factor in their marketing strategy to attract and retain customers.

The positive correlation between parking rate and consumer decision suggests that the price of parking is also a crucial factor in customer decision-making. Hotel management should set parking rates at a reasonable and competitive price to attract customers and maintain a loyal customer base. Additionally, the positive correlation between parking duration and consumer decision implies that customers prefer hotels with longer parking durations. Hotel management should consider this and provide flexible parking options to accommodate different customers' needs.

It is worth noting that this study has some limitations that need to be addressed in future research. For instance, the study's sample size was relatively small and focused only on tourists who come to the hotel in Klang by their vehicles, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Future research should expand the sample size and include different types of customers, such as those who use public transportation or taxis. Additionally, future studies could employ a quantitative research approach to complement the qualitative approach used in this study.

Overall, this study contributes to the existing literature by providing insights into the relationship between parking availability, parking rate, parking duration, and consumer decision-making. The findings suggest that hotel management should prioritize parking availability, set competitive parking rates, and offer flexible parking options to attract and retain customers.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the availability of car parking in hotels is crucial for tourists who travel by their vehicles. The results of this study have shown that the availability, rate, and duration of hotel parking significantly influence consumer decisions when choosing a place to stay. Therefore, hotel developers and owners should consider improving their parking facilities to attract and retain customers.

Theoretical implications suggest that parking availability, rate, and duration are essential factors influencing customer decisions. Practical implications indicate that the findings of this study can help anyone seeking relevant information on car parking facilities for tourists visiting Klang. Additionally, the study may inspire hotel developers and owners to improve their parking facilities to enhance their customers' experience and loyalty.

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