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Destination Image towards Revisit Intention to Natural Protected Areas in Sarawak: A Study of Functional Characteristics

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Abstract
Ecotourism is one of the major motives in tourism development through this advancing digitalized world. Moreover, the government is looking forward to seeing an opportunity to enhance attractiveness of ecotourism creation through the Visit Truly Asia Malaysia 2020 initiative. Furthermore, the sustainability of destination image should be established in a way that significantly increases the revisit intention of tourists. This study is to examine the relationship between the functional characteristics of destination image and revisit intention, namely, natural and historical attractions, entertainment and tourism activities, and tourism infrastructure as well as price and value. A total of 283 respondents comprising tourists both local and foreign tourists visited Gunung Mulu National Park, Gunung Gading National Park, Bako National Park, Kubah National Park and Niah National Park in Sarawak, Malaysia took part voluntarily in this study. In the evalutation of the developed model, WarpPLS 7.0 was implemented based on path modelling and bootstrapping to obtain the estimation of standard error and p-values. Interestingly, the findings revealed that only price and value had a significant positive impact on tourists' revisit intention, whereas no significant impact found among natural and historical attractions, entertainment and tourism activities, and tourism infrastructure. Implications of these results will be further discussed.
Keywords: Destination Image, Functional Characteristics, Revisit Intention, Ecotourism, National Parks.

Introduction
The evolution of digital advancement has shown that ecotourism has become the preferred way for people to rewire with nature and seeking for authentic natural experiences (Forbes, 2017). Ecotourism is serving for holiday-makers traveling to an uninterrupted environment with natural manifestations to enjoy breath-taking scenery, flora and fauna, along with any historical and contemporary cultural resources that exist in those natural areas (e.g. national parks) (Chiutsi, Mukoroverwa, Karigambe, & Mudzengi, 2011; Coria & Calfucura, 2012; Mondino & Beery, 2018).

Moreover, a study revealed that tourists have a higher preference in ecotourism as they consider the natural environment to be the priority of the choice of destination in travel decisions (Center for Responsible Travel, 2017). Based on the fact, destination management and development play a crucial role in developing favourable destination image in sustaining the growth of tourism destinations (Whang, Yong, & Ko, 2016; Loi, So, Lo, & Fong, 2017; Islam, Hossain & Noor, 2017; Dean, Surhartanto, & Kusdibyo, 2019). Correspondingly, Malaysia's Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MTAC) has intensified its efforts to concentrate on ecotourism whereby Visit Malaysia 2020 initiative is targeting a total of 30 million international tourists and a total of RM100 billion in tourist receipts to the country (Tourism Malaysia, 2019).

According to the report of Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MTAC), Sarawak, Malaysia has shown an increment of the growth rate of 5.22% in visitor arrivals. Thus, ecotourism also embraces a range of tourism management challenges and issues. Nevertheless, inactive tourism management plan leading to over-tourism which is overcrowding of destinations particularly in national parks (Center for Responsible Travel, 2018). As a side effect, due to the decline in the arrivals of tourists, the quality of the visitor experience is dramatically reduced and affected on the national park revenues. Besides that, ineffective tourism management also causes environmental degradation of the nature reserve, such as noise, air, and water pollution (Nianyong & Zhuge, 2001; Eagles, 2002; Anup, 2016).

This study was conducted in the five selected national parks which located in Sarawak, Malaysia namely Gunung Mulu National Park, Gunung Gading National Park, Bako National Park, Kubah National Park and Niah National Park. Every year these National Park received a large number of visitations from both local and foreign tourists mainly nature lovers. The richness and universe of ecotourism attraction plays a vital role in attracting visitors to the national park. Therefore, the destination image has become necessary and diverse for the positioning of tourism products in order to influence the choice of destination and revisit intention of tourists (Lopes, 2011; Lo, Songan, & Mohamad, 2013; Saliva, Anjos, & Pereira, 2018).

Study Objectives
The aim of this study is to analyse the functional characteristics of destination picture, including natural and historical attractions, entertainment and tourism activities, and tourism infrastructure, along with price and value for intention to revisit from the perspectives of tourists. The objectives of the present study are specified as follows:

- To examine the relationship between natural, historical attractions and tourists' revisit intention.
- To explore the relationship between entertainment, tourism activities and tourists' revisit intention.
- To examine the relationship between tourism infrastructure and tourists' revisit intention.
- To examine the relationship between price, value and tourists' revisit intention.

Conceptual Background and Hypotheses Development
Theory of Planned Behavior
Theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is one of the most prominent and influential theory for studying the revisit intention of tourists as well as for understanding and predicting the behavioural intentions of individuals (Ajzen, 2002; Chang, 2013; Huang, Chang & Backman, 2018). The TPB concentrated on intention of tourists to visit or revisit to understand the motivation for travel and behaviour of tourists (Li, Cai, Lehto, & Huang, 2010). As an improvement from reasoned action theory (TRA), Ajzen (1991, p. 188) described theory of planned behaviour theory, as the intentions of a person are affected by attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behaviour control. Attitudes refers to a favourable or unfavourable assessment of the person or analysis and evaluation of the behaviour; subjective norms refer to behaviour is considered to be perceived as social pressure to accomplish or not to accomplish individual behaviour; and perceived behavioural control is described as a perception of the person's ability to perform behaviour.

TPB has been widely adopted by many scholars to predict and understand individual behavioural intentions in a wide range of leisure settings. Recent research (Choo, Ahn, & Petrick, 2016; Japutra, Loureiro, Molinillo, & Ekinci, 2019) have shown that the behavioural intentions of tourists play a key role in influencing their travel experience and choice of destination. The theory has revealed that the commitment of tourists to a destination that influences the intention to purchase and revisit (Sarkar, 2014; Boujbel & d'Astous, 2015) which indicated specific behaviours such as favourable or unfavourable, positive or negative, and willingness or unwillingness (Lee, Hsu & Han, 2010; Vesci & Botti, 2019). Therefore, the present study apparently applied the theory of planned behaviour in the research framework by linking the destination image dimensions to revisit intention.

Revisit Intention
Revisit intention is described as tourists visit the destination repeatedly and are likely to recommend and share positive recommendations with others (Som & Badarneh, 2011; Chin, Law, Lo, & Ramayah, 2018). Previous researches (Chi & Qu, 2008; Chen & Chen, 2010; Qu, Kim, & Imm, 2011; Sadat & Chang, 2016; Stylidis, Shani, & Belhassen, 2017) suggested that the intention to revisit as tourist loyalty toward a destination and plan to return the same destination. Apart from this, destination image also plays an important character to influence the travel decision and tourists' intention to revisit the same destination in future (Cohen, Prayag, & Moital, 2014; Isaac & Eid, 2018). On the other hand, current study (Cui, Lee, Lee & Kim, 2019) also claimed that revisit intention is a key element of tourist destination loyalty in shaping their satisfaction and attitude, which means that tourists have a direct effect on the destination's attachment.

Functional Characteristics
Functional characteristics are characterized as tangible aspects of the image of destination that can be directly observed and measured by physical attributes (Echtner & Ritchie, 1993; Echtner & Ritchie, 2003; Mohamad & Ghani, 2014; Trung & Khalifa, 2019). It includes natural and historical attractions, entertainment and tourism activities, tourism infrastructure, price and value (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991; Echtner & Ritchie, 2003).

Natural and Historical Attractions

Natural and historical attractions relate to the core resources and attractors as well as the authenticity of tangible destination which are considered elements of destination image (Bonn, Cho, Lee & Kim, 2016), such as natural scenery, climate, flora and fauna, cultures, historical sites and works of art. Previous studies (Hernández-Lobato, Solis-Radilla, Moliner-Tena, & Sánchez-García, 2006; Packer, Ritchie & Ballantyne, 2011; Xu, Cui & Ballantyne 2013) highlighted that natural attraction is one of the major factors that affect the behavioral intention of tourists towards the destinations. Moreover, positive tangible destination image attributes (historical attractions) have a major effect on the decision-making of tourists to revisit a destination (Tasci & Gartner, 2007; Kim, Hallab, & Kim, 2012) which correlated to destination loyalty to ensure the longevity of the destination (Baniya, Ghimire, & Phuyal, 2017). Furthermore, tourists' perception of natural and historical attractions might create a memorable travel experience in order to influence revisit intention (Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2018). The following hypothesis is developed based on existing research:

H1: Natural and historical attractions are positively related to revisit intention.

Entertainment and Tourism Activities

Entertainment and tourism activities are referred to as a leisure destination which provides tourists with fun, pleasure, pleasure and excitement travel experiences including street entertainment, nightlife, dance performances, cultural festivals, shopping and shows (Chi & Qu, 2008; Luo & Lam, 2017). A study by Lertputtarak (2012) showed that entertainment and tourism activities have a positive relationship on revisit intention to manipulate the perception of tourists and to improve the visit experience of tourists to the tourism destination. Subsequently, entertainment and tourism activities are increasingly shaping the behavioural intention of tourists in making visitation decisions in order to create unforgettable experiences (Harun, Obong, Kassim, & Lily, 2018; Wu, Li & Li, 2018; Zhang et al., 2018). Thus, entertainment and tourism activities are a marketing resource for retaining and attracting tourists to return or repeat as well as to recommend the destination to others (Yelkur, 2000). According to the above research discussion, the subsequent hypotheses are formed:

H2: Entertainment and tourism activities are positively related to revisit intention.

Tourism Infrastructure

Tourism infrastructure refers to the ease of a tourism destination's transport facilities and basic services (Mo, Howard, & Havitz, 1993). Murphy, Pritchard & Smith (2000) highlighted the importance of infrastructure facilities in contributing to the efficiency of destination growth and tourists' revisit purpose (Nunkoo & Seetanah &, 2018). Moreira and Iao (2014) further suggested that tourism infrastructure is one of the important elements for attracting tourists to the destination. Additionally, good tourism facilities improve the accessibility and convenience of tourists to a particular tourism destination (Su & Wall, 2009), thereby creating a desirable popular tourism destination image (Grytsiuk & HGryciuk, 2017). Hence, tourism infrastructure quality is an important attribute to attract tourists to the destination (Mazilu & Stancioiu, 2009; Moric, 2013; Jovanovic & Ilic, 2016; Mandić, Mrnjavac, & Kordić, 2018). According to the above research discussion, the subsequent hypotheses are formed:

H3: Tourism infrastructure is positively related to revisit intention.

Price and Value

Price and value refer to what tourists pay for their travel, including the quality of services and products which correspond to the actual value (Ngoc & Trinh, 2015). The acceptable price and value are the fundamental components for manipulating tourist satisfaction to assess tourist's revisit intention towards destination (Qu, 1997; Lee, 2004). In fact, Kim, Ng, and Kim (2009) suggested that price and value are significant determinants of the revisit intention leading to increase in local economic benefits (e.g. sales, profit). Dwyer and Kim (2003) have emphasized that the price of goods or services should be equivalent with the value to maximize tourists ' satisfaction with the standard of service. Moreover, price and value have an impact on the satisfaction of tourists and revisit intention related to the perception of tourists on the assessment of the experience gained from the trip (Murphy et al., 2000; Yan, Wang, & Chau, 2015). Consequently, price and value as a predictor of destination in shaping the intention of tourists to visit again (Long & Nguyen, 2018). The following hypothesis is developed based on existing research:

H4: Price and value are positively related to revisit intention.

Methodology

The research population comprises both local and foreign tourists visit to Sarawak, Malaysia's Top 5 National Park as reported by TripAdvisor in 2019. The non-probability sampling method, purposive sampling method has been used in the selection of respondents in which respondents aged 16 and above would take the opportunity to be chosen as one of the respondents to this study. Non-probability sampling is a technique used to select the sample based on personal judgment and not on the size of the population (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2010; Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). In this study, the quantitative approach to survey questionnaires has been used as a survey tool for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of 57 items adapted from the previous study and adapted to the Malaysian context. The respondents are tourists who are visiting or have visited Gunung Gading National Park, Gunung Mulu National Park, Bako National Park, Kubah National Park and Niah National Park. A total of 300 sets of questionnaires were collected and used for statistical analysis using the convenience sampling technique.

First, the data went through a series of preliminary analyses via the Social Sciences Statistical Package 26.0 (SPSS). A total of 17 questionnaires have been discarded due to incomplete data. WarpPLS 7.0 (Kock, 2017) was then used with 283 data sets to evaluate the research model as shown in Figure 1. The data first went through the measurement model and then the structural model in the PLS analysis. The measurement model includes an assessment of the reliability, convergent and discriminant validity of the measure. After that, bootstrapping was performed to test the hypothesized relationship between the constructs.
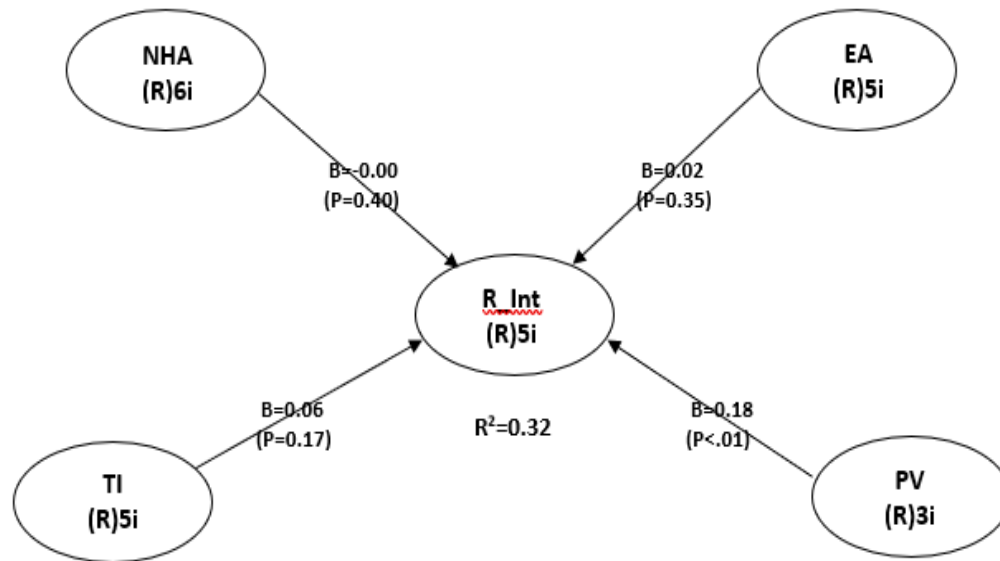
Figure 1: Research Model with path coefficients and p-values

Results and Discussion

WarpPLS 7.0 has been applied to evaluate the research model as proposed in this report. A two-step approach was carried out, where the measuring model is evaluated in the first step, involving the assessment of the construct's reliability and validity (Hair, Hult, & Ringle, 2017). The evaluation of the structural model was conducted in the second stage, enabling the assessment of proposed relationships between the constructs.

Assessment of the Measurement Model

The reliability, convergent and discriminating validity of the measures were tested by using the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) approach. Table 1 abstained from the loadings with thresholds of 0.5 and above to ensure internal consistency (Bagozzi, Yi, & Philipps, 1991). The composite reliability (CR) values, as suggested by Chin (2010), should meet the minimum cut-off point of 0.7 to declare validity. The extracted mean variance (AVE) values should meet the minimum criteria of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As a result, the CR and AVE values respectively met the minimum criteria. In order to test the reliability and internal consistency of the instrument, the alpha values of Cronbach were also adopted (Cronbach, 1951), and the results indicated that the alpha values of the Cronbach for cultural heritage attraction, tourism infrastructure, range of activities and competitiveness of destinations were identified at a good level, whereas the value of natural resources was considered acceptable As Nunally and Bernstein (1994) suggest, the value of 0.60 indicates poor, 0.61 – 0.79 indicates acceptable, and above 0.80 indicates good level respectively. Discriminant validity of the measures is shown in Table 2, referring to Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criterion, the AVE value was squarely rooted and testified against the inter-correlation of the construct with other constructs in the research model and all the values noted to be higher than the correlation of each construct (Chin, 2010). The measurement model was therefore appropriate, and proof is given in terms of reliability, convergent and discriminant validity. In addition, the determination coefficient (R^2) for the competitiveness of the destination was 0.325, which explained 32.5 per cent of the construction. The

(R^2) was above the minimum indication suggested by Cohen (1998) that is slightly above the $R^2\_0.19$ value.

Construct	No of Items	Items Deleted	Items	Loadings	CR	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
Natural and Historical Attraction	6	0	NHA_1	0.802	0.950	0.936	0.759
			NHA_2	0.863			
			NHA_3	0.901			
			NHA_4	0.882			
			NHA_5	0.879			
			NHA_6	0.897			
Entertainment and Tourism activities	5	0	EA_1	0.623	0.906	0.868	0.662
			EA_2	0.774			
			EA_3	0.853			
			EA_4	0.899			
			EA_5	0.888			
Price and Value	3	1	PV_1	0.723	0.809	0.746	0.586
			PV_2	0.782			
			PV_3	0.789			
Tourism Infrastructure	5	3	TI_1	0.820	0.909	0.874	0.666
			TI_2	0.825			
			TI_3	0.837			
			TI_4	0.822			
			TI_5	0.774			
Revisit Intention	5	0	RI_1	0.702	0.840	0.761	0.513
			RI_2	0.643			
			RI_3	0.784			
			RI_4	0.678			
			RI_5	0.765			

Table 1: Summary of Construct Reliability and Validity

	Natural and Historical Attraction	Entertainment and Tourism activities	Price and Value	Tourism Infrastructure	Revisit Intention
Natural and Historical Attraction	**0.871**				
Entertainment and Tourism activities	0.005	**0.814**			
Price and Value	0.342	0.104	**0.765**		
Tourism Infrastructure	0.281	0.059	0.363	**0.816**	
Revisit Intention	0.490	0.078	0.645	0.423	**0.717**

Table 2: Discriminant Validity of Constructs of HTMT of Measurement Model

Assessment of the Structural Model

Then the results of the testing of hypotheses are reported in Table 3. As a rule of thumb for the testing of one-tailed hypotheses, p-value must be lower than 0.01 or 0.05. The statistical findings showed that one of the hypotheses tested for the direct relationship were accepted. Price and value have been found to have significant positive relationship with destination image from the perspective of both domestic and international visitors. Interestingly, there was no support for the other three hypotheses, which are hypothesised with the significant relationship between latent variables, namely natural and historical attraction, entertainment and tourism activities, and tourism infrastructure as shown by the findings that they were not important. In addition, the values of the inflation factor of variation (VIF) were also acquired to assess the multicollinearity problem among the constructs. The results suggested that all the VIF values did not surpass 10, according to Bock, Zmud, Kim, & Lee (2005), therefore it is verified that there is no multicollinearity problem among the constructs.

Hypothesis	Relationship	Standard Beta	Standard Error	p-value	Decision	f^2
H1	Attraction >> Revisit Intention	0.002	0.059	0.487	**Not Supported**	0.007
H2	Entertainment and Tourism Activities >> Revisit Intention	-0.022	0.059	0.353	**Not Supported**	0.003
H3	Price and Value >> Revisit Intention	0.157	0.058	0.004**	**Supported**	0.064
H4	Infrastructure >> Revisit Intention	0.057	0.059	0.169	**Not Supported**	0.022

Note: *p<0.05, **p<0.01

Table 3: Summary of Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

The resulting study for hypothesis 3 showed that price and value contribute positively to tourists' intention to revisit in the context of Gunung Gading National Park, Gunung Mulu National Park, Bako National Park, Kubah National Park, and Niah National Park. As the result revealed, price and value in these natural protected areas can be concluded as a determinant of tourists' revisit intentions to ecotourism destinations. Price and value are of the basic criteria when visitors are making decisions to travel, while acting as a source of attraction for tourists (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Lane, 2009). This finding is congruent with past study where price and value of a destination have positive impact on revisit intention (Murphy et al., 2000; Yan et al., 2015). It has been suggested that good price and value destinations are capable of raising the likelihood of tourist purchasing behavior of tourism products and repeated visits to the same destination as price and value insight reflect the actual experience of tourists in the tourism destination (Petrick, 2004; Liu & Lee, 2016; Long & Nguyen. 2018). The plausible reason could be due to the fact that, despite its long distance from the city, these national parks can fulfil the daily necessity of tourists fairly and equitably. A positive tourism experience is linked to fulfilling the satisfaction of the tourists and their lives (Jung, 2015; Shen, 2016).

The results showed that three of the other destination picture elements (e.g.: natural and historical attraction, entertainment and tourism activities, and tourism infrastructure) had no important connexion with the revisiting intentions of tourists. The statistical finding from hypothesis 1 has shown that the appeal of natural and historical has no major effect on the purpose of revisiting. Interestingly, this finding contradicts past studies that suggest that the appeal of natural and historical has a positive influence on tourists' intention to revisit (Khuong & Nguyen, 2017; Karim, Setarnawat, & Viriyasuebphong, 2019). According to the feedback given by tourists during the interview, local as well as international tourists consider that harm to natural and historical sites such as beach garbage and degradation of heritage trails reduces their behavioural purpose in these natural protected areas, namely Gunung Gading National Park, Gunung Mulu National Park, Bako National Park, Kubah National Park, and Niah National Park. Moreover, the results also showed that entertainment and tourism activities were not significantly related to the revisit intentions of the visitors, thereby rejecting hypothesis 2. These findings contradict the findings of scholars (e.g.: Harun et al., 2018; Wu, Li, & Li, 2018), who emphasised entertainment and tourism activities that generate unforgettable tourist destination experiences and help to reinforce their revisiting intentions. A potential reason may be due to the high costs needed for activities like labour-power in developing a safety protocol in the creation of ecotourism (Markus, Perovic, Pekovic, & Popovic, 2019). In addition, interviewed international tourists gave a potential explanation that could be linked to the risk of growing environmental assets and residents' efficiency in the tourism destination. Results from statistical analyses showed that the tourism infrastructure was not substantially linked to the purpose of revisiting, so hypothesis 4 was not backed. Interestingly, this finding is inconsistent with previous studies that suggested that tourism infrastructure is a key feature for attracting tourists to revisit a tourism destination (Moreira & Iao, 2014; & Nunkoo & Seetanah, 2018) The incidence of this unexpected outcome may be due to the weak park facilities in the present case. Low infrastructure efficiency (e.g.: park and transportation facilities) decreases the intentions of tourists to visit again (Harun et al., 2018). Based on the interview at Gunung Mulu National Park, local and foreign tourists perceived tourism infrastructure was not being effectively implemented due to lack of investment and knowledge.

Conclusion
In conclusion, revisiting tourist intentions depends heavily on its price and value (Yan et al., 2015; Long & Nguyen, 2018). In general, both local and international tourists visit protected natural areas, or ecotourism destinations for short breaks from challenging working environments. For ecotourism destinations, therefore, it is necessary to ensure that the destination image (functional characteristics) is at decent quality in order to enhance the revisiting intentions of tourists and to improve their competitive market position (Rajesh, 2013; George, 2017). From now on, the present study revealed and verified that tourists viewed the price and value as the key determinant of their ecotourism destination revisiting intentions. Subsequently, tourists are often attracted to ecotourism destinations with good value for money, which leads tourists to view the price and value factor as a determinant of their intention to visit again.

Implications of the Study
Theoretical Implications
The results from the present study provides to the growing body on identification of factors contributing to tourists' revisit intentions to ecotourism destinations. In addition, the present study aims to further understand the effect of destination image factors (functional characteristics) on the revisit intentions of tourists towards ecotourism destinations, both local and international tourists.

Practical Implications
In the assurance of successful growth in ecotourism destinations, these results can be useful for local planners, business operators and policy makers. In today's competitive tourism industry, the value of the destination image has increased, especially in the context of ecotourism. The critical impacts of an ecotourism destination depend deeply on the price and value. Hence, the competitive stance and sustainability of the ecotourism destination are informed by a range of photos of destinations. Consequently, it is strongly suggested to further examine the destination image (e.g., psychological characteristics) and revisit purpose.

Acknowledgement

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