WILDLIFE VIEWING PREFERENCES OF VISITORS TO PROTECTED AREAS IN SABAH, MALAYSIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ROLE OF WILDLIFE TOURISM IN CONSERVATION

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FIFFY HANISDAH BINTI SAIKIM

BSc. (Hons) UNIMAS,

MSc. (Nature Tourism) UMS

James Cook University College of Business, Law & Governance

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY AND DEDICATION

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the work presented in this thesis is original, except as acknowledged in the text. All sources used in the study have been cited, and no attempt has been made to project the contribution of other researchers as my own. Further, the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to

my family, my parents, and my siblings

Untuk 'mummy', 'oma', abang dan anak-anak…

Junaidah Md. Ali, Jaiton Saridi, Mahadimenakbar, Aqil, Arif, Amir dan Ksha…

Khasnya buat ayahanda tercinta…

Dr. Saikim Gimbang…

22.09.1956 – 30.07.2014

Dan anakanda puteri tersayang…

Nur Khayriyyah Zafirah…

01.06.2013 – 04.06.2013…

To my mums, husband and children…

Junaidah Md. Ali, Jaiton Saridi, Mahadimenakbar, Aqil, Arif, Amir and Ksha…

Especially to my late father…

Dr. Saikim Gimbang…

22.09.1956 – 30.07.2014

And my late daughter…

Nur Khayriyyah Zafirah…

01.06.2013 – 04.06.2013

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السلام عليكم

Pisang emas bawa belayar,
Masak sebiji di atas peti,
Hutang emas dapat dibayar,
Hutang budi dibawa mati.

With golden plaintains sail away,
Whilst on a chest lies one that's ripe,
The debts of gold we can repay,
But debts of kindness last through life.[1]

_____

[1] Pantun (pantoum) is a Malay traditional poem equivalent to Japanese Haiku, widely recognised in the Malay Archipelago as one of the classical ways to express feelings courteously. It is characterised by quatrains, often with pleasing assonance; using simple language, nevertheless with deep meaning. The aforementioned pantun was translated by: Hamilton, A. W. 1941. *Malay Pantuns: Pantun Mĕlayu*. Australasian Publishing Co. Pty. Ltd.

STATEMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF OTHERS

The research contained herein this thesis is a result of team-based collaboration between myself, Chair Professor John Hamilton, Dr SingWhat Tee, Dr Josephine Pryce and Professor Bruce Prideaux. Chair Professor Hamilton spent considerable time teaching me to transform my writing style, and to learn and use the stats required herein.

Chair Professor Hamilton guided me through the research process, connecting with me in Malaysia via Skype, and via email on a regular basis across the past three years. Professor Prideaux and Chair Professor Hamilton guided my initial brain-storming and research agenda plans, Dr Tee added data capture techniques and analysis, Dr Price assisted with my tourism thesis approach. Chair Professor Hamilton assisted with how to frame and triangulate my research, my stats and my write-up. These assistance patterns persisted across the research process

Ethics associated with this research and thesis complies with the current laws of Australian and all permits necessary for the project was obtained.

Original research data is retained at JCO, and in the College of Business, Law & Governance in accordance with JCU research data: storage and management guidelines.

Fiffy Hanisdah Binti Saikim

ABSTRACT

This study uses quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate the preferences of tourists who visit protected areas in Sabah, Malaysia. It considers the implication that such visits have against the conservation of wildlife tourism destinations.

Several theoretical frameworks are employed in this investigation - including critical theory, grounded theory, experience theory, animal encounter theory, biodiversity hotspots theory, and scheme theory. Other theories of importance are involvement theory, theory of planned behaviour, and user-and-gratification theory. This study's wildlife tourism behaviour path model shows that tourist experiences and activities can drive memories, loyalty and satisfaction with the destination's offerings.

The study shows that wildlife tourist's expectations are framed around Sabah's endemic wildlife, rainforest, diversity of animals and abundance of animals, as well as around traditional culture. A good portion of respondent tourists (42%) indicate that their tourist expectations are substantively met, with a further 39% seeing their experience as less than very-highly-met. As such, there is room for improving Sabah's wildlife tourism industry.

The orang utans, followed by the rhinoceros, and then the elephants, are the most popular animal species. Approximately sixty seven per cent (66.9%) of study respondents are in the 25 – 44 age group, with a majority being professional's females, and often from the UK. A majority (63%) of respondents were first time visitors. Regarding environmental conservation, 33.90% (majority of tourists) learned of threats facing the wildlife species in these tours, and indicated that wildlife threats needed attention.

The real world contributions of this study include encouraging wildlife destination sites to seek solutions for the improvement of the appeal of wildlife tourism, and raising both the loyalty and satisfaction levels of outbound wildlife tourists. This study was limited in terms of the tourist respondent convenience sampling employed over as a short period-of-time in Sabah, and conducted at the Kota Kinabalu International Airport.

The paper – 'Saikim, F.H., & Prideaux, B. (2014). *Rainforest wildlife: a key element in Sabah's destination appea*l. In Prideaux, B. (Ed.) Rainforest Tourism, Conservation and Management: Challenges for Sustainable Development (pp. 241-258), New York, NY: Routledge (ISSN 978-020308718-3; 978-041563582-0),' offers some of this researcher's early views around this PhD research topic.

Keywords: wildlife tourism, Sabah, wildlife, loyalty, destination appeal, wildlife threats

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KKIA - Kota Kinabalu International Airport

UNWTO – United Nations World Tourism Organization

WoM – Words of Mouth

GDP – Growth Domestic Products

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1   PROLOGUE

In this chapter, an overview of the areas that this research addresses is provided. The topic of research and the research problem investigated here are also provided. The significance and relevance of the topic of study is also justified based on the gaps that the researcher has identified in the literature. Additionally, through this chapter the researcher makes the audience aware of the methodology employed to answer the research questions as well as explaining the limitations of this study.

1.2   AIMS OF THE STUDY

Compared to several years ago, tourism today has spread to many parts of the world including places that were not known before. This is attributed to the evolving nature of tourists in that tourists today do not merely want to sit on the beaches but want to experience nature and authentic and therefore get the value for their money (Saarinen, 2000). Alongside ecotourism and adventure tourism, nature-based tourism is today gaining a lot of popularity among tourists. These forms of tourism have one thing in common in that they all include animals and are closely related to animal-based tourism or wildlife tourism (Saarinen, 1999; Newsome *et al*., 2005). Experiences are much-sought after in this post-Fordist world of tourism. From 1990s, the experience industry got a lot of attention that saw it boom and this effect spread to adventure and nature experiences to other areas as well (Komppula and Boxberg 2002). There is a strong relationship between experiences and the type of tourism that makes use of animals as the main form of attractions.

An important role is played by animals in our society. Animals are eaten, some act as pets while other are used for transportation and scientific studies. Also, animals are used in tourism activities. While animal-based tourism makes use of animals, it is not homogenous as it has a lot of variation. Wildlife tourism is the most used concept and is there more studied. However, this researcher considers it to be a very narrow area of study. Wildlife tourism usually excludes domesticated animals in addition to leaving out parts of experiences that are irrefutably part of tourism. A role is played by domesticated animals when it comes to tourism.

Humans are the ones that dictate the various roles that animals play in tourism. In this context, role does not solely mean the encounter that an animal has with a tourist but also the environment or the surrounding in which the encounter occurs, the activities in these

encounters, and the meanings that are attached to such activities and the resulting consequences. Many different types of animals are involved in tourism business and therefore tourists have differing encounters with them. For example, tourists see these animals when used as a means of transportation, in captivity, in the wild or when used as entertainers. Literature indicates that tourists seek different animal species and therefore want to draw different experiences from these encounters. Theories on experiences in tourism literature clearly explain the elements that evoke experiences as well as providing explanations on the experiences that one can acquire. Literature on wildlife tourism adds to this with studies on the experiences that are produced on animal encounters. Given that wildlife tourism is narrowly defined, this study uses the general experience theory based on this definition as well as other theories and findings on literature on wildlife tourism.

Peoples travel decisions are influenced by travel destinations in addition to travel destinations being an indicator of the actual habits and choices when it comes to travelling. A discussion of travelling, attractions, and activities is provided by travel destinations. Additionally, travel destinations sell people dreams and the newest trends in the market. For this reason, travel destinations form the best source of information for studying any tourism phenomena and especially for this study: a request by the Universiti Malaysia Sabah on research on the future of wildlife-based tourism was the force behind this study. Therefore, this study aims at providing relevant information on Sabah Tourism on the response that visitors exhibit when experiencing different wildlife products and service and how effective these responses are in creating satisfaction that has the effect of maximizing the positive effects of wildlife tourism on wildlife relevant for marketing and policy purposes. The findings of this study should also be key in providing tourism service providers with relevant information and suggestions that are important in ensuring the success of Sabah wildlife tourism industry.

While the involvement and the request by the Universiti Malaysia Sabah formed the basis for the choice of Sabah for this project, the choice is also reasonable given that Sabah state is a tourism destination. Sabah boasts of a rich and diverse fauna and flora, and, according to Conservation International (2009) and Goudie (2006), it is one of the hotspots of biodiversity in the world. Sabah heavily relies on tourism for its economic growth. Tourism ranks third in its contribution to the economy of Sabah after agriculture and manufacturing. Sabah's gross domestic product growth has been positive since 2000, at which it stood at RM32.4 million and increased to RM73.7 million in 2016, becoming one of the five major states to contribute to the country's GDP. Primary sectors, such as agriculture, plantation, forestry and petroleum, formed part of its main contributions to economic activities, as well as the service sector, such as tourism. In terms of tourist arrivals, Sabah's tourism has set a new record in 2018 with the

highest tourism receipts ever at RM8.342 billion on the back of a record-high 3.879 million arrivals (see Figure 1.1) (STB, 2019).

Visitors Arrival to Sabah, Malaysia
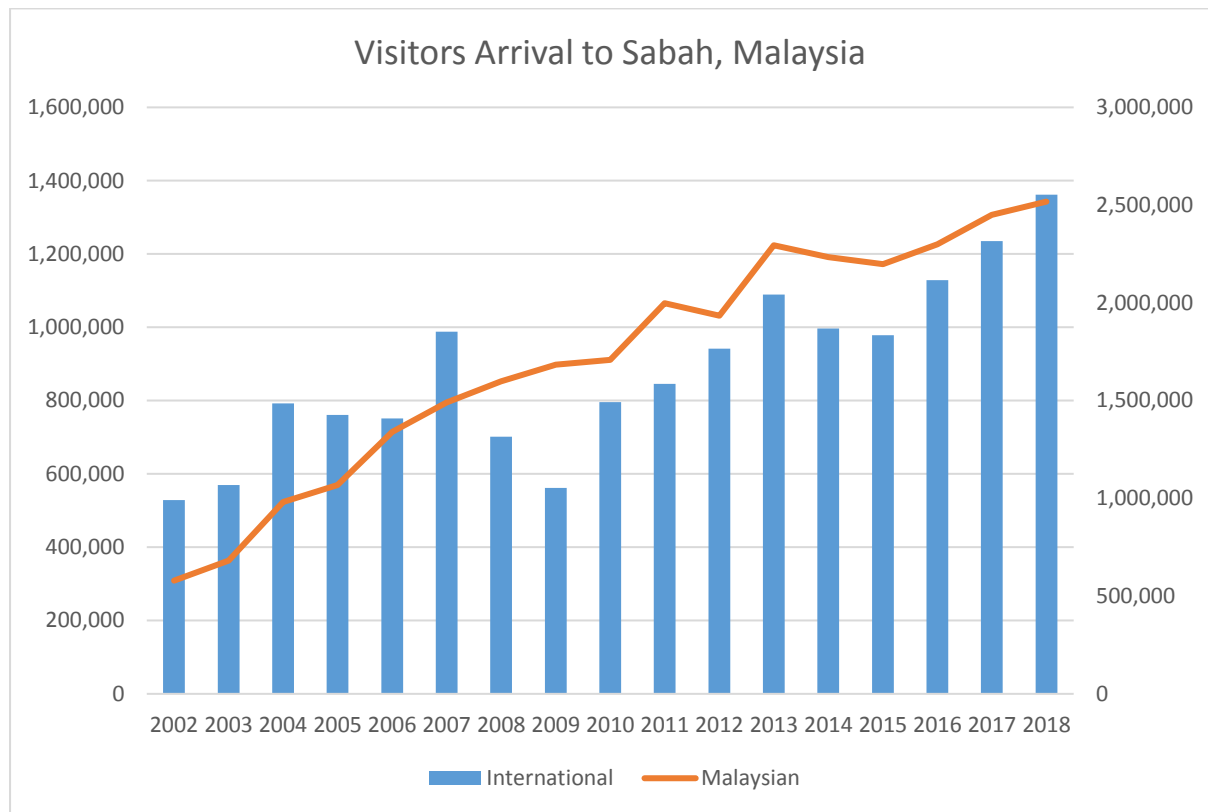
Figure 1.1:   Visitor arrivals in Sabah
Source: Sabah Tourism Board, 2019

As one of the 12 mega diverse areas of the world, Sabah boasts of international biodiversity attractions (SDC, 2007). This luxurious biological diversity and uniqueness is also the reason why Sabah was chosen as a research site for his project.

To date, there are only a few studies which have investigated wildlife tourist satisfaction for a specific site or for particular activities. A summary of the key findings of these studies is provided in Table 1.1. The items that led to the satisfaction of tourists is also provided in the tables with clear emergence of some items consistently.

Table 1.1: Summary of items related to satisfaction with wildlife-based activities.

STUDY	ITEMS CONTRIBUTING TO SATISFACTION
Duffus and Dearden (1993) Whale watching tours on Canada's Pacific Coast – Killer Whales	Seeing whales Getting close to whales

	Seeing displays of whale behaviour
	Seeing coastal scenery
	Having a naturalist/crew member to answer questions
	Seeing other marine mammals
Davis *et al.* (1997) Whale shark tours in Western Australia	Being close to nature Seeing large animals Seeing many different types of marine life Excitement Learning about the marine environment Adventure Underwater scenery Freedom Relaxation Being with friends
Leuschner *et al.* (1989) (Specialist) Birdwatchers in Virginia, USA	Seeing species not previously seen Seeing many different species Seeing rare or endangered species
Foxlee (1999) Whale watching in Hervey Bay, Australia	Numbers of whales seen Activities of whales Distance of the tourist from the whale Readily available information about whales Readily available information about other forms of marine life The style of presentation of information
Hammitt *et al.* (1993) Wildlife viewing in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, USA	Seeing many different kinds of wildlife Seeing black bears Seeing white-tailed deer Seeing a larger number of animals First-time visitors Using binoculars/telescope to see wildlife Taking photographs If numbers seen matched expected numbers
Tourism Queesnland (1999) Whale watching in South-east Queensland, Australia	Numbers of whales seen Travel groups other than families Repeat visitors Domestic visitors On board commentaries Smaller boats
Schanzel and McIntosh (2000) Penguin viewing in New Zealand	Natural habitat and behaviour Proximity to the penguins Educational opportunities Innovative/novel approach Fewer other people present Presence of infant penguins

The majority of the studies which are provided in Table 1.1 paid attention to one type of wildlife activity or specific setting. An alternative approach is reported by Moscardo *et al.* (2001) in

which respondents were asked to describe their best wildlife experiences as well as their worst experiences while on holidays. This critical incident approach showed that several factors were important including close contact, availability, of variety, education, rare species, new species, and the natural environment. The quality of experience was also manifested in tourist's touching and feeling of the animals, though this reported by only 14% of the surveyed sample. On worst experiences, close contact with animals was also found to be problematic with 37% of the respondents indicating either being harassed, frightened or attached by wildlife. These sources of worst experiences also revealed additional concerns including poor enclosure for the wildlife, wildlife welfare, poor staff, bad weather, and poor quality and/or limited visitor facilities.

Surveys and observations of visitors in aquaria, zoos, and other wildlife captive settings provide another source of information on the satisfaction of the visitors. Reviews conducted by Kreger and Mench (1995) and Bitgood *et al.* (1988) found that visitors become greatly interested and get enjoyed when they are able to get close to the animals and even touch and feed them. The visitors also get enjoyment from pleasant natural outdoor settings, educational shows and/or demonstrations, naturalistic enclosures, and being able to see wildlife easily.

Other studies also indicated that visitors are also interested in other aspects of wildlife. For example, a study by the Bitgood's team (1988) found that visitors are attracted by both infant and large animals. Additionally, a study by Broad (1996) found that visitors express the greatest excitement when they visited a zoo with primates, bears, and baby animals.

By answering the following research question, the qualities of wildlife-based tourism, its phenomenon and place in the field of tourism is made clear: (1) *what kind of wildlife-based tourism is sought by the tourists in Sabah?* Through answering this question, a discussion on the contemporary situation and contemplation of the trends in wildlife-based tourism in Sabah state can be made. After the determination of wildlife-based tourism in Sabah, a discussion of the experiences can then be made. The understanding of the element of experience in wildlife tourism is made with the objective of answering the second research question of this study: (2) *what kind of elements evokes emotions and experiences in wildlife-based tourism?* The theoretical background forms the basis for studying the elements and the various experiences of wildlife tourism. Therefore, the third research question for this study is: (3) *what kind of experiences do the presented animal encounters evoke?* Chapter five provides the analysis of the studied factors and therefore the experiences and the elements which produce them is then made clear. The qualities of wildlife-base tourism can be made clear as well as the knowledge which is important for advancing visitor management to ensure that visitor

satisfaction and the conservation of animals is achieved at wildlife-based tourism destinations. In part I, this study will provide a discussion of the existing elements in the creation of the various experiences as well as the weakness that result from the animal encounters.

The research questions provided above can be answered by (1) compiling a profile of visitors touring Sabah wildlife, (2) investigating the relationship between the viewing patterns of wildlife by the visitors and wildlife attributes in Sabah, (3) determining if the awareness of the visitors for wildlife conservation is increased through their experiences, (4) and through the identification of the possibility of the utilization of wildlife as a selling proposition for tourism in Sabah state. A mixed method research approach will be utilised to answer these questions.

Today, many of the tourism destinations are challenged in terms of establishing themselves as tourism destinations and maintaining, protecting or strengthening their competitive status in the global marketplace which is becoming more competitive. For this study, this thesis will look into the destinations that are specifically concerned with animal-based tourism specifically from the perspective of serious wildlife tourists. The study will examine the phenomena of the spatial distribution of wildlife based tourism with the aim of understanding animal-based tourism as a whole and also for the purpose of confirming the reliability of this study. The focus of the researcher will be on experiences where the location, setting, and geographical destinations play a major role in influencing these experiences. However, the results of the destinations, settings and encounters will also be examined to facilitate the determination of whether animal based tourism in Sabah state is a reflection of the definitions that are provided in literature. Furthermore, the researcher will also examine the research questions from the perspective of time and change.

Through answering the question of this research, important and valuable data can be collected on this area of animal-based tourism which has not received a lot of attention from researchers specifically when it comes to serious wildlife-based tourists. This data will provide the insight into the most common activities that involves the use of animals in tourism, the most important aspect of these activities that create the best experiences in tourists – animal encounter and the type of encounter that are had. Through gathering this information, it is possible to improve tourism destinations that rely on animals and the animal encounters that provide the highest satisfaction and versatile experiences to the visitors.

The well-being of the animal is also enhanced through the information that is gathered. The scrutiny of this information needs to be done with the knowledge that this study only focusses on one destination. Therefore, the results of this study have to be contemplated within this

limits as allowed by the theories and the background. The research will provide a discussion of the problems and the possibilities that the collected data provides and perform a reflection of the reliability of the results in the results chapter of this thesis. The researcher will not make any generalizations as this was never the purpose of the study. This study aims at gathering deeper and more qualitative information about the subject of the study but in a wider scale so as to understand the phenomena of the experiences in animal encounters. Yet, sue to the large data set and the big coverage, careful conclusions need to be drawn with the application of the results for developing animal-based tourism encounters while maintaining the knowledge of the premises of data.

There are several underlying factors and motivations for travelling: a discussion of the destination pull factors is made in tourism geography. Pull factors such as geographical attributes and climate pull people tourists generating home, region to destinations. The destination may have different aspects of attraction that may serve as smaller units of attractions or items of pull factors for the visitors. Examples of this include sights and events that attract tourists to specific locations. Animal encounters form the main element of attraction in animal-based tourism. Within the element of attraction, there are other factors that act together to contribute to visitor satisfaction. Today, tourists are looking for experiences which are a culmination of the satisfaction of the visitors; something that has to be achieved. There are varied experiences and therefore the elements that generate them are also varied. The researcher makes an effort to understand the phenomenon of animal-based tourism by first looking at the varying qualities of destination and animal-based tourism, defining the attractions (or animal encounters), and then look at the experiences that they produce and the element that create such experiences.

1.3   TERMINOLOGY

In this section a brief explanation of the terminology that is central to this thesis is provided. The researcher defines the concepts of tourism and attractions from a perspective of tourism geography followed by an explanation of the terms animals and zoo.

According to UNWTO (2012) tourism is the largest industry in the world and witnessed a 4.6% growth to 983 million from 940 million in 2010. The World Tourism Organization glossary defines tourism as: *"Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes"* (UNWTO, 2012).

From this definition, Vuoristo (2003) notes that the common conception is that travelling is done for three main purposes. These are:

1. Leisure, recreation and holidays

2. Business and professional

3. Other (visiting friend and relatives etc.).

Based on the region boundaries of a destination, tourism can be classified as either domestic tourism or international tourism. Tourism can further be classified into various forms that include culture tourism, mass tourism, nature-based tourism, and alternative tourism. Numerous special interest or niches of tourism also exist. These forms of tourism will be discussed in the next chapter of this thesis.

Tourism has several impacts that include economic, ecological, and social. Economic impact is the most studied part but nowadays some researchers have delved into the social and ecological impacts. The impacts of tourism are increasingly becoming deeper and widespread with the growth of the tourism industry and the increase in the variations of the tourism destinations. Different impacts are exhibited by different forms of tourism.

Leiper proposed the tourism model presented in Figure 1.2. The pull factors responsible for tourists travelling to a particular region and the nature of the destination region are the two areas which are relevant to my study. As note in the section above, pull factors can include several things such as the climate, geographical qualities, and culture among others. On the other hand, push factors are those that establish the will of an individual to travel (Järviluoma 1994). According to Leiper (1979) (cit. Hall. & Page, 2010), within an industry, attractions include events, facilities, and sights that are oriented to tourists experiential opportunities. Vuoristo (1994) noted that there is a connection between a site and an area or a place (for example, the Eiffel tower) or a connection can exists between an attraction and time (for example, the Olympics). In this study, the main focus of the researcher is on destinations with animal-based attractions: destinations with activities, sights or events that provide tourists with animal encounters.
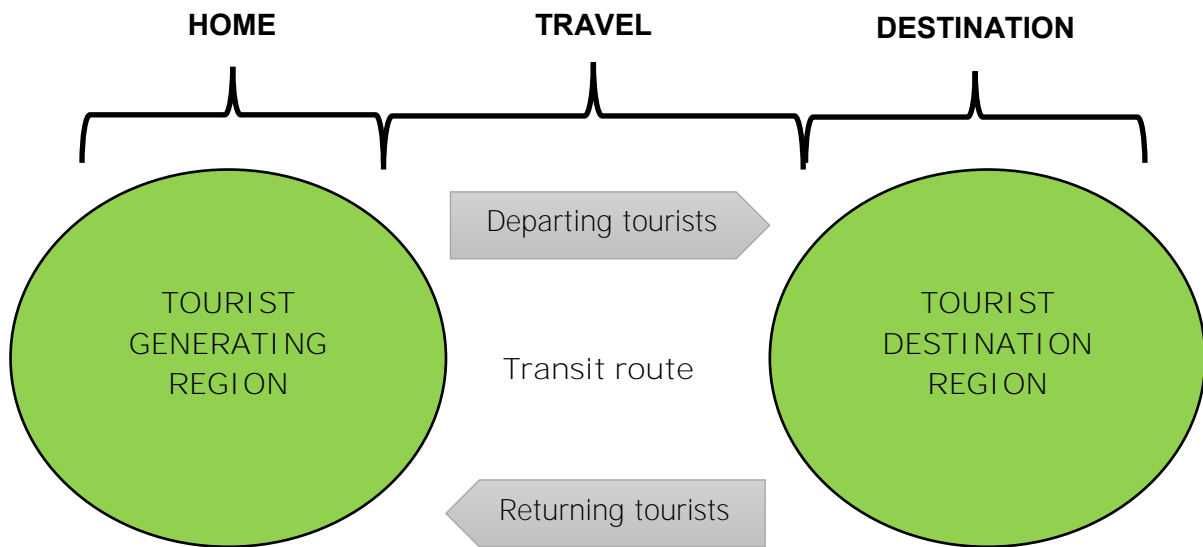
Figure 1.2:   The tourist system

Source: Leiper, 1981 cited from Burton, 1995

Throughout this thesis, the term animal is used to refer to non-human animals. This refers to animals that are domesticated and undomesticated including vertebrate and invertebrates but not coral or plants. An example of animal-based attraction is the zoo. By zoo, this researcher does not merely imply zoological gardens that are commonly referred to as zoos, but also sanctuaries, oceanaria, aquariums, fauna parks and aviaries, different zoological institutions. These attractions are different from each other due to the different types of animals that they keep such as birds, fish, mammals, reptiles etc. but they have the same level of confinement or captive settings (Tribe 2004). The term zoo as used in this paper, also includes farms and farm animals. The terms mentioned above are key to this study and understanding them is important for understanding this study. In the next section, the background of the study is presented in a discussion on animal-based tourism and its attributes.

1.4   BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The key concepts of this study are defined in this chapter. A description of what animal-based tourism is provided as well as where it happens and its position in the general tourism field so as to building an understanding of this topic. Changes brought forward by different researchers on animal-based tourism are also discussed in this section.

1.4.1   Animal-Based Tourism as a Form of Tourism

Literature on wildlife tourism forms the basis of literature for this study. Animal-based tourism is defined based on two key researchers by two authors: Newsome *et al*.'s *Wildlife tourism*

(2005) and Karen Higginbottom's *Wildlife tourism* (2004). A wider understanding of the subject is obtsined by considering other studies including Shani and Pizan's (2007) paper on '*Towards an ethical framework for animal-based attractions,*' and Swarbrooke *et al*.'s *Adventure tourism – the new frontier* (2003).

According to Swarbrooke *et al*. (2003), 24-40% of tourists are considered wildlife-related tourists while 40-60% are claimed to be nature-related tourists. About half the population of the people of Malaysia have interest in nature-based tourism, according to The Sabah Tourism Board statistics (STB, 2019). However, only 3.2 million of the Malaysian people are active consumers of this form of tourism. It is difficult to estimate the economic importance of wildlife tourism, but it is evident that it has clear benefits and big meaning (Higginbottom 2004). Given that wildlife tourism locations are mainly in the rural areas, they bring a lot of benefits to these areas. Even if it is difficult to estimate, it is believed that recently wildlife tourism has witnessed a lot of growth though this growth has not been witnessed in all sectors: while hunting and zoo tourism are believed to have declined in recent years, watching wildlife in wilderness has witnessed a lot of growth (Higginbottom 2004). Research on the potential of the wildlife tourism sector has been done in Sabah by the Sabah Tourism board with the aim of developing this sector (e.g. SDC, 2009). The demand for wildlife tourism is believed to be risen with Sabah state having quality resources to provide excellent products in this area of tourism (STB, 2019; SDC, 2009). The growth of wildlife tourism in Sabah is in the fields of scuba diving, jungle trekking, photographing, and fishing in natural waters (Musa 2002; Ancrenaz *et al*. 2007; Chan and Baum 2007; Bennett & Reynolds 1993).

Though wildlife tourism is considered to be economically profitable with this growth, this growth is thought to be associated with some negative effects. The negative impact of wildlife tourism has been widely researched especially on the environment. However, wildlife tourism could have appositive impact on the environment by encouraging conservation. Using land to establish national parks and for conservation purposes is considered a valid option for land use because of the income that is derived from tourist activities (Higginbottom, 2004). The impact of tourism is generally thought to be dependent on the form of tourism; more ecological, socio-cultural, and economic impacts are believed to be associated with mass tourism as compared to alternative tourism that is associated with low number of tourists numbers and the more considerate use of the resources available in a particular destination (Honey, 2008; France, 1997; Newsome *et al*., 2005). However, various forms of tourism overlap and therefore the various categories are only used as a simplification. This is the reason why forms of tourism are closely related. Depending on the location, Newsome *et al*. (2005) defined wildlife tourism as "*ecotourism is tourism for the environment; nature tourism is tourism about*

the environment and adventure tourism is tourism in the environment." These forms of tourism merge in Newsome *et al.*'s tourism model provided in Figure 1.3 and this included wildlife tourism

Many different forms of tourism are reached by wildlife-based tourism because of its activities, surroundings, the experiences it produces, and activities. Naturally, wildlife-based tourism has a close relationship with nature tourism or nature-based tourism. According to Saarinen (1999) and Newsome *et al.* (2005), nature tourism is a fast growing area of tourism and is often considered a trending area in tourism business. Saarinen (1999) further noted that nature-based tourism is usually generalized and simplified as the form of tourism that is based on the natural environment and their attractiveness. There is a difference in the level of conservation and authenticity in the destinations and the environments of nature tourism. Unlike ecotourism, the idea of conservation is not included in nature based tourism (Shackley, 1999). On the other hand, at the centre of ecotourism is the idea of conservation. At its best, Honey (1999) noted that ecotourism offers principles and practices for changing the whole tourism industry but its downside is that it threatens the whole ecosystem.

Like other forms of tourism, ecotourism has many classifications and has a close relationship with animal-based tourism. Citing the work of Hector Ceballos-Lascuráin (1988), Honey (2008) noted that ecotourism is *"travel to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific object of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery of its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural aspects found in these areas".* Ecotourism is done for various purposes including the promotion and the conservation of the environment, enjoyment and appreciation of nature and culture, and production of local economic and social benefits as well as having minimal impacts on the environment. Additionally, Fennell (2003) noted that the definitions of ecotourism also include the aspect of learning and adventure.
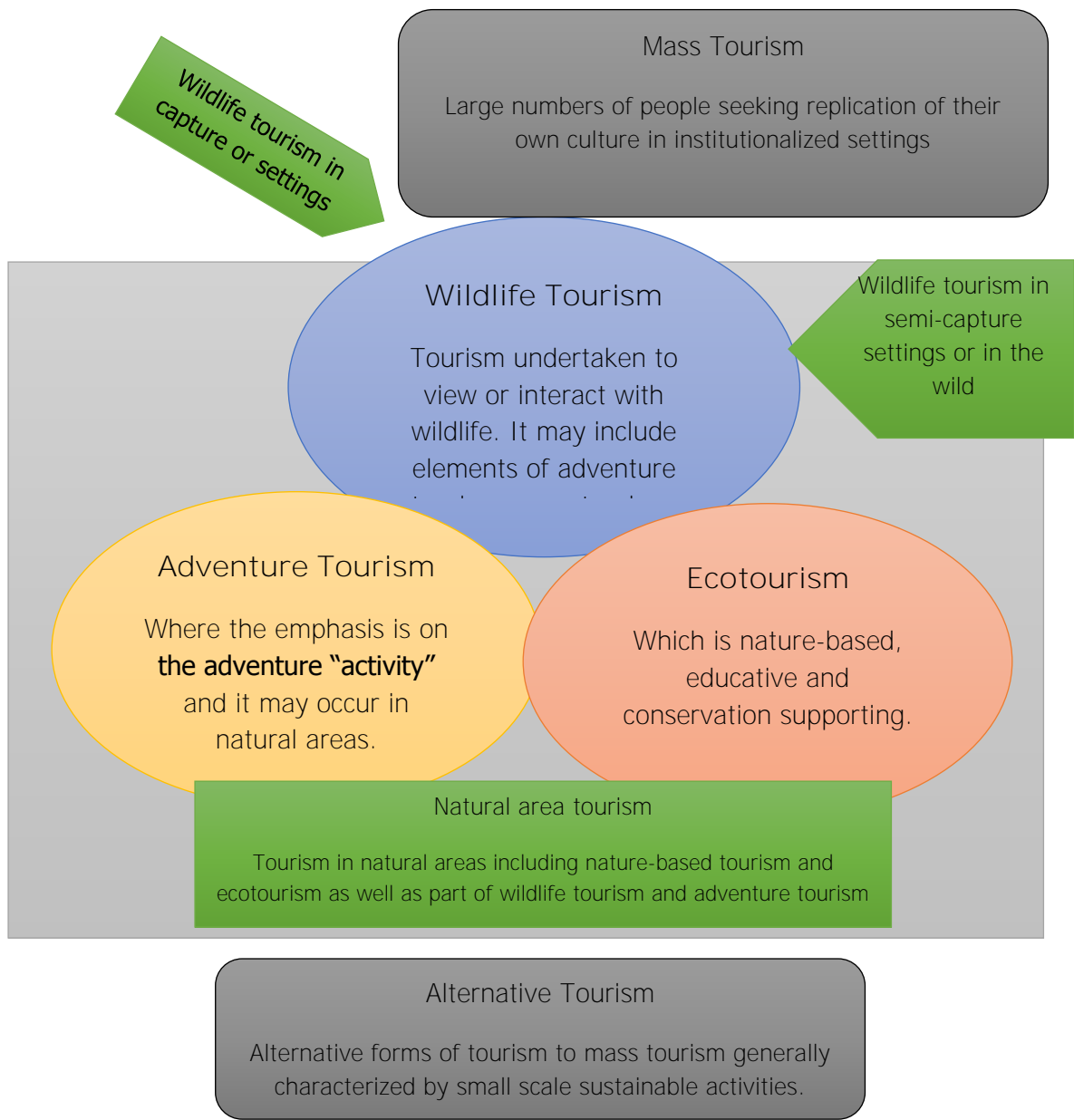
Figure 1.3:   Wildlife tourism's position within tourism

Source: Newsome *et al*., 2005

The third form of tourism that is closely related to animal-based tourism is adventure tourism. According to Swarbrooke *et al*. (2003), adventure tourism is often considered as *"a physical phenomenon, involving tourists undertaking physical activities in unfamiliar and often inhospitable environments."* Adventure tourism also has other non-physical attributes that are related to it and this includes intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects. Additionally, the concept of adventure tourism is believed to vary widely as different people relate to adventure in different issues. Still, Anon (2003) noted that adventure tourism includes other attributes

that include danger, excitement, risk, novelty, and escapism. More extensive research has been done on the physical aspect of adventure tourism and is considered to involve activities such as bike-riding, whale watching, trekking, cheetah-watching, swimming with sharks, sailing, surfing, dog-sledding and reindeer expeditions, etc. (Swarbrooke *et al*., 2003). Eight out of the 23 activities that were mention in the book about adventure tourism included animals. The rest could also include some form of animals. As a researcher, I consider animals in adventure tourism to be a secondary attraction because it is not the primary activity. However, the role of animals in adventure tourism cannot be denied.

In the majority of studies conducted about Sabah tourism, nature-based tourism is usually studied in the context of nature-based tourism and has been utilized in the concept of wildlife tourism for studying the watching of wildlife consisting mainly of large animals, primates, and birds. The forms of tourism that are widely discussed in the literature on Sabah tourism are wildlife photographing, jungle trekking, and wildlife watching (STB, 2019). The definitions of wildlife-based tourism is widely used in this study because the researcher considers it accurate as well as it fits the specialization of this study on wild animals in Sabah.

Wildlife tourism has many classifications related to it and these are used in this thesis for defining and describing wildlife-based tourism. There is a great variations in environments, destinations, animal types and the types of activities, but these are connected by encounter with animals. Higginbottom (2004) defined wildlife tourism as the type of tourism that is based on encounter with non-domesticated (non-human) animals.

Different hierarchical scales or levels in terms of the roles that animals play exist. At the highest level, animals can be the main purpose of the trip while at the lowest level animals can just be a component of a travel product. For this reason, places at the highest hierarchical level are described as purely wildlife tourism destinations and are the main wildlife attraction centres with low level of competition from other attractions. An equivalent concept for the hierarchical scale is the "wildlife-dependent" and "wildlife-independent" forms of tourism. In this classification the motivation by the traveller to see wildlife is established by the dependency on wildlife. The traveller can seek to interact with the animal or the interaction can be an unintentional but add value to the experience of the traveller (Higginbottom, 2004). In this study, all the possible hierarchical levels can be considered except the unintentional encounters.

In animal-based tourism, the classification of encounters is popularly done based on either consumptive or non-consumptive encounters. Consumptive animal-based tourism implies that

the travellers capture or kill an animal (fishing and hunting) while in non-consumptive animal-based tourism implies encounters that do not involve the capturing or killing of animals such as animals watching. This classification, according to Higginbottom (2004), is specious because consumptive does not necessarily imply that it is unsustainable. In relevant literature, this classification is used popularly but in this thesis, it is not used.

A wildlife-tourist spectrum by Orams (1995) is presented by Bulbeck (2005). In this spectrum, the level of confinement is used in categorizing wildlife tourism: from feeding wildlife to wild and captive to semi-captive as indicated in Table 1.2. Different encounter sites are simplified by Orams' table based on their naturalness and confinement level. The natural setting of the animal is the wild or wilderness which also forms their habitat while semi-captive settings are characterised by some artificial features. On the other hand, captive settings are fully man-made and artificial. In the later part of this thesis, a discussion of the settings and differences between the many specific forms is provided.

Table 1.2:   Classification of animal encounter sites.
Source: Orams, 1995 cited from Bulbeck, 2005

WILD	SEMI-CAPTIVE	CAPTIVE
Migratory routes, National parks, whale watching sites, breeding sites, natural feeding/drinking sites, turtle watching sites, etc.	Rehabilitation centres and programs, wildlife parks, dolphin pens, feeding wildlife, etc.	Zoos, oceanaria, aquaria, aviaries, etc.

Higginbottom (2004) provided a most widely used classification for recognizing animal-based tourism or wildlife tourism. The following criteria were used by Higginbottom (2004) to classify wildlife tourism:

- Level of confinement (captive – free-ranging continuum)
- Principle type of encounter (viewing simulated natural activities or natural activities, view non-living animals, view performing animals, handle animals, feed animals, kill or capture animals, research or conservation work, view and learn about wildlife farm production, indirect, no 'real' animals)
- The degree to which emphasis is placed on wildlife tourism experience (continuum from a minor component to the emphasis of the whole experience)
- Environment (or simulated environment) where interaction occurs (coastal, land, marine underwater, marine not in water, freshwater underwater, freshwater not in water)

- ➢ Type and range of animal species (e.g. in wildlife farms: alpacas, ostriches, crocodiles; in free-ranging settings: whatever species are encountered, mammals, fish, whales, birds, seals)
- ➢ Dispersion (fixed site attraction, mobile attraction, dispersed activity)
- ➢ Type of supplier: none (independent travellers), non-profit organization, private tourism operator, a wildlife agency or a government nature conservation agency, educational institution, local council.

The different attributes of wildlife tourism are simplified by this model. The confinement level refers to the different encounter setting with the animal and for this part, this study presented the Orams' model in Table 1.2. The meaning of the role of animals in the destination is classified by the degree of emphasis of tourism experience on wildlife: if the animals are the primary attraction or just part of an attraction. Using another perspective, Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001, cit. Newsome *et al*. 2005) studied wildlife tourism as a product. Table 1.3 presents this.

The classifications provided in Table 1.3 includes the different ways of using wildlife tourism products as well as indicating the different motivations of the tourists. Unlike nature-based tours where watching of wildlife is only part of the tour, a high level of interest is required is required in animal watching. Habitat specific tours need a lot of motivation as compared to artificial attraction because of the ease of availability of artificial attractions. Fishing and hunting are different from other classes by activity in that the animal is not considered an object of gaze only but that of catching and/or killing Moscardo and Saltzer (2005) provided a discussion of the motivations of the visitors by presenting a table that shows the results of five different studies about the market on wildlife tourism. Based on these studies, it was found that wildlife tourism are generally younger, have a higher education, travel longer, spend more, and are most likely to be independent. However, one Canadian study found that wildlife tourists tend to the generally older. Due to the activities involved in wildlife tourism, it could be argued that it is for those who are physically skilled.

Table 1.3:   Wildlife tourism products.
Source: Reynolds and Braithwaite, 2001 cited from Newsome *et al*., 2005.

WILDLIFE-BASED PRODUCT	DESCRIPTION
Specialist animal watching	Whale watching or bird watching
Habitat specific tours	Usually rich and/or diverse wildlife

Nature-based tours	Partly focusses on wildlife viewing
Eco accommodations	Located in wildlife rich habitats
Thrill seeking tours	Where large or dangerous wildlife are encouraged to engage in spectacular behaviour by tour operators
Artificial wildlife attractions	Viewing of species kept in captivity
Hunting/fishing tours	Consumptive use of wildlife

Wildlife tourism is defined by Newsome *et al*. (2005) as the form of tourism that is mainly done with the intention of viewing or encountering animals. Wildlife tourism can, therefore, take place in various settings that include captive, semi-captive or wild. Additionally, it entails various interactions that may be passive observation, feeding, and/or touching the species. Hunting and fishing is not included in the definition of wildlife tourism by Newsome *et al*. (2005) because they do not accept or condone it. On the other hand, this study includes hunting and fishing in the definition of animal-based tourism although I find the activity to be morally shaky. Hunting and fishing still happens and therefore it is part of tourism.

Four main types of wildlife tourism are considered to exist by Higginbottom (2004):
- ➢ Wildlife-watching tourism – this entails viewing or interacting with free-ranging animals),
- ➢ Captive-wildlife tourism – this entails viewing animals in man-made confinement; wildlife parks, zoos, aquaria and animal sanctuaries; also shows and circuses by mobile wildlife exhibitors
- ➢ Hunting tourism
- ➢ Fishing tourism

In the first section of her work, Higginbottom superficially separated hunting and fishing but in the later part of the book she joins them together. In this paper, the researcher will separate them into different categories for the purpose of research but will discuss them together: this is aimed at defining the existence of the two in a better way. In the classification provided by Higginbottom, she has also divided wildlife watching into two categories: wildlife watching in captivity and in the wild. However, in this study, the researcher considers animal watching as a single encounter but in the discussing the level of confine, wild-settings and captive-settings are separated. Also, the researcher separates shows as a specific type of encounter and in a similar fashion as Reynolds and Braithwaite (Table 1.3), a discussion of separate watching encounters is provided: habitat specific tours, specialised watching etc. other types of

encounters discussed in the study are touching, photographing with, riding/transportation, feeding, hunting and fishing.

1.4.2   Animal Encounters and Changes in Animal-Based Tourism

In the section above, this study provided a presentation of some of the possible animal encounters and some levels of confinement. In this section, a particular focus is given to the attributes of the different animal encounters. The aim of the researcher is to provide a brief idea of the kind of discussions these encounters usually create in literature. In the later section of this study, the categories that are presented here are utilised in studying content analysis as "signifiers" for going through the data. Compared to Higginbottom, Newsome *et al.* provided less encounter types as they excluded fishing and hunting. This study makes use of many different types of encounter as it aims at considering the variations of animal-base tourism.

Humans generally define the roles that animals play and this mainly consists of animals being considered a target: for touching, object for gazing, for hunting etc. These roles are bound to activities and to destinations. More than one role is played by the animals and the value that human beings give to the animals determines the part that animals play. Riding and transportation are also included in animal-based tourism in this study. Also, the researcher separate shows from watching and place "photographing with" animals in its own class for research purposed, but the researcher does not think of them as part of the watching category. This approach is aimed at understanding the importance of animals in entertainment. Secondly, to have consistency and categories that are more detailed for the many animal based tourism variations.

To some, wildlife watching is a non-consumptive form of tourism and therefore a true option of tourism. In watching wildlife, many different species in many different locations are involved. Examples of well-known wildlife watching are whale watching, bird watching, different kinds of safari (such as those in Kenya or other parts of Africa), marine life watching, and watching animals in zoos. Wildlife watching is considered a non-destructive form of tourism as it has the least effect on the environment and its surroundings. However, this consideration has been questioned and continues to be questioned in the literature as tourists often go too close to the animals and therefore disturb them. When conducted in the wilderness, wildlife watching also impacts the nature. The masses of the various tourists create paths in the wilderness and disturb the ecosystem. Another big issue is tourists trashing the ecosystem. However, some of the aspects of wildlife watching are not harmful to the environment as they contribute to education and knowledge about conservation. Valentine and Birtles (2004) noted that only the

protected are of the national parks is funded by the fees paid by the tourists and therefore maintain the living areas of wildlife.

Watching of wildlife can take place in any destination. Tribe (2004) noted that Zoos are the oldest form of tourism and the efforts for taming and keeping animals captive began many years ago. A contradictory nature characterises zoos. Keeping animals in captivity has been question if it is right to do so and keep them in small closed cages. However, the desire to see animal in a close range speaks of the reason for the existence of these establishments. Over the years, Bulbeck (2005) examined the different eras of the zoos and noted that zoos have changed significantly over the years. Circus types of representations characterised earlier zoos and later historic museums emerged and today zoos are playing a significant role in the promotion of education, conservation, and research. In the 1970s and 1980s, zoos acted as mere wildlife centres but over the years zoos have been established based on the justification that they promoted education, conservation, and research. Additionally, with the years the settings in many zoos have also changed to more naturalistic by modelling the natural habits of the animals kept in those zoos. According to Tribe (2004) and Bulbeck (2005), the ecosystem do not only show the animals but also the whole ecosystem.

Zoos are also justified as recreational sites. Zoos are considered as family entertainment sites for day out either with friends or family. Cherfas (1984, cit. Tribe, 2004) argued that without the role of recreation zoos would not be zoos. However, this claim is opposed by Hancocks (2001, cit. Bulbeck, 2005) who notes that the only real justification for zoos are the education and learning because the welfare of animals comes first. Combining recreation and entertainment together with education and conservation is a difficult task. Many studies found the role of zoos to be contradictory as the majority of people visit them purely for recreational activity but many conservation as the main reason for zoos existence. This new role seem to be taking shape and animal's welfare need to be given more consideration (Tribe, 2004). Visiting zoos is usually morally justified by claims of conserving the zoo (Turley, 1999, cit. Tribe, 2004)

Moscardo and Saltzer (2005) noted that many studies indicate the tourists want to see animals in their natural settings. Yet, Bulbeck (2005) indicated that many studies have found that exhibitions providing interactions with animals are the most interesting. Many studies have found that touching, feeding, and interacting with the animals to generate the most exhilarating experiences as well as getting close to the animals (Curtin, 2009).

A study by Orams (2002, cit. Newsome *et al*., 2005) indicated that there are three main purposes of feeding of wildlife in tourism: educational purposes, experiencing the unusual animals, and the possibility of close encounter. The feeding of wildlife, according to Orams is a more complex matter than just getting close to the animal and notes that it is related to animals being subordinate to human beings. Other authors also claim that feeding of wildlife by human beings is out of the kinship that exist between animals and human and is done out of interest for nurturing (Katcher and Wilkins, 1993, cit. Newsome *et al*., 2005; Bulbeck, 2005). In a study by Bulbeck (2005), when one of the respondent was asked to state why tourists want to touch wildlife, the respondent noted *"Think of a baby, the first thing is to touch and taste, we've never grown out of it"*. In a study in Finland that looked into developing an animal park, the author discussed the nature of animal farms or parks in relation to zoos. Farm animals and more exotic animals such as emus and ostriches are presented in animal parks. The possibility for touching and petting the animal is the main difference when it comes to zoos and is the main element of attraction (Curtin, 2009). Yet, touching and handling of other animals than farm animals can be done, and zoos keep farm animals as well. Perhaps, for urban dwellers, farms are considered traditional and authentic and therefore the best place for a human to closely and naturally interact with the animals.

It is claimed by Bulbeck (2005) that the entertainment role of zoos (animals performing tricks, animal shows, dressed up animals, and dolphins jumping hoops) has been replaced by the desire of humans to see animals acting in a natural way in natural settings. Instead, the natural behaviour of animals has become the new shows and performances are made out of feeding. The format of the old shows is considered more humiliating to the animals and that it gives the wrong image to the audience of animals being nice and devoid of predatory behaviour including being dangerous to human beings. However, Bulbeck (2005) notes that a good thing that came out of the study is the welfare of the animal is taken care of with the animals being provided with good and clean spaces.

Other types of shows include circus performances, dog performances, horse performances, and blood sports such as dog-fighting, bullfighting, and cockfighting. The role of blood sports has significantly changed due to the changes that have occurred in the animal rights sector. Studies on the fundamental changes in the animal-based tourism have been conducted and they mostly focus on cetaceans. In some countries, the hunting of whales is still permitted but in many countries, the practice is considered illegal. Whale watching in Australia is a great commercial opportunity and therefore live whales are more commercially attractive than those that are dead (Bulbeck, 2005). Similarly, the attractiveness of wild cetaceans in the UK has contributed to reduced rates of captivity. Campaigns against keeping dolphins in captivity have

been pioneered by animal rights movements and this has contributed in closure of dolphinarium. This led to the closure of other dolphinaria and as of date, there are no dolphinaria in the UK (Hughes, 2001).

Hunting and fishing are also considered as consumptive forms of tourism. Traditionally, some societies held hunting as their cultural heritage while fishing is available to many users groups. Hunting and fishing has attracted some ethical concerns as it is associated with injuring, killing, and reducing the populations of animals. Because of the selective nature of trophy hunting, it has affected the fitness of populations as it targets the most impressive individual animals especially male animals that are big. On the other hand, the correct management of hunting and fishing is associated with positive consequences; more human hunting of animals is conducted when the money provided by tourists is directed towards conservation and when hunting activities are directed towards animals and species that are not endangered or rare (Bauer and Herr, 2004). In Finland, summer cottages are a special feature of its tourism and are usually located near the sea, lakes or other water bodies (Müller, 2007). This brings accommodation near the fishing activities. Sievänen (2001, cit. Koivula and Saastamoinen, 2005) noted that an estimated 13% of all domestic tourists in Finland travel with the aim of fishing. On the other hand, 3.1% of domestic tourists travel with the aim of hunting. This shows that fishing is very important for Finns. Fishing is considered attractive to Finns because of its beauty and safety as well as its easily accessed nature (Sorsa, 2004). However, there is a reduction of the importance of the catch due to the increased use of the "catch and release" method and reduced catching of fish for food. In a good fishing experience, relaxing and enjoying nature as a way of breaking out of everyday routine is considered important (Sharp and Lach, 2003).

Using a similar categorization approach as that of Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001), Newsome *et al*. (2005) performs a categorization of hunters based on different wildlife watching products. Categorization of hunters is done based on their interest in the environment, interest in challenge of hunting, being outdoors or seeing animals. Trophy hunting is considered to have been replaced by photography; as a hunter does not have to bring trophies such as horns to indicate that they were successful in their trip as the photography plays the same role (Bauer and Herr, 2004).

The use of animals for riding and transportation have only been mentioned by Swarbrooke *et al*. (2003) in his book and in the article by Shani and Pizan (2007). In these works, animals are used for transportation in wildlife tourism. Swarbrooke *et al*. (2003) mentioned that animals play an active role involuntarily including riding. For example, husky sled trips or elephant trips.

This researcher finds it questionable whether the role of animals in any tourism activity is ever voluntary, but perhaps Swarbrooke *et al*. may have intended to mean that animals are considered as devices for transportation and therefore this appears as a "forced role". In an article titled, the *Emergence of Mountain-based adventure tourism* by Beedie and Hudson (2003) rising is described as a soft venture tourism. This research presumed that riding is mostly related to adventure tourism. However, Beedie and Hudson (2003) did not mention this, yet more attention is given to horses, and in tourism, riding of horses can be referred to as equestrian/equine tourism. Lane (2009) noted that horseback riding is a niche market and it's mainly located in farms and ranches found in rural areas.

Further, a good deal has been derived from horse tourism. According to Hemmi (2005), different products are available in equine/horse tourism and this includes trail riding and trekking with a horse. These activities are carried out in nature, and besides riding they may offer food and other activities but involves the use of horses which are physically and mentally fit. The former product has a shorter duration and does not include overnight stays.

Wildlife tourism, according to Swarbrooke *et al*. (2003), mainly entails observation but may include exceptions such as hunting, fishing, and riding. In my opinion, watching animals in the wild, in captivity or in shows as well as feeding, touching, and photographing with animals constitute another category with the main activity being watching. According to Orams (2002), touching and feeding are also activities, but feeding is motivated by the interest of the tourist to watch while touching does not happen except in captive settings such as the zoo. Being objects of gaze, photographs can also be considered as part of watching. The other category is constituted by fishing, hunting, and riding; this category engages the tourist in a different activity other watching. Although depending on the environment, watching can be tied to an activity; for example in snorkelling and diving, watching is a significant part of experience.

The shift form whale killing to whale watching, evolving roles of zoos, shutting down of UK dolphinaria, shift from trophy collection to photographing, and the increased studies on the impact of tourism on the environment, and the sustainable management of tourism, is an indication that the careful consideration of the rights of animals and addressing of ethical concerns. Burton (1995) noted that the increasing interest in environmental issues and the airing of films of animals in the wild on televisions has now seen many people wish to see wildlife in their natural habitat as opposed to a safari park setting or a zoo. In the following sections, the destinations of animal-base tourism is presented.

1.4.3 Destination of Animal-based Tourism

Swarbrooke *et al.* (2003) noted that when it comes to the geographical dimensions of tourism, the frontiers are being pushed back adventure tourists, and this has led to making destinations of the last wilderness on earth as well as on space.

Across globes differing environments, animal encounters can take place. Natural environments are mainly connected to these encounters but they can also happen in urban environments. Animal-based tourism destinations are found across the world; from tundra to rainforests. A lot of expansion and diversification has been witnessed in the tourism industry in the last six decades, and this has contributed to tourism becoming one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors globally. Within this period many new destinations have emerged and have increased competition for traditional European and North America. In a recently updated UNWTO's Tourism Towards 2030 long-term outlook, an increase of 3.3% of international tourist arrivals globally is expected between 2010 and 2030. This percentage indicates that every year, the number of tourists will increase by about 43 million to stand at a total of 1.8 billion arrivals by 2030 (UNWTO, 2012). After the Second World War, beaches and coastal areas were the most familiar tourist's destinations, but recently these destinations are being rapidly replaced by new ones. Travellers are now more spread out: to Africa, Asia, Pacific, and South America. Antarctica is also growing as a destination for tourists (Vuoristo, 2003).

The success of a destination is not defined by its attractions only but may also include facilities, services, and infrastructure. Additionally, political stability is an important factor in attracting and receiving tourists (Vuoristo, 2003). In general, any destination in the world can serve as an animal-based tourist destination but areas which have natural wilderness are rich in this form of tourism. For example, watching and hunting of wildlife. Valentine and Birtles (2004) noted that less developed countries have the highest levels of biodiversity in the world and for this reason, these regions provide wildlife-watching destinations that are well-known to the world. Areas with wilderness have poor accessibility and therefore the infrastructure that is needed for tourism to take place may not be available. As mentioned in the section above, a good number of animal-based tourism destinations are found in developing countries, but in some cases the political climate may not be conducive enough to allow tourism activities to be conducted.

As mentioned in the sections above, Orams (1995, cit. Bulbeck, 2005) performed a classification of animals encounter sites into three categories based on the level of confinement. Animal encounter settings can also differ by environment. They can occur on

land, under the water or boats but one common thing among them which is confinement. Settings are very important in generating meaning experience for tourists. Captive or semi-captive settings may be viable options for people who do not desire to meet animals in the wild or those with not resources to visit them in the wild. However, some tourists only love natural wild settings. In the next section, features of both wild and captive settings are presented.

Wild-settings

In the world, wild-settings can be found anywhere. Major international destinations for watching of wildlife was presented by Valentine and Birtles (2004: 20) as shown in Table 1.4. All continents present an opportunity for wildlife watching. In Table 1.4, the most significant qualities for the various wildlife watching destinations in the world are provided including destination characteristics and species.

Table 1.4:   Major international destinations for wildlife watching.

Source: Higginbottom and Buckley, 2003 cited from Valentine and Birtles, 2004.

REGION	WILDLIFE	COMMENTS
Eastern and Southern Africa (especially Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Namibia)	Large mammal (and sometimes bird) watching as part of safari game lodge experience. Principally in public protected areas; also private game reserves especially in South Africa.	Long experience of nature/wildlife (safari) tourism. Ban on sport hunting and trophy trade in Kenya. Except for South Africa, most tourists are international. Significant environmental and socio political threats. Many reserves fenced (South Africa) and wildlife professionally manipulated for sustainable management.
	Mammals with high diversity, high abundance, large body size. Open plain and plateaus with large vistas make it easy to find and observe wildlife. Penguins and whales in marine and coastal areas (southern), hippos and crocodiles in wetlands and rivers.	
North America (USA and Canada)	Mainly large mammals and birds. Key species include several species of bears (especially polar bears in Churchill, Manitoba), arctic foxes, large ungulates, red wolf, bobcat, coyote, river otter, snakes, alligators, invertebrates. Centred on protected areas. Significant marine and coastal wildlife watching from cetaceans to pelagic birds.	

Central and South America (especially Costa Rica, Belize)	Mainly forest fauna in areas of high biodiversity such as the Amazon basin. Some as part of general nature-based experience. Key species include various birds and primates. Increasing use of freshwater systems and water-based marine and	Central America generally better developed for tourism than South America due to strong protected area systems, closer to large market, greater political stability, and multi-national initiatives. Significant environmental and socio-political threats.
Southeast and South Asia (especially India)	Various forest fauna in areas of high biodiversity in SE Asia, mostly as part of general nature-based experience. Key species including Komodo dragon and orang-utans. India has a more specialized wildlife watching. Mainly in protected areas. Some growth in marine tourism.	Wildlife tourism generally small but new areas and species becoming available. Significant environmental and socio political threats. Significant future potential in some countries.
Pacific Ocean, includes Micronesia and Hawaiian Islands, New Zealand, Fiji, Galapagos	Dive tourism is the main focus with some focus on marine species (sharks including whale sharks, coral reef organisms, whales and dolphins; manta rays)	Marine tourism especially subject to growing pressures and need for close management. Many uncertainties needing research.
Australia and Papua New Guinea	International visitor interest in icon species (koala, kangaroo) and some specialized focus on marine environments including whale watching, coral reef diving, whale sharks. Endemic birds also a focus. Mainly in protected areas.	Well-developed specialist infrastructure.

As previously mentioned, some destinations dedicated to wildlife tourism and may have varied attractions including flora, but animals play a major role in attracting tourists. Examples of

destinations that are considered as pure wildlife destinations are Costa Rica, the Galapagos Islands, and Kenya (Valentine & Birtles, 2004).

Watching of wildlife usually occurs during specific seasons which due to their history are predictable such as breeding, migration, and hatching. Savannahs with rich wildlife and good visibility and remote oceanic islands with plenty of wildlife and sea birds are good candidates for wildlife destinations as compared to rainforests. Though rainforests may have a lot of wildlife, it low visibility and difficult environment due to dense plantation, their rate of tourist attraction is low (Valentine & Birtles, 2004).

The UNESCO and global other organizations are protecting some natural areas and landscapes. For example the Ngorongoro Park in Tanzania and the Galapagos Islands which is being protected as a world heritage site. According to Burton (1995), in International National Parks all human activities targeted at exploiting natural resources are forbidden and landscapes are protected to preserve its natural state. In 1964, Kinabalu Park was gazetted as the first park in Sabah State and followed by a declaration by UNESCO as the first Malaysian World Heritage Site in 2000 due to its exceptional biological attributes (Chan & Wong, 1996). Protecting these sites is usually intended at maintaining their rich biodiversity. The most attractive wildlife resources, according to Valentine and Birtles (2004), can be found in tourism destinations with the following categories:

➢ Single iconic species, usually of large body size (charismatic mega fauna)
➢ Large numbers of large animals
➢ Areas of high diversity (richness of species) where many different species may be seen.

Classification by Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001, cit. Newsome *et al*., 2005) of wildlife products indicate that the majority of wildlife products are found in either semi-captive settings or wild settings: habitat specific tours like safaris, specialist animal watching like bird watching, eco accommodations and hunting and fishing tours, and nature-based tours.

Captive-settings

According to Frost (2011), captive settings such as zoos range from small, regional, and owner-operator ventures to those with substantial operations in major towns and cities with visitation levels which is only comparable to that of other top attractions in the world. Although animal-based tourism seem to be focussed on areas with natural wilderness, the widespread nature of zoos make them available to a bigger market and a larger customer base as compared to wild settings (Tribe, 2004). In the earlier section, a discussion of what zoos mean to tourists and the experiences they draw from such encounters was provided.

It is difficult to specifically tell the number of zoos in the world but these are estimated to be about 10,000. Cities form the major locations of zoos, but more popularity lie in safari parks and zoos that present animals in larger natural settings. Most popular zoos are usually located outside the cities (Tribe, 2004). According to the World Zoo Conservation Strategy, there are 1, 200 "core zoos" globally. The attendance number of the core zoos in the world is presented in Table 1.5 by Species Survival Commission (SSC) (1993, cit. Tribe, 2004).

Table 1.5:   Zoo attendances around the world.
Source: SSC, 1993 cited from Tribe, 2004.

CONTINENT	MILLIONS
Africa	15
Asia	308
Australasia	6
Europe	125
Latin America	61
America	106
TOTAL	**621**

Based on table 1.5, the majority of zoo attendances are found in Asia followed by Europe; Europe numbers are still lower than those of Asia. Europe is followed closely by America with Africa and Australasia having the least attendances. However, it is important to note that these numbers were collected in 1993 and are quite old and there is the possibility of significant change over the years.

The categories of attractive wildlife resources as suggested by Valentine and Birtles' (2004) are also applicable to captive-settings: different animal collections are kept by zoos while some zoos specialize in certain species, but zoos with diverse animals including charismatic big animals are usually more preferred. Central areas located near potential visitors form the best locations for zoos with diverse and multiple species of individual animals (Tribe, 2004). Additionally, Tribe noted that farm type zoos and safari parks which are usually larger than zoos and with large numbers of individual animals are usually located outside major cities. Farm animals and tourist's farms are usually located in rural areas.

To sum up, around the world, animal based tourism destinations are popular and are located in almost all parts of the world. However, given that some areas have more resources and therefore able to get more resources, they are more popular wildlife tourism destinations. Captive-settings are also more generally available for a large audience but they are different from wild-settings.

1.5   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: EXPERIENCES IN TOURISM

A discussion of the changes that have occurred in the tourism industry in the last few years are presented in this section as well as the emergence of the concept of *"experience tourism"*. The researcher provides an explanation of the concept of experience and the experience industry based on literature.

In a manner similar to the western society, the world has experienced more economic and social changes in that people have become wealthier and have a lot of leisure time. This implies that they have more resources to travel. The economy of the world is considered to have changed through three different stages which are the agrarian society followed by industrialization and then the service society. Presently, the economy of the world seems to be shifting to the experience industry era given that customers are becoming more demanding and therefore materials and services are no longer providing customer satisfaction but experience is becoming key to meeting customer satisfaction (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). The tourism industry today has generally been affected by changes in the Western society. A shift from modern, Fordist era to postmodern, post-fordist era with different tourism needs has occurred. Urry (1990) and Poon (1993) originally presented the differences between Fordist and post-Fordist tourism. These differences were modified by Saarinen (2006) and are presented in Table 1.6.

Table 1.6:   The changes of supply and demand in the Fordist and Post-Fordist production.
Source: Saarinen, 2006 modified from Urry, 1990 and Poon, 1993.

OLD "FORDIST PRODUCTION"	NEW "POST-FORDIST PRODUCTION"
☐ Mass tourism	☐ Individual tourism
☐ Passive and inflexible	☐ Active and flexible
☐ Common and conservative	☐ New and different
☐ Homogenous	☐ Heterogeneous
☐ Built	☐ "Authentic"
Modern	**Post-modern**

Tourism is now becoming more individualised as opposed to mass tourism and is offered in small-scale and specialized form: alternative forms of tourism and niche markets are gaining popularity. More travels today are having the resources to reach places that mass tourism did not reach. Tourist today want to engage in activities that provide lifetime experiences as opposed to just lying on the beach. These demands are met through individualized supply by

the markets. Additionally, this has seen the emergence of niche markets and trips dedicated to certain activities such as scuba diving or bird watching (Saarinen, 2006).

In contemporary tourism, Juntunen (2007) noted that vacations tend to be more attractive. As tourists go on holidays, they come along with their hobbies and lifestyles. Pleasure is usually sought by some tourists while others seek personal achievement. A tourist wants to relax, fulfil oneself, and get healthy. Personal feelings and sensations forms the basis of tourism activities as well as fulfilling and satisfying mental and social needs (Aho, 2001). Activities of leisure tourism are mainly focussed on attaining some form of experience. For this reason, Borg *et al*. (2002) defined tourism as the search for experiences and/or is usually focussed on achieving certain experiences.

Another contemporary phenomenon is sensation seeking which is the desire of an individual to experience something that differs from their daily routines in life; the desire to experience something new. It is considered as taking risks at many levels, searching for change, searching for an adventure, avoiding boredom or reducing one's inhibitions (Perttula, 2002). Mossberg (2003) further noted that experiences that add value and satisfaction to the lives of tourists are much sought after.

The necessities for most people can be provided by a modern well-fare state as well as satisfy their most urgent need and physiological needs such as sleep and nutrition. According to Tarssanen and Kylänen (2005), today's society is more hedonistic and thus spending resources on oneself such as money is considered justified. More resources today are available for people and therefore they travel more as a way of moving away of their daily routines. This is mainly done as a way of learning something new or fulfilling a dream. People today no longer consume to fulfil their need but their desires (Tarssanen & Kylänen, 2005).

The popularity of the concept of experience heightened in the 1990s. However, Mossberg (2003) noted that this concept first emerged in 1950s, but it is only a few years ago that it matured. At first, the concept was used in describing adventure or nature based tourism products but its use became widespread in the 21st century and it is being used in describing many tourism products including hedonistic experiences, spa or even dining (Komppula, 2002). Experience has been applied to every aspect of our lives from eating, watching movies, and even hobbies. Everything has been "branded with experiencing". Today, seeking experience is an important part of tourism industry. Experience is not only provided by the tourism industry but also areas such as entertainment, technology, media and culture business are now significant producers of experience (Komppula and Boxberg, 2002).

In summary, individual and exotic experiences are widely sought for in the tourism industry today. The demand and supply for it exists. The term experience, according to Tarssanen (2005), has been widely to the extent that is has experienced some form of inflation or distortion. Additionally, Saarinen (2006) noted that boom of experience in the tourism industry has led to a new type of research for authors: the tourist experience study. Three different schools on experience were discussed by Tarssanen and Kylänen (2007): these are from the US, central Europe, and north Europe. The US version of the school of experience focusses more on economics and the production of experiences while the school from central Europe pays attention to the experience of individuals and the generation of experience. The approach taken by north Europe is a combination of the approach by the US and central Europe. There is still the need for more information on the production of experiences. In the literature chapter, the researcher will present a discussion of the experience concept and its meaning.

1.6   JUSTIFICATION

The diversity of charismatic animals that are unique to the Malaysian state makes wildlife tourism an important part of the identity of tourism in Sabah (Mohammed *et al*., 2013; Bernard et al, 2013, SWD, 2019) (see Figure 1.4). A broad sweep of experiences characterises wildlife tourism and this includes all aspects of tourism genre with the main attraction being the distinguishing feature of the various animals. Such experiences may involve different types of animals that include indigenous animals, aquatic or terrestrial animals, captive or non-captive animals as well as the endemic or feral animals (Payne and Davies, 2013). An ideal context for operating tourism operations successfully in Sabah state is ensured by the unique nature of the wildlife in Sabah as well as the rarity and remoteness of various items

The popularity of wildlife tourism is depended on various key components that include the following: the vulnerability and the ease of viewing certain species and the perceived charisma of certain species (Green *et al.*, 1999). The ease of viewing is related to various factors in the daily activity cycle of the species including peak foraging times, seasonality, and waking hours. Addition it entails the range of species, the habitat of species, and the geographical location. For example, in habitat that are restricted and geographically isolated as well as for nocturnal wildlife, it may be difficult to the view wildlife but easier to view diurnal animals and those that are found in habitats that are widely distributed. A lucrative tourism market is presented by wildlife species that are difficult and rare to find such as gorilla and whale shark tourism. However, this means that only those with money and time (Shackley, 1996). A narrow audience (comprising mainly professionals and enthusiasts) as opposed to a mass market may be attracted to wildlife species that are difficult to view due to the high demanding nature, patience, and dedication that is needed to attain successful viewing experience. Individual

consumption patterns and consumer preferences may be impacted these influences including the type of wildlife tourism products and services that individuals may select in the future. Apparently, as seen from the literature, wildlife tourism demand has a direct relationship with how rare a species is (Moscardo *et al.*, 1999), and for this reason, the researcher through this thesis has the intention of addressing the existing gaps through the determination of visitor expectations and reactions in relation to existing wildlife tourism experiences, specifically in relation to the kind of tourist satisfaction that makes them adopt an attitude that contributes to the conservator of these tourist destinations. Further, this thesis also establishes a conceptual framework for building relationships between tourism and conservation within the experience of tourists in wildlife tourism and its impact on the demand of tourism that is also applicable to other destinations.

Figure 1.4:   Sabah's unique and charismatic wildlife.

Source: Sabah Wildlife Department, 2019.

1.7   METHODOLOGY

To meet the objectives of this thesis, the data collection process was split into four stages. The first stage entailed the review of various publications and reports with the aim of collecting secondary information. In the second stage, the researcher conducted in depth interviews

using three main groups of respondents which were tourists, conservationists from NGOs and government institutions, and tour operators. The second stage was mainly targeted at collecting detailed information about these groups of respondents. The second phase or stage was particularly important given that it provided insight to the researcher of the perspectives of the respondent's and therefore providing the researcher with the ideas on structuring the focus groups.

Focus groups interviews constituted the third phase of the process of data collection. Using a qualitative approach, the focus groups were used as emphasis of a specific theme or topic under exploration. Focus groups were also chosen with the aim of evaluating how the participants from each of the group respondent to each other views and this was utilised in developing a common view for the group. Using this technique, the researcher then develops an understanding about why people feel the way they do and this greatly helped in the construction and designing of the questionnaire structure used for gathering more data from respondents at the site of study. The respondents were randomly selected and this was done because the focus group is only a small representative sample of the nationals or international tourists that visit Sabah.

In the fourth phase, the design and development of self-completion (self-administered) questionnaire was done based on the findings of the focus groups. A self-administered questionnaire is one of methods used in the quantitative research approach. The developed questionnaire was used in determining the experiences of the visitors in wildlife-based tourism, the preferences of the visitors in wildlife-watching services product, and the knowledge and awareness of the visitors on conservation of wildlife. Using the self-administered questionnaires, an airport survey was conducted using randomly selected respondents. The respondents were both the national and international tourists. Over a period of five months, the researcher collected a total of 446 surveys specifically at the airport, the Kota Kinabalu International Airport. In field studies with respondent tourist not being 'experts,' and likely unable to clearly discriminate fine differences, a 5 point Likert scale is generally engaged (Hair *et al*., 2012). Hence, the survey questionnaire consisted of multiple choice questions, 5-point Likert Scale questions, and open-ended questions. A copy of the questionnaire is provided in the appendix.

1.7.1 Secondary Data Sources

As mentioned in the section above, this study also involved the collection of secondary data. This data was collected from sources such as annual reports, economic surveys, statistical abstracts, development plans, and internet websites.

1.7.2 Primary Data Sources

Survey Venue

The site for collection of data for this study was the **Kota** Kinabalu International Airport or known as KKIA (as illustrated in Figure 1.5). KKIA was chosen because of the ability of the researcher to capture departing tourists with the aim of assessing their overall satisfaction with the destination and the offerings provided. The airport serves a lot of national and international tourists and is accessible easily. However, this site had several limitations. The first limitation was related to tourist's participation. The second was language barrier. This study relied on voluntary participating of tourists who were visiting Sabah and therefore there was the risk that the visitors may not be willing to participate or later cancel their participation in view of time restrictions that some of them might have due to fixed time for boarding their flights or coaches. Secondly, some of the tourists are not fluent in English language speaking and therefor they could easily lose interest in participating in the surveys.

Figure 1.5:   Kota Kinabalu International Airport, Sabah, Malaysia is the second busiest airport in Malaysia.

Source: Sabah Tourism Board, 2011.

Sampling Design

The sampling design of the study is used to refer to the sampling plan employed by the study, the targeted population of the study, in-depth interviews, and focus groups as well the as the recruitment of research assistants or enumerators. It entails the process of obtaining the study sample which is used in providing consistent and reliable information of the population being studied.

In-Depth Interviews

The researcher conducted in-depth interviews on wildlife tour operators and tourists. A total of 15 interviews were held. The researcher also interviewed seven NGOs and government institutions representatives who are involved in wildlife research but not tourism with the aim of gaining their perspectives on the topic of study. The identification and location of the tourist, tour operators, and conservationists was done through discussions held with officers from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment in Sabah state responsible for policy development and issuing of guidelines on the development of sustainable tourism in Sabah in line with the policies formulated at the national level. The ministry officials in Sabah are also involved in assessing the appropriateness or suitability of tourism development projects involving (i) the application of land belonging to the state and (ii) private land to make sure that such use aligns with the legal requirements, zoning laws, state policies, marketing and promotional efforts.

The interview was guided using three sets of interviews: each set of questions for the three groups of tourists, tour operators, and conservationists. The interviews for the tour operators started with general questions about tour or tourist attraction sites entailing the present wildlife, the level of interaction with tourists, and their sources of information for wildlife management. The central focus of these interviews was on conservation research with questions asking the efforts that have been put in conserving wildlife and their efficacy in relation to tourism as a venture, additional needs for conservation, and how they defined conservation. The last question of the interviews was on the professional background of each of the interviewee's.

The tourist interviews questions shared similarities and differences with the first set of questions. The questions posed to tourists operators were similar to those of the tour operators: 'what additional conservation is needed, and what are their definitions of conservation?' The tourists were also asked additional questions such as: 'what wildlife watching activities in relation to wildlife tourism have they conducted, are they satisfied with the experience, what motivates them to do wildlife watching, what have been wildlife tourism strengths and weaknesses in terms of conservation?' These questions were the heart of

interviews for tourists. In a similar manner to the first set of questions, the last question of the tourist interviews was on the professional background of each of the interviewee's.

The third set of questions were for the conservationists and were similar and different to questions posed to tourists and tour operators. Some of the questions that the conservationists were asked included: 'have they involved in wildlife tourism related conservation activities, what are their perspectives about wildlife tourism as a tool for wildlife species conservation, what are the strengths and weaknesses of wildlife watching/encounter tourism, what additional conservation is needed and what are their definitions of conservation?' Similar to the questions presented the other two groups, the conservationists question set ended with a question about the professional background of the interviewee.

As to the questions presented to the conservationists and their subsequent analysis, tempering was done through the recognition of both current and past extensive debates on nature and tourism practice as a tool for conservation particularly the conservation of wildlife species that are at risk of extinction or endangered (Rodger and Moore, 2004; Newsome *et al.*, 2005). However, acknowledgement of wildlife tourism as both a social foundation and as a way of generating knowledge particularly producing knowledge for nature and conservation of wildlife species is done as a starting point for this study (Ballantyne *et al.*, 2007; Ballantyne *et al.*, 2009; Ballantyne *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, this is either a set of cultural activities for producing knowledge of a system for producing knowledge as well as the knowledge produced by that system (Ballantyne *et al.*, 2007; Ballantyne *et al.*, 2011). The researcher in this study adopts a constructionist approach as opposed to getting submerged in this debate by relying on the interviewee's definitions and perspectives.

A theory building approach was used for the transcription and analysis of the interviews, as well as being used for designing and developing the structure of focus group interviews.

Focus Groups Interviews
Before both the pilot and main survey were carried out, semi-structured conservations on a range of pre-determined topics were used for conducting focus groups. Tape recording of the sessions of the focus groups interviews was done with the aim of gathering and reviewing the collected data. The data collected from focus groups of 10 individuals or tourist representatives were used for establishing the patterns and design of the questionnaire structure.

Pre-testing the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was tested with the aim of ascertaining the appropriateness and the relevance of the questions. Tourists at the airport who were preparing to board planes and tour areas around Sabah were administered with the questionnaire. A few problems with the questionnaire were found but this was adequately addressed with the assistance of the enumerators and research assistants. The exercise also adopted an interactive nature meaning that subjective issues arising from the exercise were easily and sufficiently addressed. Low compliance and response rate was recorded due to inadequate time for the collection of luggage or just insufficient time from the respondent's perspective. This time averaged 30 minutes to one hour. However, filling of the questionnaire only required about 15 to 20 minutes. Therefore, the questions were precise and brief.

Target Population

This study focussed on national and international tourists regardless of their reason for visiting Sabah, Malaysia.

1.8   LIMITATIONS

<u>Tourist participation</u>: given that study is based on tourism, it relied heavily on the voluntary participation from both national and international visitors coming to Sabah from KKIA. This heavy reliance meant that the study faced the risk of the lack of willing of the visitors to participate or cancel their participation when the research was still underway due to their restricted time given that some of them have to the leave when the time of their flight reaches or when their coaches arrive. To avoid this from happening, the design of the questionnaire is clearly made as well as the questions being shorter and clear-cut.

<u>Language barrier</u>: English, an international language, was used in developing the self-administered questionnaire. For this reason, only visitors with good understanding of English language were surveyed; this was associated with the exclusion of important visitor segment such as those from China and Japan. Volunteers were picked for administering the questionnaire to avoid the loss of important data. The volunteers assisted in any question that the respondents did not understand by explaining what the questions meant to avoid misunderstanding.

<u>Use of volunteers</u>: this study also partly relies on the use of volunteers in their exit survey. For this reason, some of the volunteers may lack the skills and techniques for carrying out structured interviews or for handling self-administered surveys. Therefore, to avoid the loss of

data during the survey, the volunteers were trained on the techniques of asking questions and ethical principles for this type of survey.

1.9   THESIS OUTLINE

This thesis has a total of seven chapters. In Chapter One, an introduction and brief overview of the research is provided. In Chapter Two, a discussion of the conceptual framework as well as the elements of the elements of wildlife-based tourism is presented. The elements of this framework are further presented in the two chapters that follow. In Chapter Three, an investigation of the experiences and the competition among destinations of wildlife-based tourism is presented while in Chapter Four detailed information about the design and the methodology of the study for the collection of the primary data is presented. In Chapter Five, the analysis of data collected from the three stages of the primary research and the results of the analysis are presented. The findings of the thesis are presented in Chapter Six. A suggestion of the implications of the findings for the wildlife tourism industry ensuing from the discussions and scenarios is also presented. The conclusions of the thesis are presented in Chapter Seven as well as the answers to the research problems and aims of the study that were outlined in section 1.2. Suggestions for areas for further research are also provided in this chapter. Two main types of conclusions are drawn: conclusions based on the literature review of the factors contributing to the satisfaction of wildlife tourists and conclusions based on conclusions drawn from the results of the survey. Recommendations are also two-fold; based on reviewed literature and on the results of the survey.

1.10   EPILOGUE

In this chapter, a general introduction into wildlife tourism and wildlife tourism experiences and the problem statement of the study were presented. Wildlife tourism was defined as the type of tourism in which one travels to a given destination with the aim of viewing wild animals and the environment (Reynolds and Braithwaite, 2001). As seen from various studies such as that by Shackley (1996) and Mbaiwa (2005), the wildlife-based tourism industry has grown to become one of the main income earners for many countries in the world. For this reason, tourism needs to be managed in a way that it develops further and to ensure it is self-sustaining.

For developing countries, wildlife tourism is a major foreign income earner (Reynolds & Braithwaite, 2001) and this also applies to the economy of Sabah, Malaysia and, therefore, it is very important for Sabah economy. For the wildlife tourism industry to grow and remain sustainable, the concept of satisfaction has to be integrated in its operations. Several researchers have researched on satisfaction, but none of these studies focussed on wildlife

tourist satisfaction. Therefore, this researched aimed at identifying and evaluating the variables that contribute to satisfaction of wildlife tourists.

Kota Kinabalu International Airport (KKIA) in Sabah, Malaysia formed the site for the survey. Structured self-administered questionnaire was used for collection of data following the application of convenience sampling method. A descriptive method was applied in analysing data with the utilization of Figures and tables as well as multiple regression model and statistical techniques to determine the level of significance between variables.

CHAPTER TWO: INTRODUCTION TO WILDLIFE-BASED TOURISM

2.1 PROLOGUE

For many years tourists have mainly travelled from developed countries to developing countries and for this reason, wildlife tourism has been considered as a way of wealth redistribution from developed to developing countries. The funds collected by developing countries from wildlife tourism have also contributed to the conservation of the wildlife (Ashley and Roe, 1998; Manfredo, 2002) including endangered species (Tisdell and Wilson, 2004). Wildlife tourism is a specialised form of tourism and finds its basis through the interaction of visitors with wild animals. Wildlife tourism has attracted a lot of interest from not only the government and the tourism industry but also researchers (Rodger and Moore, 2004; Reynolds & Braithwaite, 2001). However, the area still has a lot of significant gaps in research in terms of the wildlife viewing experiences of the tourist and the implications arising from species conservation. The majority of the studies (Wright, 1999; Rounsevell & Binns, 1991; Adamic, 1997; Green & Higginbottom, 2001; Jones & Buckley, 2001; Scholik & Yan, 2002; Leung & Leung, 2003; Green & Giese, 2004; Tribe & Higginbottom, 2004) only focus on direct and indirect implication of the wildlife tourism.

Always, human beings have had a close relationship with animals and the human appreciation of wildlife arouse from the time when human beings were associated with animals that lived around them. Human beings generally view wildlife as a resource but they co-exist (Newsome *et al.*, 2005). Traditionally, wildlife has been conserved by human beings based on their importance in what has been described as a 'human-centred' or 'anthropocentric' worldview (Sofield & Li, 2001; Newsome *et al.*, 2005). However, recently human beings have started appreciating animals based on their attributes as opposed to their usefulness and this has led to the emergence of another view described as 'eco-centric' or 'life-centric'. In 'eco-centric' or 'life-centric' view human beings recognize biodiversity as an essential element of life on earth (Sofield & Li, 2001). This new form of recognition for wildlife as a form of life irrespective of the value or usefulness to human beings brings a new perspective of relationship between humans and wildlife and helps in explaining why recently there has been an increase in interest in wildlife tourism. Particularly, in Sabah, Malaysia, a wide scope for wildlife development has been witnessed by virtue of the enormous diversity of habitats and species of wildlife found there which includes the large variety of huge and charismatic species. Similarly, it has predicted that the tourism will experience a faster growth in Sabah than in other parts of the world especially developing countries (STB, 20019). Also, Sabah seems to be in great need of tourism revenues given that its protected areas do not provide adequate

conservation for biodiversity and this leaves many other species and ecosystems unrepresented (King and Nair, 2013).

Currently, enough revenue is not generated by wildlife protected areas in Sabah which play an important role in funding conservation efforts. For example, STB (2004) indicated that over 10,000 tourists visited the Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary in Sandakan while the Sepilok Orangutans Rehabilitation Centre also located in Sandakan earned an estimated income of MYR528, 250.10 (USD$138,901.90) in 2000 representing an increase of 32% as well as a surplus of MYR130, 543.15 (USD$34, 325.00) in the same year. In some areas of Sabah and outside the protected areas, wildlife plays a significant role in community conservation efforts given that some of the revenues from wildlife tourism are used in community developments in remote villages (King and Nair, 2013).

However, the role of wildlife tourism in conservation comes with various limitations. For example, in some areas in Sabah, the revenues from tourism only cover the operating costs while in other areas fewer community-run tourism operations exist (King and Nair, 2013). These limitations also include disturbance of sensitive species by tourists, the dependency of wildlife tourism on good infrastructure, development projects associated with high volume tourism, and environmental impacts associated with mass transport (Moran, 1994; Gössling, 2000). The benefits that accrue to conservation in community-run tourism operations may also be limited by capital and skills shortages, low profitability, and difficulties stemming from challenges in the distribution of revenue (Kiss, 2004; Leader-Williams & Hutton, 2005). Other researchers also found that narrow tourist interests act as serious limitation in the role of wildlife tourism in conservation. For example, a study by Kerley *et al.* (2003) indicated that the preferences by tourists for charismatic mega wildlife has led the tourism community to have little appreciation of biodiversity. The dependence on charismatic mega fauna, according to Goodwin and Leader-Williams (2000), may cause the distortion of the priorities of the management and this may contribute non-conservation of the wider biodiversity. Additionally, a Central America assessment study by Wilkie and Carpenter (1999) found that protected areas with no charismatic mega wildlife experienced poor prospects of generating adequate income to sustain their operations.

The perceived importance of the so-called 'big five' in Africa contributes to the narrow viewing experiences that may negatively affect tourism operations (Goodwin & Leader-Williams, 2000). The big five are elephants (*Loxodonta africana*), buffalo (*Syncerus cafer*), rhinos (*Ceratotherium simum*) and (*Diceros bicornis*), lions (*Panthera leo*) and leopards (*Panthera pardus*). The big five are very popular among tourists, but there is the likelihood that these five

are the most expensive to conserve because they may be targeted by poachers and therefore require very elaborate and therefore expensive anti-poaching operations (e.g. rhinos). Additionally, these animals may be expensive to conserve as they can cause damage to human beings (e.g. elephants, lions, leopards). Due to the high cost of conserving these wildlife, successful conservation is only limited to government protected areas and therefore limits the scope to which wildlife can contribute to the conservation of the overall biodiversity, especially in areas in which the community is involved in conservation efforts.

The focus on charismatic wildlife has also affected tourism in Sabah. Borneo has four of the big five wildlife found in wildlife which are Sumatran rhinoceros (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*), Bornean clouded leopard (*Neofelis diardi*), Borneo pygmy elephants (*Elephas maximus borneensis*), and banteng (*Bos javanicus*). Additionally, Borneo has its other icons that include the Proboscis monkeys (*Nasalis* larvatus) and orang utans (*Pongo pygmaeus*). Tourist who visit Borneo are mainly attracted to Orang utans and proboscis monkey and this has led to neglecting of other wildlife species that would significantly contribute to the conservation effort if they received much attention. The other species in this conservancy are the Bornean gibbon (*Hylobates muelleri*), Malayan sun bear (*Helarctos malayanus*), slow loris (*Nycticebus coucangi*), and flat-headed cat (*Plionailurus planiceps*). Therefore, understanding the factors that contribute to the satisfaction of tourists in wildlife watching is important because it is one of the most pertinent research areas for conservation of species in the wildlife tourism industry (Shackley, 1996; Petrick, 2003; Prebensen *et al*., 2013). Positive experiences by tourists tend to be transmitted by tourist to others as well as influencing a repeat visit. Over time, transmission of these messages from one tourist to another improves the awareness of other travellers of these species and therefore contributes to the long term conservation of particular species (Alén *et al.* 2007; Hallowell, 1996; Kozak and Rimmington, 2000; Pizam, 1994; Operman, 2000).

A range of different factors define the level of tourist's satisfaction with particular species (Peter and Olson, 1996). These factors, according to Peter and Olson (1996), are assessed based on the comparison of the perception of the tourists of the products and services to receive in a trip and the expectations that are generated before and during the wildlife watching trip (Chon and Olsen, 1991; Barsky and Labagh, 1992; Bigné and Andreu, 2004). Due to this interest, many researchers have conducted studies with the aim of measuring the degree of satisfaction of tourists, but very few researchers have focussed on the analysis of the antecedents of these variables and the possible relationships between them. In a market in which the role of tourism is in a high demand, having the ability to offer an attractive tourists watching experience means that one has good understanding of (1) the motivation behind the

choosing of certain wildlife species as compared to others; (2) the activities and/or opportunities accompanying the wildlife tourism watching experience; and (3) the degree to which the tourists is satisfied with the products and services that they receive (Jang & Feng, 2007). In this respect, the causal relationship between conservation driven, wildlife attributes, and the satisfaction of the tourist with encounter with wildlife have received superficial investigation conceptually and empirically (Yoon and Uysal, 2005). The approach of this research is based on the belief of the researcher that wildlife tourism is an exciting venture and has two goals of fostering the conservation of wildlife and developing tourism in the natural area.

To boost the understanding of the reader on wildlife tourism, the researcher has organised this chapter in several sections starting with literature review on the topic and concepts and definition of wildlife tourism. This is followed by a narrow focus on wild tourism growth and economic importance followed by a discussion on the market trends and groups in wildlife tourism.

2.2   WILDLIFE TOURISM

What is wildlife watching? How does wildlife watching relate to tourism? Technically, the term wildlife is used to refer to both flora and fauna. However, in popular use the term is used to refer to animals in the wild. Many people have a classic image of what wildlife means as they consider it as a large mammal or a flock of wild birds, but generally, the term is used to refer to all types of animals including marine life and insects. Therefore, wildlife watching is an activity that entails the watching of wildlife. The term wildlife watching is usually used to refer to watching of animals and is on this basis that it is distinguished from other types of wildlife activities such as fishing and hunting. Essentially, Tapper (2006) noted that wildlife watching is an activity involving observation of the wildlife, but in some cases, it can involve the interaction of the tourists with the animals being watched though feeding or touching of the animal.

Wildlife tourism can then be described as the form of tourism whose organization is aimed at watching wildlife. In recent years, wildlife tourism has grown significantly; a quick search on the internet yields thousands of companies that offer wildlife watching tours or those that promote wildlife tourism as an activity that they offer to their clients (Tapper, 2006). The term wildlife tourism is mostly used by the companies in the tourism industry as opposed to wildlife watching tourism. Mostly these two terms equal, but the term wildlife tourism can also be used to refer to the fishing or hunting tourism and in some cases to viewing of wildlife in captive settings such as zoos or confined parks where the wild existence of the animals in not there

(Tapper, 2006; Newsome *et al.*, 2005). In this study, the terms wildlife tourism and wildlife watching tourism are used a s substitute for each other and are defined as the form of tourism that is conducted with the aim of viewing animals or encountering of animals in the wild in their natural environment.

2.2.1 Definition and Classification of Wildlife Tourism

The tourism industry is one of the global industry that is experiencing a lot of growth. According to Buckley (2000), in the majority of the tourism encounters, the desire to experience a change from the daily routine and to access the natural environment is very important in tourism operations. The attractiveness of a travel destination or a recreational area is influenced by the natural environment (Farrell and Runyan, 1991; Newsome *et al*, 2005). This is because tourists are increasingly desiring to have contact with the natural environment including the wildlife populations and this led to the emergence of a tourism sub-sector referred to as wildlife tourism (Shackely, 1996; Duffus and Dearden, 1990; Reynolds and Braithwaite, 2001)

For many years, animals have captivated and fascinated human beings. For this reason, it is no surprise that wildlife tourism is experiencing a lot of growth and is becoming an important tourism sector globally (Roe *et al.*, 1997; Shackely, 1996; Newsome *et al.,* 2005). As illustrated in Figure 2.1, wildlife tourism is considered a sub-set of nature-based tourism given that animals are a sub-set of nature (Green and Higginbottom, 2001) which forms the settings in which tourist want to watch wildlife. Newsome *et al.* (2005) noted that wildlife tourism has elements of adventure travel, components of nature-based tourism, and some characteristics of ecotourism.

In common usage including the tourism industry, the term wildlife is used to refer to animals (fauna) only; however, the term is scientifically used to refer to both fauna and flora (Shackley, 1996; HIgginbottom *et al.*, 2001; Braithwaite and Reynolds, 2002). From Figure 2.1, 'tourism in the wild' is the term used for describing wildlife tourism that is undertaken in natural areas. When travel is conducted in remote regions with the aim of viewing animals, the element of adventure exists but this is associated with some risk as some of the animals are dangerous. When wildlife tourism is undertaken in natural areas, it acquires some characteristics of ecotourism in that it is educative and/or interpretive, and promotes practices for conservation of the environment and animals in the wild.

The popularity of tourists interacting with wildlife in their natural setting in many parts of the world is rapidly increasing (Reynolds and Braithwaite, 2001; Higginbottom, 2004; Rodger and Moore, 2004; Newsome *et al.*, 2005). Many activities can be considered as non-consumptive

forms of wildlife tourism and these include whale watching, bird watching, African animal safaris, swimming with whale sharks, glow worm viewing and trekking for days to view a rare species. As of 1998, the whale industry in the world had already taken roots and recorded high tourist's numbers of over 9 million people who came from all over the world to come and watch whales. At this time, it was estimated that the industry was generating more than US$1 billion in total expenditure. Stronger growth of this industry was still witnessed ten years later as it expanded into other countries and developed more in countries which already had established industries. In 2013, a total expenditure of $2.1 billion was recorded from whale watching activities by more than 13 million people from more than 119 countries and territories. This came with a high number of tourist's operators which stood at 3,300 operations who in turn employed about 13,200 people (O'Connor *et al.*, 2009).
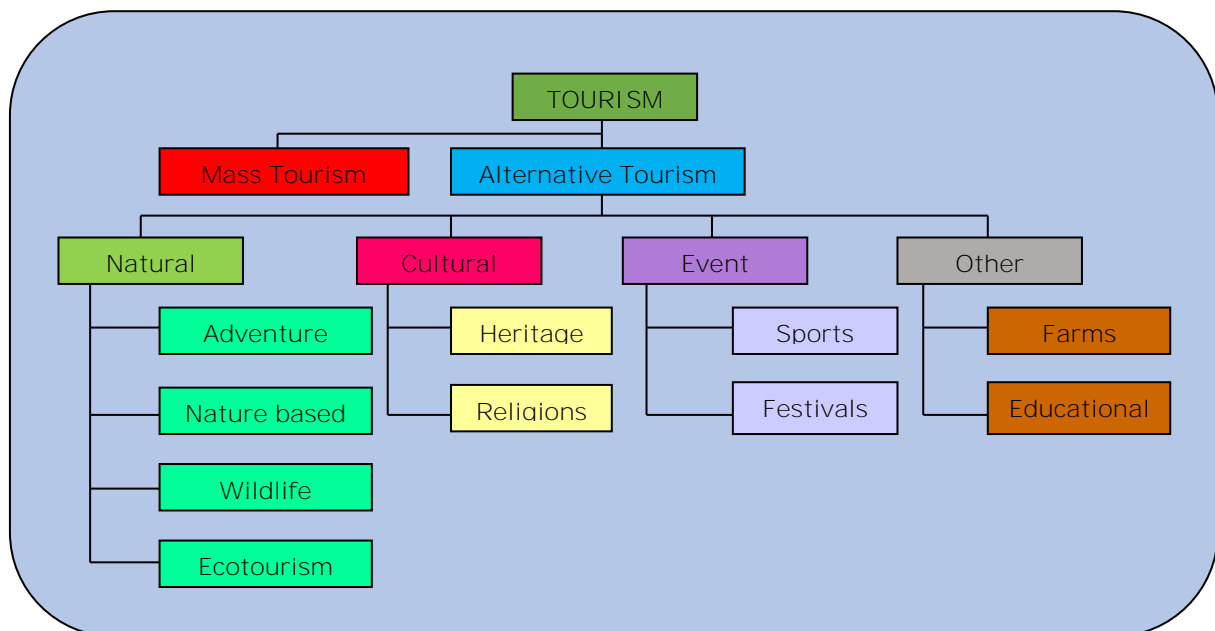
Figure 2.1:   The relationship of wildlife tourism to other forms of tourism.
Source: Newsome *et al.,* 2002.

The examination of the various classifications of the wildlife tourism industry is important for several reasons. First, it provides the basis for choosing the method for analysis and discussion of results. Secondly, it makes clear the lack of research into the differences that exist between the un-facilitated and facilitated experiences.

Higginbottom *et al.* (2004) provided a definition of wildlife tourism as the type of tourism in which tourists encounter non-domesticated or non-human animals in either their natural settings or in captivity. This definition include two important elements in which wildlife encounter occurs; non-captive (in-situ) and captive (ex-situ) environments. While

differentiating these environment is logical, some researchers have put forward arguments for a captive - free continuum because the extent to which these animals are confined is dependent on various environmental factor that may include the size of the park (small vs. large) and the type of zoo (urban vs. free range) (Shackley, 1996; Orams, 1996; Higginbottom, 2004; Valentine and Birtles, 2004).

The spectrum of viewing wildlife animals ranges from a heavily manipulated experience to a more authentic wildlife experiences (Newsome *et al.*, 2005). The traditional zoo found in the urban environment sits at the highly controlled end. Other situations include those in which animals are viewed from vehicle in garden and park environments as well as those in which the tourists mix with animals in walk-through enclosures that are integrated into the zoo environment. Where tourists gain close unrestricted access by cages or through the use of visible barriers, more naturalistic encounter is provided. Additionally, more naturalistic encounters occur when the captive wildlife occurs in a semi-natural environment. However, difficulty with viewing of some species especially in tropical rainforest wildlife in Australia and Borneo has been associated with having great charisma, rarity and uniqueness. Audiences who could not afford to take a holiday to watch wildlife in non-captive settings are attracted to captive wildlife tourism (Shackley, 1996)

For many years, entertainment or entertainment-related reasons formed the reasons for visiting captive wildlife (Tribe, 2001). However, with time, what tourists find to be entertaining has changed as people now prefer a more naturalistic representation of wildlife as opposed to focusing on circus act style presentation. The change in the nature and the design of captive wildlife facilities reflect this change in focus among visitors. Jamieson (1995) observed that historical examples of perceived entertainment such as dancing bears, the London Zoo Chimpanzee Tea Party and anthropomorphized circus animals do not have a lot of appeal as they used to. A description of what is considered to be positive entertainment in captive settings was provided by Shackley (1996) who noted that this may include designing the captive setting to look like natural habitat to encourage the animals to simulate natural behaviour. This approach focussed on feeding arrangement for the animals to make them forage for food or solve problems to obtain the food. Other examples of designing captive settings to simulate natural setting include having trees that exude honey at particular times of the day for bears to find, using artificial termite mounds for chimpanzees to poke sticks into, and scattering food around the captive setting such that gorillas must hunt for the food. This form of entertainment is justified by Shackley (1996) from an anthropocentric perspective by noting that there may be few objections to animals engaging in natural food gathering activities which may also entertain the visitors. This approach by Shackley seems to be a view based

on the end justifying the means where it is acceptable to use animals to entertain human beings as long as it has the guise of naturalistic behaviour.

The idea of putting emphasis on the expectations of visitors for education about captive animals in a natural setting as opposed to anthropomorphizing them was also supported by Dengate (1993). Of course, in the end, the animals are still in the artificial environment and are fed a regulated diet while being watched by onlookers so any appearances of behaving naturally are simply that. Indeed, in his work, Midgley (1983) observed that captive animals exists in mixed context as they are neither fully domesticated nor are they fully wild. This might imply that captive settings which are designed to be more naturalistic smoothen the conscience of the tourists by providing 'entertainment' on supposed reasons of witnessing natural behaviours in a natural setting.

Moscardo *et al.* (2001) also observed that visitors to captive wildlife settings are also attracted by other things that include pleasant natural outdoor settings, naturalistic enclosures and being able to touch and feed the animals in what could be taken as more of domesticated animal interaction. In line with this, a suggestion was made by Tribe (2001) on how captive settings can be made more attractive by integrating opportunities for interaction between the animals and tourists as well as between the guides and tourists. Tribe (2001) also suggested that captive wildlife settings could be made more attractive by removing the many barriers that exist between visitors and captive wildlife. This may be done by means of 'walking the wildlife through the zoo' or could be taken as a captive environment in which both the animals and tourists are contained in an enclosure. A setting that simulates the natural habitat of the animals would be the ideal place for interactions of these kind to take place. As mentioned previously, education was strongly associated with conservation as an important aspect of appealing wildlife tourism (Dengate, 1993).

The need for these kind of experiences is evident in the changing strategy of traditional zoos which are moving from showcasing a wide variety of exotic animals to just showcasing a few of them. This change in strategy also focusses on the conservation of species that are threatened in the wild with the prospects of increasing their survival or restocking the depleted non-captive populations (Tribe, 2001; Shackley, 1996). Thus, an ideal captive wildlife tourism facility is that which incorporate conservation and education with the opportunity for visitors to interact with charismatic as well as rare animals in a naturalistic setting. These changes are an illustration of the changing visitor expectations towards captive wildlife facilities which in turn influences the satisfaction of the visitors from their experiences. From these descriptions, it appears that captive wildlife tourism is the type of 'entertainment' which entails experiencing

the 'wild' animals in a naturalized setting while still having the opportunity to easily view the animals and touch them in the same way that we interact with domesticated animals.

Another common distinction of wildlife tourism/species apart from the definition of the captive and non-captive environment is the differentiation between consumptive and non-consumptive forms of wildlife tourism (Vaske *et al.*, 1982; Duffus and Dearden, 1990; Shackley, 1996; Bauer and Herr, 2004). Bauer and Herr (2004) define consumptive wildlife tourism as the form of tourism in which aquatic or terrestrial wild animals (not domesticated animals) are harvested. Consumptive tourism includes activities such as hunting and fishing. On the other hand, non-consumptive tourism entails viewing of wild animals (Valentine and Birtles, 2004). The significance of this division has been questioned by some researchers because these terms are laden with a lot of value and may therefore be misinterpreted especially when it comes to the impact that they have (Tremblay, 2001; Higginbottom, 2004). It is very easy for one to associate consumptive form of tourism with negative impacts and non-consumptive tourism with little or no impact on wildlife. This concern is well articulated by Higginbottom (2004) who noted that wildlife watching which is poorly managed can have serious negative effects on wildlife, while well-managed fishing and hunting activities can be sustainable ecologically.

In this chapter, fishing and hunting are considered as harvesting of aquatic or terrestrial wild animals and not domesticated animals. The combination of hunting and fishing is aimed at overcoming the contrast between the relative social indifference towards fishing and the negative public attitude that is frequently directed at hunting. Fishing and hunting activities can both be cruel or destructive, or humane and professional. As Caughley and Sinclair (1994) put it, both fishing and hunting can be justified if both are sustainable. By making use of a Triple Bottom Line concept (i.e. being socially, economically and environmentally accountable), hunting and fishing can contribute to conservation both holistically and sustainably as demonstrated by CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe (Child, 1993). The design of CAMPFIRE was undertaken by the Parks & Wildlife Management Authority (PWMA) (Previously known as the Department of National Parks & Wild Life Management (DNPWLM) in the mid-1980s (Martin, 1986). CAMPFIRE is an approach for ensuring the development of rural areas in the long-term through the use of wildlife and other natural resources to promote devolved rural institutions as well as improve governance and livelihoods of people (Child *et al.*, 2003). CAMPFIRE is an illustration of the devolution of the right to manage, use, dispose of, and benefit from natural resources. There are main five main activities under CAMPFIRE (Taylor, 1999) and this includes

- ➢ **Trophy hunting:** selling of hunting concessions to safari operators who work to set government quotas and professional and hunter's accounts for 90% of CAMPFIRE

income. High fees of US$12,000 are paid by individual hunters who want to shoot elephant and buffalo with strict monitoring provided by local licensed professionals. Trophy hunting may become the ultimate form of ecotourism as it involves small groups of tourists who demand few amenities while causing minimal ecosystem damage and yet they provide a significant income.

- **Selling live animals:** this activity was started recently. Live animals from areas with very high wildlife populations are sold to game reserves or National Parks. For example, 10 roan antelope were sold for US$ 50,000 in Guruve district.

- **Harvesting natural resources:** local communities are invited to harvest natural resources such as caterpillars, timber, crocodile eggs, and river-sand which is the sold. 'Problem animals' can also be killed and their skins and ivory sold. Problems animals are defined as individual animals that persistently threaten or cause damage and can therefore be legally killed.

- **Tourism:** previously, the bulk of revenue from tourism activities was not received by local communities. However, in 1990s pilot projects were set up in five districts in Zimbabwe to ensure that local people benefit from tourism though direct employment while other run local tourism facilities.

- **Selling wildlife meat:** in regions with plentiful of species, supervision in killing and selling of skins and meat is done by the National Parks Department. However, only small amounts of money are raised from this.

The sustainability of hunting/fishing from an ecological point of view is based on the principles of wildlife harvesting. Bauer and Giles (2002) indicated that when hunting is managed properly, it can have many conservation benefits. Some of the individuals who initially subscribed to a protectionist-conservationist attitude are now supporting claims that rich trophy-hunting tourists could save Africa's wildlife (e.g. Roe *et al.*, 2002; Baker, 1997a, 1997b; Lewis and Alpert, 1997; Child, 1993). After many years of discredit by the conservationists, hunting tourism is slowly being accepted again. Several countries in Africa including Tanzania, South Africa, Zambia, and Namibia are drawing a lot of income from safari hunting. This form of tourism has been at the centre stage of the development of successful community conservation models such as the Zimbabwean CAMPFIRE (Child, 1993). Bauer and Giles (2002) observed that recreational hunting and fishing is a vast industry in rich countries and may therefore provide a lot of income for poorer countries in the forms of consumptive wildlife tourism. However, conservation particularly from Western countries still have a lot of questions regarding this form of tourism while people in non-western societies consider it as an opportunity for incomes through consumptive wildlife use.

A third distinction is usually made between wildlife tourism that is carried out with the aim of viewing wildlife and another form of tourism in which viewing of animals is done but it is incidental to another recreational experience (Davies, 1990; Reynolds and Braithwaite, 2001; Higginbottom, 2004). These two categories of tourism were referred to as "wildlife-dependent" and "wildlife-independent" respectively by Higginbottom (2004). Higginbottom believes that in wildlife-independent tourism, the viewing of wildlife may not be the key motivating factor but the experience with wildlife adds to the value of the experience that is actual sought.

In the various market segments, the tourism sector meets the tourism demands. The main segments are the general tourism market (usually a high volume market), specialist tourism market as well as the independent travel market. These segments have different methods of operation and therefore come with different impactions for the wildlife watching tourism. A wide range of different species in different locations are usually covered by wildlife watching tourism and this means that some of the packages offer wildlife as a supplementary attraction and experience for the visitors (Tapper, 2006).

Wildlife tourism has also been characterised by several researchers. Emphasis on a spectrum of tourists was put by Orams (1996, 2002) and this entailed wildlife opportunities with various components including options for management strategy, outcome indicators for tourists and wildlife as well as how tourists interact with wild animals (Table 2.1). Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001) also defined wildlife tourism as the form of tourism which overlaps various forms of tourism including nature-based tourism, rural tourism, ecotourism, consumptive wildlife, and human- animal relations. A wide range of activities that caters for a wide range of needs in various ways was included in this definition (see Figure 2.2). However, this research adopts the following definition: 'non-consumptive wildlife encounters with non-domesticated, free ranging, land dwelling and marine in their natural environment.'

Table 2.1:   Wildlife – tourist spectrum.
Source: Orams, 2002.

CATEGORY	SETTING	EXAMPLE	HUMAN INFLUENCE
Captive	Aviaries	Gondwanaland, Queensland, Australia	Completely human constructed
	Zoos Oceanariums Aquariums	San Diego Zoo, California, USA Sea World, Florida, USA Monterey Bay, California, USA	
Semi-captive	Wildlife parks	Lok Kawi Wildlife Park, Sabah, Malaysia	Partially human constructed

	Rehabilitation centres	Sepilok Orangutans Rehabilitation Centre, Sabah, Malaysia	
	Sea pens	Dolphins Plus, Florida, USA	
Feeding wildlife	Natural	Dolphins, Monkey Mia, Shark Bay, Western Australia	Natural environment
		Reef Sharks, Bahamas	
		Kea (parrots), South Island, New Zealand	
Wild	National parks	Kruger National Park, South Africa	
	Migratory routes	Cape Cod, Massachusetts, USA (Whales)	
	Breeding sites	Mon Repos, Australia (Sea turtles)	
	Feeding/drinking sites	Namibia, South Africa (Vultures)	
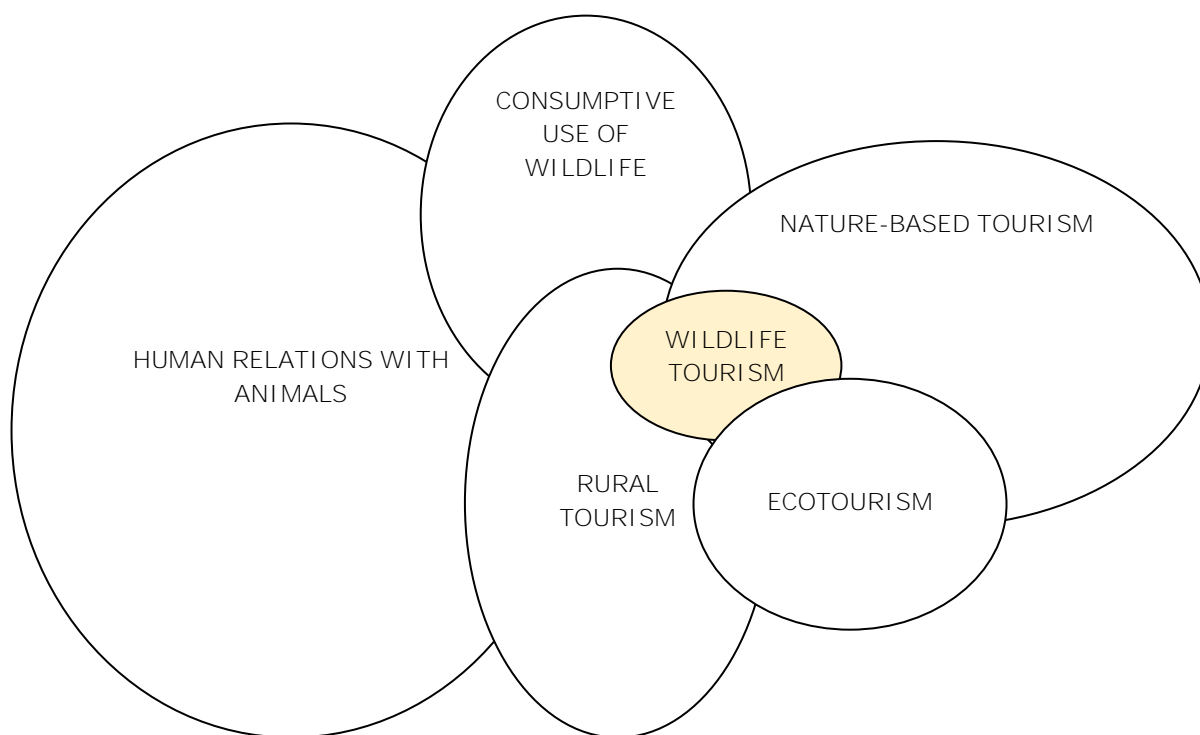
Figure 2.2:   Wildlife-based tourism.

Source: Reynolds and Braithwaite, 2001.

2.2.2   Elements of the Wildlife Tourism System

The core of a wildlife tourism product (in case of the involvement of a commercial tourist operator) or a wildlife tourism experience (no involvement of commercial operators) is the encounter between a visitor and the wildlife. As illustrated in Figure 2.3, this arises from the interaction of various elements including the visitors, the natural resource base (both wildlife and the associated habitat), the operator or business as well as the setting. The encounter

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between these various elements has consequences for the natural resource base, the visitor, the economy (from small businesses to that of the whole country), and for the host community. These consequences can the negative, positive or neutral for both the host community and the natural environment (Budowski, 1976; Ashley and Roe, 1998; Higginbottom, 2004). The wider context in which these experiences occur, in turn, define these elements.

Thus, there is need to take these elements in an integrated way to explain the various outcomes of wildlife tourism and toe ensure its sustainable management. The different elements will be given different emphasis and level of detail by different researchers or stakeholders, but sustainable management requires that all these elements and their interactions be given consideration (Higginbottom *et al.*, 2001; Higginbottom, 2004). Identifying the major stakeholders in wildlife tourism can also be made possible using this conceptualisation (Table 2.2) (Higginbottom, 2004).
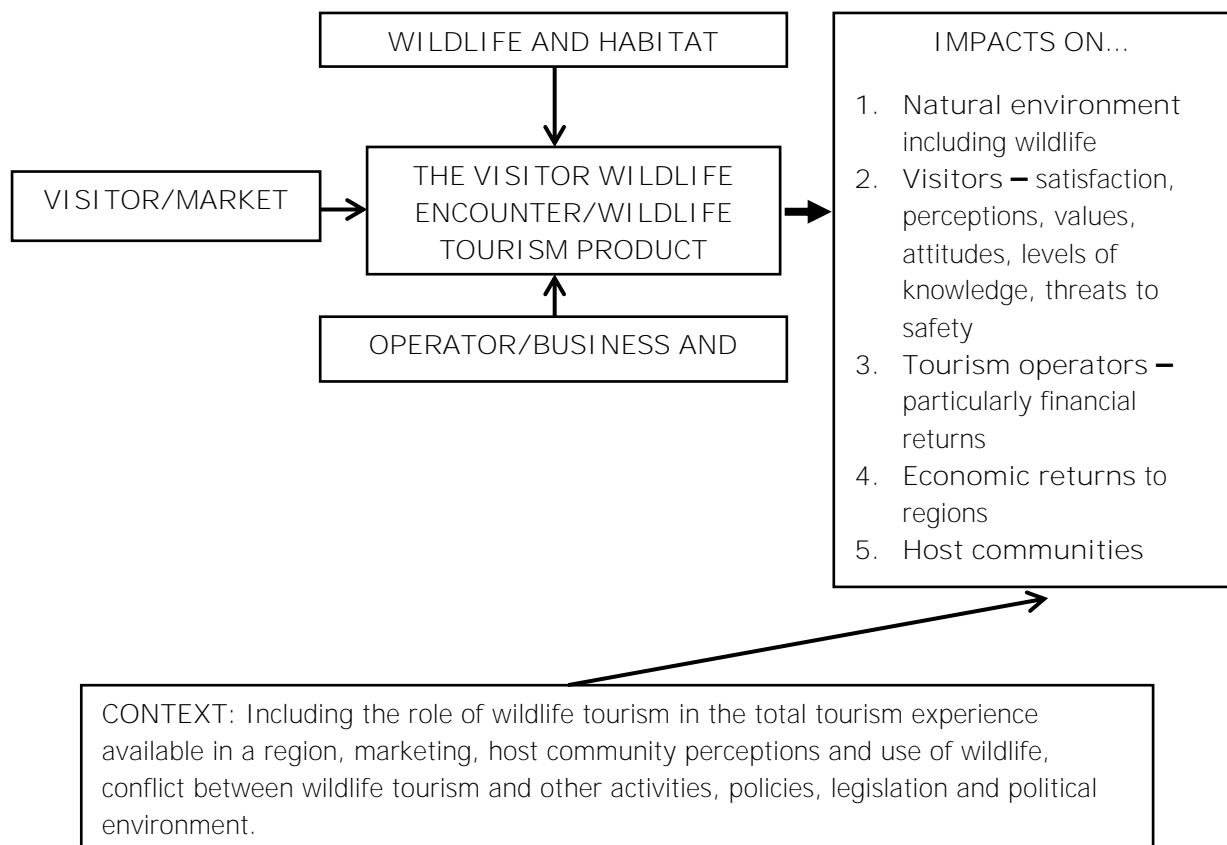
Figure 2.3:   Interactions between components of the wildlife tourism experience.
Source: Higginbottom *et al.*, 2001

The researcher recognizes that the Table provided below is just a simplification, and that the various groups have diverse primary goals among the different organizations or individuals. Particularly, many stakeholders in the tourism industry including tourism operators consider

high quality experiences, long-term economic sustainability as well as ecological sustainability to be their primary goals.

Table 2.2:   Primary goals of major wildlife tourism stakeholders.
Source: Higginbottom, 2004.

STAKEHOLDER	EXPECTED PRIMARY GOALS
Visitors	Access to affordable, high quality wildlife tourism experiences.
Tourism industry, including private and public sector operators, the travel trade and industry associations	Growth of wildlife tourism.
	Maximise short-term profits to individual operators and members of travel trade.
Government agencies concerned with tourism planning and promotion	Economically, socially and ecologically sustainable growth of wildlife tourism.
	High quality operators and experiences.
Host communities	Maximise profits to local area.
	Minimise negative social consequences of tourism.
	Minimise disruption of local uses of wildlife.
Environmental managers, particularly government conservation agencies	Ecologically sustainability of tourism activities.
	Satisfy public recreation goals.
	Use tourism to support conservation goals.
Non-government organisations concerned with animal welfare and conservation	Minimise threats to wildlife conservation and/or welfare.
	Use tourism to support conservation goals.
Wildlife	Generally it is assumed that their interests are reflected among the goals of the latter two stakeholder groups.

2.3   IMPACTS OF WILDLIFE TOURISM ON WILDLIFE

The size, scope, and value of wildlife tourism has increased tremendously in the last couple of years. In line with this, research have also increased their efforts in studying the impact that wild tourism has on wildlife (Higginbottom, 2004). The impact of wildlife tourism on wildlife come in three main ways. The first is through the change in the behaviour of the wildlife (Orams, 2002). It also changes the psychology of wild animals (Poole, 1981; Green and Giese, 2004), and third it damages wildlife life habitats (Duffus and Dearden, 1990; Giese, 1996). Other risks also arise from pressure to make tourism destinations popular and more attractive by initiating more expansion as well as the rapid changes that occur in the number of visitors to particular sites from time to time. These pressures emerge from the increasing competition

between destinations and changes in tourist preferences as well as the heightened concerns among tourists for their personal security (Dyck and Baydack, 2004).

Behavioural Effects of Disturbance

Wildlife disturbance has several effects on their behaviour. These include spending less time on feeding or resting, using more energy to trying to move away from the source of disturbance, and shifting to remote feeding grounds that may be less productive. The movement of wildlife from familiar feeding grounds to others may also meet greater competition from other species as well as making them more vulnerable to predation. Evidence for these types of disturbance has been observed in birds, cetaceans, and great apes (Burger *et al.*, 1995; Jones and Buckley, 2001; Sekercioglu, 2002; Orams, 2002). For example, studies by Wilson (1994), Orams (2002), and Tapper (2006) observed that both chimpanzees and dolphins became more watchful and therefore feed less when they were observed by a group of tourists.

Disturbance poses a lot of vulnerability especially to species during their juvenile stages and breeding periods. Disruption during courting as well mating behaviours is later on evident in the care of their offspring and this has a negative effect of reducing successful breeding. This is a significant threat to their maintenance as well as their survival (Wilson, 1994; Newsome *et al.*, 2005; Newsome *et al.*, 2002; Dixit and Narula, 2010). For example, disruption among the big cats can lead to the cubs being separated from their parents exposing them to predators. Watching of the mother-offspring groups is particularly common among tourists and therefore there is need to take a lot of care to limit the amount of tourism that goes around them (Ward and Hughey, 2004).

Tourists are often particularly keen to watch mother-offspring groups, and therefore great care is needed to limit and control any tourism around them (Ward and Hughey, 2004).

Physiological Effects of Disturbance

The disturbance caused by tourism activities has also been found by several recent studied to cause physiological changes in wildlife. One of the effects is the alteration of the blood chemistry that causes heightened levels of stress hormones in their blood. Additionally, regular feedings of individual by humans also cause additional changes as seen at Stingray City and the Sand Bar in the Cayman Islands (Lewis and Newsome, 2003). Also, certain species such as great apes have high susceptible to human diseases. Human contact with one of these animals may be cause of transmission of diseases to the rest of the animals (Litchfield, 2001; Woodford *et al.*, 2002).

Habitat Damage and Disturbance

Damage to habitats and sites where the species are watched can also be caused by wildlife watching tourism. One such damage is that of coral reefs at sites which are frequently visited by a large numbers of recreational divers (Duffus and Dearden, 1990). Reef organisms are destroyed by the breaking of the coral causing a reduction of the habit for fish spawning and feeding. Consequently, this reduces marine life at these sites and therefore reduces the attractiveness of these sites to divers (De Vantier and Turak, 2004).

Wildlife habitats are also negatively affected by tourism facilities used by tourists for watching the wildlife through the solid and liquid wastes that these facilities release (Shackley, 1996). For example, home stay accommodation is usually used by international divers around the reefs of Bunaken National Marine Park in Indonesia which helps in reducing the physical impact. However, these homestay facilities make use of septic wastewater and sewage treatment systems and are just 50 meters from the beach. Any leakages from these systems would cause the enrichment of the coastal waters damaging any reefs that are located nearby (Buckley and Pannell, 1990; De Vantier and Turak, 2004).

The activation of the tourism cycles in areas with low levels of tourism activities may pose significant risk to an area given that these areas are poorly planned and therefore lack the ability to take in any form of uncoordinated expansion of tourism activities. These uncoordinated expansion can lead to loss of habitats for wildlife due to the increased pressure from the disturbance caused by wildlife watching activities (Tapper, 2006; Newsome *et al.*, 2005; Shackley, 1996; Duffus and Dearden, 1990). The impact of the increase in tourist's numbers is evident in the Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve in Mexico which is witnessing a rapid increase in day time tourists numbers in Riviera Maya necessitating the building of hotels near to the Reserve to makes access for tourist easier (Bozec *et al.*, 2005). The Meso-American Barrier Reef system has also seen an increase in day time visitors who mainly perform diving and snorkelling activities but spend very little in the Reserve and the community while posing a major sanitation and waste management problem (Harborne *et al.*, 2001). Furthermore, these diving sites are being overused and therefore experiencing damage that is slowly reducing their attractiveness for the low-volume high-value tourism which has been an important stream of income for many years. However, there are efforts to improve the management of the dive sites with the Reserve working closely with the local dive operators, but still lacks the power to control the population of visitors who visit the Reserve during the day (Butynski and Kalina, 1998; Litchfield, 2001; Lewis and Newsome, 2003; Newsome *et al.*, 2004; Harborne *et al.*, 2001).

Certain animal species can also be threatened by general tourism developments. For example, in many parts of the world, the development at the coastal regions has seen the damaging of the turtle nesting areas on the beaches (Higham, 1998; Landry and Taggart, 2010; Chan, 2006). This indicates that there is need to the plan on effective land use and other forms of coastal planning to protect key wildlife areas from the adverse effects of development.

Green and Giese (2004) provided a comprehensive review of the breadth with which wildlife is impacted by tourism activities. They presented two main categories of these activities as summarised in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3:   Wildlife tourism activities that can result in impacts on wildlife.
Source: Green and Giese, 2004.

CATEGORY OF ACTIVITIES	
Activities resulting in impacts on key behaviour	**Activities resulting in direct killing/injuring of animals**
☐ Supplementary feeding of wildlife	☐ Hunting and fishing
☐ Habitat clearing and modification	☐ Specimen collection
☐ Disturbing nests, courtship and care of young	☐ Killing animals for safety and comfort
☐ Disturbing feeding	☐ Collisions with vehicles
	☐ Introduction of disease

2.4   WILDLIFE TOURISM AND ITS ROLE IN CONSERVATION

While the list of the negative impacts that wildlife tourism has on tourism is extensive, the positive Impacts are very few and most of the time these benefits are viewed only from a conservation perspective (*e.g.* Higginbottom and Tribe, 2004). In this section of this chapter, the various contributions of wildlife tourism are reviewed in regards to their nature, magnitude and effectiveness. Conclusions are then drawn on the extent to which these benefits contribute to conservation particularly from the perspective of non-consumptive wildlife tourism. Proposals on how wildlife tourism can increase its contribution to conservation are also made.

Direct Wildlife Management and Supporting Research from Wildlife Tourism

Wildlife watching is associated with direct wildlife management which most of the time is in situ and involves various activities such as reintroduction, exotic predator control, reforestation as well as patrolling to check for poaching activities (Higginbottom *et al.*, 2003). Conservation-related wildlife management has several players that include commercial tourism operators, non-profit organizations established to undertake conservation efforts only (for example, the Australian Wildlife Conservancy is a not-for-profit independent organization which was set up

with the aim of conserving threatened wildlife as well as the ecosystem in Australia), and government organizations such as Sabah Parks which has been working Sutera Sanctuary Lodge in Kinabalu Park to conserve wildlife. Sabah Parks is a leading government agency in conservation of wildlife. In some cases commercial tourist operators have made significant contributions to wildlife conservation. For example, in South Africa private game reserve operators have reintroduced a range of animal species that had become locally extirpated as well as endangered species (James and Goodman, 2000). Another private company that is involved in conserving native wildlife species is Earth Sanctuaries which operates various privately-owned sanctuaries. Earth Sanctuaries has set up fences that exclude feral animals from each of their sanctuary as well as eradicated all exotic species from all its properties. The company funds its conservation efforts by offering various ecotourism products that include tours, accommodation, and an education program about the environment. Additionally, Earth Sanctuary also carries out captive breeding, reintroduction into private reserve networks as well as acquire animals from elsewhere. The company is also in charge of managing ten reserves of 90,000 hectares of land with four of these being open to the public. 19 rare and threatened species of wildlife has been reintroduced by the company into their land (Earth Sanctuaries, 2000; Higginbottom *et al.*, 2001; Buckley, 2002).

Providing Funding For Conservation

The government charges fees on tourists as well as commercial nature-based tourism operators and uses these money to fund the cost of managing tourism activities. The bulk of these fees are from the use of protected areas where the majority of wildlife watching takes place. Also, the government occasionally requires permits which come with a certain fee for tourism operators who provide tourism services that involve coming into close encounters with species that are a conservation concern even if they are outside areas that are protected. For example, operators in Western Australia who provide tourists with close encounters with whale sharks have to pay a special fee for a special interaction license (Higginbottom *et al.*, 2003).

Generally, revenues from around the parks in the world are not sufficient to fully cover operation costs (Goodwin *et al.*, 1998) as well as funding conservation efforts. However, there are some exceptions in which the user fees charged by some parks in some parts of the world that cover the cost of operation as well as support conservation efforts

Although revenues from parks around the world are generally not sufficient to fully offset their operating costs (Goodwin *et al.*, 1998), let alone to provide net funding for conservation, there are some exceptions (Lindberg *et al.*, 1996; Higginbottom *et al.*, 2003). Tourism based on gorillas in East Africa is one of the few published cases that entails the watching of wildlife.

The conservation of the habitat for this endangered species as funding the cost of fighting poaching activities has been taken care of by the income that is charged for the various tourism activities (Mcneilage, 1996; Butynski and Kalina, 1998; Newsome *et al.*, 2005).

Providing Education about Conservation

As part of their experience of wildlife or nature tourism, education of the tourists can also be conducted to increase their awareness on conservation and motivate behaviours that positively impact the wildlife and/or their habitats (Newsome *et al.*, 2005; Higginbottom *et al.*, 2004; Shackley, 1996; Tapper, 2006; Higginbottom, 2002; Jones and Buckley, 2001; Pennisi *et al.*, 2004; Nielsen and Spenceley, 2010). The education may provide tourists with more knowledge on conservation or change their attitude which may in turn lead to (Higginbottom *et al.*, 2003; Newsome *et al.*, 2005; Shackley, 1996):

- ➢ Tourist involvement in wildlife research or conservation;
- ➢ Stimulation of more responsible behaviour in tourists toward the natural environment of the wildlife as well as the wildlife itself by encouraging the tourist to minimize negative behaviour on local tourism areas as well as those which are in other areas;
- ➢ More donations from the tourist for conservation purposes;
- ➢ More political pressure on local and national governments to attain the various objectives of conservation;
- ➢ Increased and highly satisfied customers and therefore more successful business.

Education components as well as environmental interpretation is incorporated by many wildlife and nature-based tourism operators both in the public and the private sector (Ballantyne *et al.*, 2007; Moscardo, 2001; Higginbottom, 2002; Higginbottom *et al.*, 2003; Newsome *et al.*, 2005; Ballantyne *et al.*, 2011). Three main aspects characterise the argument for interpretation supporting sustainable wildlife tourism. First, interpretation acts as a means of management of the interactions that occur between the tourists and wildlife. The element of interpretation in education is important for informing visitors on the appropriate behaviour that reduces the impact of the interaction that they have with wildlife by explaining the various management strategies as well as supporting various safety measures (McArthur and Hall, 1993; Moscardo, 1998; Newsome *et al.*, 2005). Secondly, interpretation encourages pro-conservation attitudes as well as motivates tourist to act on broader conservation issues by raising their knowledge and awareness of wildlife and habitats (Gray, 1993; Moscardo, 2001; Newsome *et al.*, 2005). Thirdly, the satisfaction of visitors can be enhanced through quality interpretation and this, in turn, makes tourist operations more commercially viable (Ham, 1992; Moscardo, 1998; Higginbottom *et al.*, 2003; Ballantyne *et al.*, 2007; Ballantyne *et al.*, 2011).

Providing Socio-Economic Incentives for Conservation

Income is also generated from the watching of wildlife in several ways. The first way is through payments such as permit fees and entrance fees that tourists make when they visit wildlife watching sites. Also, tourists pay drivers, guides, and other staff who accompany to the watching sites (Newsome *et al.*, 2005). Also, when travelling to wildlife watching sites, tourists have to get accommodation services which they pay for. At the regional or national level, while visiting wildlife watching sites, tourist may also be interested in other tourism activities and as a result they may decide to visit other tourism sites in the country or get interested in the culture or heritage of the country. The availability of more tourism opportunities can encourage tourists to stay and spend more money in a country despite being initially attracted to view some specific wildlife (Tapper, 2006).

Lately, tourism as a nature-based industry has acted as source of development and employment for remote areas. The balance of social, economic, and environmental interactions of tourists with a destinations results in net tourism benefits (Greiner *et al.*, 2004; Newsome *et al.*, 2005). Only when the local community has some measure of control over a tourism venture is when the venture is considered successful. Additionally, such measure of control should result in equitable sharing of benefits resulting from wildlife tourism opportunities (Scheyvens, 2002). Wildlife tourism is considered to have the potential of offsetting the local opportunity cost of protected areas by providing the rural communities with employment, income as well as infrastructural benefits. The rationale for such development is that when protected areas are considered to have tangible economic benefit for the local people, then it is likely that they will gain political support of the people (Goodwin *et al.*, 1998; Newsome *et al.*, 2005). An argument was presented that people are more likely to protect their asset as well make further investment into it, if they gain more from the use of wild animals through tourism.

An obvious benefit of tourism to local communities especially in rural areas is through the provision of employment and generation of income for the hosts (Wearing and Neil, 1999; Newsome *et al.*, 2005; Higginbottom *et al.*, 2003; Woods-Ballard *et al.*, 2003, Orams, 2001). This includes:

- ➢ Direct employment (mainly by service industries such as restaurants, hotels, concessions);
- ➢ Indirect employment (arising out of increasing industry inputs such as employment at a retail souvenir outlet);
- ➢ Induced employment (arising out of increased spending capacity of local residents due to increased receipts from tourism; consumption of goods for example).

Various researchers have shown that wildlife watching plays a role in the conservation of the watched animals as well as the host community (Higginbottom and Tribe, 2004; Mallinson, 2001; Turley, 1999; Shackley, 1995; Shackley, 2001; Tribe, 2000; Sekercioglu, 2002). However, the question that this researcher has is, will the experiences of these visitors from the watching of wildlife induce in them sufficient degree of satisfaction, motivation and excitement that will make them loyal to a destination and thus, support the conservation of wildlife? Little attempt has been made to systematically research and quantify these experiences and satisfaction relationship into conservation effects and most of the available information is anecdotal.

2.5   GROWTH AND ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF WILDLIFE TOURISM

Drawing from a report published by The Ecotourism Society in 1998, Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001) suggested that the role that is played by the wildlife tourism sector in motivating higher tourist numbers is significantly rising given that the number of wildlife tourists has gone up immensely with the establishment of the wildlife tourism sector. Reynolds and Braithwaite are not alone in making this statement as every introduction in many publications on general or specialised wildlife tourism indicate that the number of visitors as well as diversification has increased in recent years (see for example Vaske *et al.*, 1982; Davies, 1990; Duffus and Dearden, 1990; Orams, 1996; Shackley, 1996; Muloin *et al.*, 2001; Hoyt, 2000; Higginbottom, 2004; Newsome *at al*., 2005).

Over the past two decades, enormous growth has been witness in tourism and travel sectors. The international tourist arrivals increased to 763 million in 2004 from 441 million in 1990 with 52% of these tourists being leisure and recreational tourists. This growth is projected to continue and by 2020 international tourist's arrivals is set to hit 1.6 billion (UNWTO, 2005). Additionally, around the world domestic tourism has significantly increased as the spending power of more people has gone up as well as having more time to participate in tourism activities. Estimating the size of domestic tourism is difficult, but estimates put it at around ten times the size of international tourism, and there is a likelihood that it has experiences a lot of growth as compared to international tourist arrivals in recent years. Larger growth has also been witnessed in wildlife watching tourism (Rodger *et al*., 2007). This is evident in the growth in the different types of wildlife watching activities that have been developed and linked to commercial tourism, the number of tourism businesses that offer this form of tourism as well as the population of tourists that participate in this form of tourism. Emphasis on sustainable tourism is being put by an increasing number of tourists agents and operators who are also engaging in the development and marketing of products that are more 'wildlife-friendly' in

addition to those that are carbon-neutral as well as ensuring that a fair share of incomes from the tourism activities go to the people in areas in which tourism activities are conducted (Rodger *et al*., 2007; Tapper, 2006).

According to Knight and Gutzwiller (1995) and Shackley (1996), wildlife tourism coincides with several things and this includes;

➢ Growth in disposable income,

➢ More leisure time,

➢ Institutionalized paid vacation; and

➢ Cheaper and faster access to tourism destinations due to improved transportation and infrastructure.

Going for a holiday overseas is no longer something that only the rich people can afford. Enhanced media coverage that advertises wildlife as well as the ready availability and accessibility of travel information has stimulated wildlife tourism. Extensive destination advertising, wildlife documentaries, ready availability of travel literature, and greater communication through the Internet as well as word of mouth has stimulated wildlife-based tourism (Shackley, 1996). An exponential increase in the range of wildlife viewing activities with a focus on a broad range of species coincide with overall growth and diversification in global tourism (Shackley, 1996; Sinha, 2001; Newsome *et al*., 2005). Before, species that were easy to view and access were the focus of wildlife tourism activities. However, changes have been witnessed as there is increased transportation which is in line with increased demand for new tourism products. Now, the interest of wildlife tourist has shifted to seeing rare animal species as well as birds that they do not see at home (Shackley, 2001; Tremblay, 2002).

Wildlife tourism in many destinations contributes to generation of the much needed revenue (Shackley, 1996; Tisdell and Wilson, 2002; Wilson and Tisdell, 2003; Tisdell and Wilson, 2004). For example, during the 1999-2000 turtle breeding season in Mon Repos, near Bundaberg in Queensland, an estimated tourism expenditure of about AUD$2.68 million was generated, according to Tisdell and Wilson (2002). Additionally, a study by Wilson and Tisdell (2003) put the total tourism expenditure in in Hervey Bay in Queensland at about AUD$7.9 million in 2000 from whale watching activities. Putting into consideration that these revenues are only from small areas where tourist operations are being conducted, the total revenue that is likely to be obtained from all tourism operations could be substantial, especially given that the number of wildlife tourists is growing. Hoyt's (2000) estimates substantiate these by noting that more than USD$1 billion was generate from whale watching in 2000.

In China, Nianyong and Zhuge (2001) observed that wildlife tourism is growing. Tourist are now being targeted by many of the nature reserves, forest parks as well as scenic sites. 1999 was designated the national Year of Ecotourism by The Chinese State Tourism Administration China with the theme of 'Touching, Understanding and Protecting Nature'. A survey bring together 100 provincial as well as national nature reserves in 29 provinces established that 82% of the reserves were involved in nature-based wildlife tourism.

Broad patterns of wildlife watching tourism destinations are provided in Table 2.4. The table also indicates the type of prominent wildlife at various locations plus additional comments on sustainability issues at those destinations. From the table, it is evident that the tourism industry has seen significant growth in the wildlife tourism sector. However, the degree to which wildlife tourism can be used as a conservation tool is still anecdotal.

Table 2.4:   Major Destinations for Wildlife watching.
Source: Higginbottom and Buckley, 2003.

REGION	WILDLIFE	COMMENTS
Eastern and Southern Africa (Especially Kenya, South Africa, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Namibia)	Safari-game lodge experience mainly from viewing large mammals (and sometimes bird) watching. Majority occurs in public protected areas; also private game reserves especially in South Africa.	Long experience of nature/wildlife (safari) tourism.
	Mammals with high diversity, high abundance, large body size. Open plains and plateaus with large views make it easy to find and observe wildlife. Penguins and whales in marine and coastal areas (southern), hippos and crocodiles in wetlands and rivers.	Sport hunting and trophy trade banned in Kenya.
		Except for South Africa, most tourists are international.
		Threats – both environmental and socio-political are significant
		Many reserves fenced (South Africa) with professional manipulation of wildlife for sustainable management.

North America (USA and Canada)	Mainly large mammals and birds. Key species include several species of bears (especially polar bears in Churchill, Manitoba), large ungulates, red wolf, bobcat, alligators, invertebrates, arctic foxes, coyote, river otters, snakes. Centres on protected areas. Significant marine and coastal wildlife watching from cetaceans to pelagic birds.	Trend away from hunting to wildlife watching. Strong domestic component to terrestrial wildlife watching tourism. Significant growth in birding. Major initiatives to link wildlife watching to conservation. Migratory component significant (adds seasonality and concentration).
Central and South America (especially Costa Rica, Belize)	Mainly forest fauna in areas of high biodiversity including Amazon basin. Some as part of general nature-based experience. Key species include birds and some primates. Increased use of water-based marine and freshwater systems.	Better tourism development in Central America than South America due to it is closer to large market, greater political stability, multinational initiatives, and strong protected area systems. Significant environmental and socio-political threats.
Southeast and South Asia (Especially India, Borneo)	Several forest fauna in areas of high biodiversity in SE Asia, mostly as part of general nature-based experience. Key species including rhinos, orangutans, Komodo dragon and elephant. India and Borneo has more specialized wildlife watching. Mainly in protected areas. Some growth in marine wildlife tourism.	Wildlife tourism generally small but new areas and species becoming available. Significant environmental and socio-political threats. Significant future potential in some countries.
Pacific Ocean, Micronesia, Hawaiian Islands, NZ, Fiji, Galapagos	Main focus on dive tourism with some focus on marine species (manta rays, sharks including whale sharks, coral reef organisms, whale and dolphins).	Marine tourism especially subject to growing pressures and need for close management. Many uncertainties needing research.
Australia and Papua New Guinea	International visitor interest in icon species (koala, kangaroo) and some specialized focus on marine environments including coral reef diving, whale watching, whale sharks. Endemic birds also a focus. Mainly in protected areas.	Well-developed specialist infrastructure.

2.5.1 Wildlife Tourism is Economically Important

Wildlife tourism benefits in several ways from economics. These benefits include 1) estimating the impact that wildlife tourists' expenditures have on income as well as employment; 2) consideration of the economic value of wildlife for satisfying human tourism wants and other purpose, and the implications that these values have on optimal economic resource management including wildlife; 3) improving the outcomes from wildlife tourism through the use of economic policy instruments (Tisdell and Wilson, 2004).

Economic Impact of Wildlife Tourism on Income and Employment

In recent decades, the importance of wildlife viewing tourism has grown significantly and this has seen this form of tourism also grow in many countries (Field, 2001; Wilkie and Carpenter, 1999) to the extent that it is becoming a key tourism industry (The US Fish and Wildlife Service, 2001). Many tourists have indicated that one of their main reasons for visiting a country is to view wildlife. Many tourists have also extended their stay in a country due to the presence of wildlife in those countries. One country where this is evident is South Africa.

It can therefore be said that wildlife tourism demand come from various tourist groups and from both domestic and foreign without excluding generalist and specialist groups (Wilson and Tisdell, 2001). In the same way, the amount of money that comes from tourist operations is also varied based on the different species (Wilson and Tisdell, 2003), from locals as well as foreigners (Tisdell, 2001) and averagely from specialist such as birdwatchers who are estimated to have higher expenditures than general group of tourists (Sekercioglu, 2002). Furthermore, the majority of tourist are noted to visit an area because of the wildlife presences as well as s pend more days in an area because of the presence of wildlife (Wilson and Tisdell, 2003; Tisdell and Wilson, 2002).

The income that is generated from wildlife watching tourism acts as an incentive for conservation of the watched species as well as their habitats. Rural areas form the bulk of the habitat of the majority of the wildlife species that tourists want to watch. These areas have higher poverty rates as compared to urban areas and have few job opportunities. Therefore, tourism has the potential of providing employment as well as alternative source of income. In comparison to other sectors, the creation of jobs in the tourism sector requires lower capital expenditure and creates jobs mainly for youths and women in addition to providing entrepreneurship and development opportunities for small firms.

In terms of the number of international arrivals and contribution to the Gross National Product, small and least developed countries in the world such as Vietnam and the Laos are experiencing faster tourism growth than some developed countries, and it is becoming a very important tool for economic development for many of developing nations. According to Tapper (2006), the majority of these countries have a rich presence of wildlife and therefore a large portion of their growth in international tourism is related to nature-based and wildlife watching tourism watching activities (Tapper, 2006).

The promotion of economic and social development can be done by all forms of tourism including the watching of wildlife as long as they are socially, environmentally and

economically sustainable and are developed based on strategies and measures that ensure compatibility with the priorities and the needs of the host communities (Tapper, 2006; Tisdell and Wilson, 2004). At the same time, one should also realize that like other businesses, tourism is a highly dynamic business sector and therefore realise that a tourism business in an area will only succeed if there is demand for tourism services, and if possible the products and packages provided by these businesses should satisfy tourism demand.

As a result, it is important that any tourism business should have a good understanding of the expectations of the tourists as well as the trends in the tourism industry as these have a strong impact on determining the viability and profitability of wildlife watching tourism, and whether it has the potential for playing a role in alleviating poverty and contributing to community development at any particular site (Tapper, 2006), but also providing an incentive for conservation of wildlife through active government involvement (Higginbottom, 2004).

Economic Value of Wildlife Watching Tourism
For many locations in the world, the value of wildlife watching is high with many people regularly paying significant amount of money with the aim of viewing certain animal species, and nature in general (Tisdell and Wilson, 2004).

For example, according to a survey by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (2001) and Tapper (2006), one in five of residents in the United States consider wildlife watching to be one of their recreational activities, with about 40% of them travelling from their homes to go to areas where they can view birds. Tapper (2006) further noted that US residents directly spend about USD$32 billion on wildlife watching that includes USD$7.5 billion expenditure on food, transport and accommodation associated with wildlife watching activities.

A study by The International Ecotourism Society (1998) approximated that about 20% to 40% of all tourists who travel globally are interested in watching wildlife and they do this by taking short viewing excursions that are added on a main activity, casual wildlife observation or by taking trips that are entire dedicated to watching of wildlife (Tapper, 2006; Shackley, 1996; Higginbottom, 2004; Newsome *et al.*, 2005).

Income is also generated from the watching of wildlife in several ways. The first way is through payments such as permit fees and entrance fees that tourists make when they visit wildlife watching sites. Also, tourists pay drivers, guides, and other staff who accompany to the watching sites (Higginbottom, 2004; Shackley, 1996; Newsome *et al.*, 2005). Also, when travelling to wildlife watching sites, tourists have to get accommodation services which they

pay for. At the regional or national level, while visiting wildlife watching sites, tourist may also be interested in other tourism activities and as a result they may decide to visit other tourism sites in the country or get interested in the culture or heritage of the country. The availability of more tourism opportunities can encourage tourists to stay and spend more money in a country despite being initially attracted to view some specific wildlife (Tapper, 2006).

Other sector of the economy can also be stimulated by the economic effects of tourism, both through product and service demands by the tourism sector as well as other local sectors. For example, the local agricultural producers may benefit by selling their produce to tourism company and in turn, the income that they earn could be used to purchase other local products and services (Tapper, 2006; Newsome *et al.*, 2005; Tisdell and Wilson, 2004; Troëng and Drews, 2004). As such, a significant stimulus for the local economic development can be provided by relatively low levels of tourism in an area.

Economic Instruments and Wildlife Tourism

In allocating and utilising scarce resources, including ensure that the wildlife is conserved to promote tourism, does not only needs relevant incentives, but also requires relevant controls to make prevent the overutilization of the available resources. These controls are applicable for both private and public provision of wildlife for tourism purposes.

In the literature, discussion/utilization of various policy instruments to manage wildlife tourism has been done. These instruments can be used for various purposes including providing incentives and providing various controls on wildlife service providers as well as aiming wildlife users to behave in certain ways. Furthermore, these policy instruments may be used for generating revenue which could be channelled for infrastructure development and for meeting certain conservation objectives (Table 2.5) (Higginbottom, 2004; Tisdell and Wilson, 2004).

Tourism Trends for the Wildlife Sector

According to Yuan *et al.* (2004), wildlife viewing has been identified as an activity with the strongest potential with the global adventures sector as the global tourist population has always been attracted to animals. For centuries, humans have been fascinated by their behaviour, their survival needs as well as their interaction with the environment (Shackley, 1996; Orams, 1999; Higginbottom *et al.*, 2001; Reynolds and Braithwaite, 2001). The attraction of humans to wildlife tourism is related to this fascination, though reliable global estimates for this sector are not available.

Using the figures from North America, many other people take part in other forms of viewing of free-ranging animals. Probably, even more people view animals in zoos with annual visitor numbers being places at 500 million (Yuan *et al.*, 2004). However, the percentage of tourists in these numbers is not clear. Additionally, globally millions of people in several parts of the world take part in hunting tourism (Bauer and Giles, 2001) with a huge unknown number of people participating in the fishing tourism (Yuan *et al.*, 2004). Consequently, huge financial revenues are obtained from global wildlife tourism.

Table 2.5:   Classification of economic instruments for managing wildlife tourism.

Source: Da Motta *et al.*, 1999.

MINIMUM FLEXIBILITY FLEXIBILITY	MODERATE FLEXIBILITY		MAXIMUM	
MAXIMUM GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT		INCREASED PRIVATE INITIATIVES		
CONTROL ORIENTED	MARKET ORIENTED		LITIGATION ORIENTED	
Regulations, Standards Gen. Examples	Charges, taxes and fees	Market creation	Final demand intervention	Liability legislation
Relevance agency restricts the amount of operators of wildlife tourism and users (visitors) at a site and restrictions placed on certain areas. Compliance is monitored and sanctions made (fine/cancelling /suspension of license, jail terms) for non-compliances.	*User charges*: The environmental authority, the National Parks and Wildlife Service or landholders charge fees at wildlife tourism sites. Fees are aimed at creating incentives for providers of wildlife, to reduce tourist numbers or both.	*Tradable permits*: Environmental authority establishes a system of tradable permits in the use of wildlife resources. Trading is permitted at unregulated prices.	*Performance rating*: Environmental authority or National Parks and Wildlife Service require wildlife tourism operators to provide information on the use of wildlife for their business. Notices, informing visitors about the threats to wildlife and threats from wildlife. Eco-certification may be provided for such operations.	*Strict liability legislation:* The tourist operator or user or both are required by law to pay any damages to those affected or wildlife injured. Damaged parties collect settlements through litigation and court system.
Specific examples of applications: Licensing of wildlife watching activities	Various user fees to watch wildlife User charges and permits	Property rights attached to wildlife resources Tradable permits for use of wildlife for tourism /	Ranger / display education Other interpretive facilities	Damages compensation for all parties Zero Net Impact' requirements

		hunting or subsistence hunting		
Rationing use	Taxes on hunting equipment	Black-list wildlife tourism operators	Liability on neglecting
Quotas	Fishing gear use	Disclose legislation requiring operators to adhere to specified regulations	Safety requirements
Zoning	Subsidies to operators / investors	Provide warnings about dangerous animals and dangers to wildlife from tourism	Insurance requirements for wildlife tourism operators
Land use restrictions	Non compliances charges		
No go areas Distance restrictions for viewing wildlife			

2.6 KEY FEATURES OF TODAY'S WILDLIFE TOURISM

According to Knight and Gutzwiller (1995) and Shackley (1996), wildlife tourism coincides with several things and this includes;

- ➢ Growth in disposable income,
- ➢ More leisure time,
- ➢ Institutionalized paid vacation; and
- ➢ Cheaper and faster access to tourism destinations due to improved transportation and infrastructure.

Going for a holiday overseas is no longer something that only the rich people can afford. Enhanced media coverage that advertises wildlife as well as the ready availability and accessibility of travel information has stimulated wildlife tourism. Extensive destination advertising, wildlife documentaries, ready availability of travel literature, and greater communication through the Internet as well as word of mouth has stimulated wildlife-based tourism (Shackley, 1996).

An exponential increase in the range of wildlife viewing activities with a focus on a broad range of species coincide with overall growth and diversification in global tourism (Shackley, 1996; Sinha, 2001; Newsome *et al.*, 2005). Before, species that were easy to view and access were the focus of wildlife tourism activities. However, changes have been witnessed as there is increased transportation which is in line with increased demand for new tourism products.

Now, the interest of wildlife tourist has shifted to seeing rare animal species as well as birds that they do not see at home (Shackley, 2001; Tremblay, 2002).

The high and constantly changing tourist demands has seen the development of new tourist destinations. The improvement in transportation infrastructure as well as a conducive political climate in some tourists' destinations has also led the exploration of places that were not easily accessible by tourists (Shackley, 1996). At the same time, tourist are visiting destinations in developing nations more than developed nations (Roe *et al.*, 1997). In many parts of the world, it is widely accepted by the private sector, government and non-governmental institutions are now accepting and supporting that good management of wildlife tourism can contribute to wildlife conservation and therefore have positive contribution to the local economies (Rodger, 2004).

There is a likelihood that a wildlife tourist travel along a continuum and as such, Duffus and Dearden (1990) indicated that a person who may have interest in viewing captive wildlife would evolve and start showing interest in the taking trips to go and view wildlife in specific area. At the end, this individual may dedicate a lot of money, time, and effort to travel to far places so that they can view a particular animal. At the start of their wildlife watching experience, these 'specialists' visit wildlife without exerting a lot of pressure on the ecological setting. However, with time their awareness as well as attraction profile goes up and they eventually evolve into more 'generalist tourist (Duffus and Dearden, 1990; Higham, 1998). (Shackley, 1996) observed that the more an endangered species is, the higher the attraction among tourists. From a lay point of view, rare implies something that is unusual while endangered implies something that is scarce. When put together, these terms imply that the interaction of a rare and scarce species means that the tourist has interacted with an animal that is exceptional and unique and therefore it carries a lot of special significance (Bentrupperbaumer, 2005).

2.6.1 Increased Environmental Awareness and Consideration of Animal Welfare Issues

Concern over the environment in the past three decades has significantly increased. This is evident in the push by various organizations on the need to live a life that is more environmental conscious and through the global introduction of Green political parties especially in the 1980's (Shackley, 1996). This trend has also been observed in the tourism industry with close interactions between the natural environment and the tourists being seen (Buckley, 2000). At the local and global level, tourism is well known for promoting the awareness about the environment. Significant foreign exchange earnings are also derived from tourism activities (Whelan, 1991; Lilieholm and Romney, 2000).

This trend has seen the attitude of the public towards wildlife change significantly. When wildlife tourism was being introduce, it main done through hunting zoos with the animals contained in small bare cages (Higginbottom *et al.*, 2001). In the recent decades, a shift from consumptive to non-consumptive tourism is taking a lead in many parts of the world. In 1942, the release of Bambi, a Walt Disney's film, led to the 'the Bambi Syndrome' that is known in the whole world. This film promoted an anti-hunting message in the world portraying human beings as violent that having a wild nature that is free of the intrusion of human beings is like having a Garden of Eden (Muth and Jamison, 2000). Steadily, human beings have become more protective of animals as well as realising that animals are more beneficial when they are alive as opposed to when they are dead. This change in attitude among human beings has also resulted in changes in the way zoos are designed with more natural enclosure as well as their objective. There has also been improved husbandry programs, breeding programs and increased conservation (Tribe, 2001).

2.7   THE DEMAND FOR WILDLIFE WATCHING TOURISM

In the last decade, significant growth has been witnessed in the nature and adventure travel sector making it important in the tourism industry. A large portion of this growth is taking place in areas with unique biodiversity with the tourism representing opportunities and threats for the conservation of biodiversity. Often the tourists are attracted by the quality of the life in an areas, their biotic elements, flora and fauna or the wildlife (Newsome *et al.*, 2002). Interest in wildlife tourism especially is growing rapidly too (Cong *et al.*, 2014; Snyder, 2007) and the variety of experiences offered is constantly expanding to include new areas, species and ways of interacting with the wildlife (Higginbottom, 2004; Snyder, 2007; Larm *et al.*, 2017). Wildlife tourism activities are often located in pristine environments of high conservation value and are generally claimed to be ecologically and socially sustainable (Weaver, 2002).

Myers *et al*. (2000) proposed a theory of biodiversity hotspots with the foundation of the theory starting in a 1988 journal paper by Myers. The theory focusses on habitats spread in different parts of the world that are rich in biodiversity but are constantly being threatened. The theory identified 25 hotspots located in the various parts of the world containing 44% of all vascular plant species, 35% of all vertebrate species that occupy 1.4% of earth's landmass (Myers *et al.*, 2000). The theory focussed on species with the qualification mark being that a hotspot must contain endemic plant species that total to at least 1500 or 0.5% of plant species globally. These hotspots contained many endemic vertebrates totalling to 27,298 species that consists of 4,809 mammals, 9,881 birds, 7,828 reptiles and 4,708 amphibians. Lack of reliable and large scale data saw fish being exempted in this count. The majority of the vertebrates in these hotspots have an endemicity of 0.2-5.7% of the global total but they do not the criteria for the

listing as a hotspot but serve as a backup for strengthening the argument. Following this, in the future, for a site to be considered a hotspot, it must have lost at least 70% or more of its primary vegetation (DOE, 2007). Therefore, one cannot be surprised that wildlife watching tourism in Sabah shows significant growth. This growth is evident in the number of the wildlife watching tourism activities that have been developed over time and linked to commercial tourism, the number of businesses that offer these wildlife tourism watching activities and the population of tourists that participate in this form of tourism (SDC, 2007). Emphasis on sustainable tourism is being put by an increasing number of tourists agents and operators who are also engaging in the development and marketing of products that are more 'wildlife-friendly' as well as ensuring that a fair share of incomes from the tourism activities go to the people in areas in which tourism activities are conducted.

Wildlife attractions in the popular category that is currently being exploited in Sabah, according to the Sabah Development Corridor plan (2007) include the following;

i. Marine turtle's egg-laying behaviour and nocturnal nesting on the beaches at Turtle Island and Sipadan. Other associated activities include incubation, hatching, rearing and release of young turtles. These activities are doubtfully of no significant conservation value but may be appealing to tourists.

ii. Observation of the rare primates including the spectacular Proboscis monkey in the lower Kinabatangan region – this activity is gaining a lot of popularity in the region.

iii. Another activity that is gaining popularity is the Cave nesting sites of swiftlets that produces edible bird's nests. Example of these are found at Madai and Gomantong.

iv. At present, the viewing of orangutan at Sepilok is of no doubt the most popular wildlife activity in Sabah. This is created artificially by releasing of animals from the rehabilitation centre. This area provides a sure spectacle of amazing wildlife viewing experience as it provides the only site in Sabah where one can see and photography the "red-ape" during their 1-2 hours visit to the site.

v. The private-run Sandakan Crocodile Farm is also another artificial attraction for tourists. The farm provides tourists with the opportunity to see crocodiles in large numbers regardless of the zoo-like conditions.

From the above description, it is evident that there many wildlife tourist attraction sites for wildlife tourists seeking to visit Sabah. It is clearly shown that many tourists will be attracted to places with the highest levels of biodiversity. However, the type of wildlife that may interest tourists is a subset of the total figures and the popularity of a particular class of animal may be influenced by several variables. As noted by Higginbottom and Buckley (2003), popular categories in which attractive wildlife resources fall are as follows;

> Large numbers of large animals
> Single iconic species, usually of large body size (what may be termed charismatic mega fauna)
> Areas of high diversity (species richness) where many different species may be seen.

2.7.1   Characteristics of Wildlife Tourism Markets

In addition to accurately estimating the overall levels of demand for viewing of wildlife, it is important to perform measurements as well as profile the different segments of the market or the types of visitor. This is because, tourists are different and not a homogenous population as indicated by Duffus and Dearden (1990). This is true even for tourists who are motivated by the same stimulus, for example, wildlife viewing. Despite many researchers calling for this area of study to be investigated, very little has been done even when it comes to the basic characteristics of visitors to specific wildlife attractions or activities. A summary of some of the findings from published studies that compared wildlife and non-wildlife tourist markets is provided in Table 2.6. From this table, it is evident that very few consistent patterns exists confirming the argument by Duffus and Dearden (1990) that many different types of wildlife tourists exist.

Table 2.6:   Some studies of differences between wildlife tourism markets and other tourists.

STUDY	MAJOR RESULTS
Boxall and McFarlane, 1993 (Participants in a Christmas bird count, Canada)	Wildlife tourists were more likely: □ To be older □ To have higher levels of education
Pearce and Wilson, 1995 (International tourists to New Zealand)	Wildlife tourists were more likely: □ To stay longer □ To travel further □ To spend more □To be younger □ To have higher education levels and incomes □ To be independent travellers
Moscardo, 2000 (Tourists to be the Whitsundays, Australia)	Wildlife tourists were more likely: □ To stay longer in the region □ To be independent travellers
Fredline and Faulkner, 2001 (International visitors to Australia)	Wildlife tourists were more likely: □ To be younger □ To travel further □ To stay longer

Moscardo *et al.*, 2001 (Tourists to Tasmania, Australia)	☐ To be on a package tour
	Wildlife tourists were more likely:
	☐ To be female
	☐ To be younger, independent, longer stay
	☐ To use the Internet for information

2.7.2   Wildlife Tourism Market Groups

In the various market segments, the demand for tourism services and products is met by the tourism sector. The main market segments are: the specialist tourism market, general package holiday/high volume tourism market, and the independent travel market. These segments have slightly different ways of operation and therefore have different implications for the wildlife watching tourism. Because the different tourism locations cover a wide range of different species which may be easy or difficult to access, the type of activity as well as the location may indicate the type of profile of the tourists that engage in that activity.

A possible way of looking at the main market groups that watch wildlife is to take into consideration the typology of international tourists that travel to particular protected areas (Table 2.7). All these categories are experiencing significant growth in the number of tourists. The key factors of these typologies are; budget, traveling experience, comfort requirements, travelling alone or in large groups, and the level of interest of the tourist in the local culture and nature.

With the trends that the tourism market is currently experiencing, this typology has various implications for the wildlife watching tourism as well as affecting the potential of the wildlife watching tourism to play part in the conservation and development of the local communities (Tapper, 2006):

➢ Firstly, all categories of tourism are experiencing growth implying that wildlife tourism activities will experience a similar increase that is associated with each of these categories. This will have an impact both on areas where wildlife tourism is currently present and in remote areas where the explorer and specialist categories of tourists will go in search of new wildlife watching experiences. This means that there will be need for careful planning to ensure that the quality of wildlife watching is maintained to prevent the damaging of watched animal populations, and to keep wildlife watching activities away from vulnerable areas or those that are sensitive for wildlife.

➢ Secondly, success in wildlife watching tourism will only be achieved if it ensures compatibility with the demand in the market especially in regard to quality, price, and the activities that are offered. This means that careful planning of wildlife watching

activities is made to ensure that it is appealing to the main types of tourist that are dominant in any area, and based on an accurate assessment of the demand in the market.

➢ Thirdly, having a well-planned and managed wildlife tourism watching can provide substantive opportunities for wildlife tourism to contribute to the development of a community as well as raise revenues and support among the various stakeholders for the conservation of wildlife.

Table 2.7: Typology of international tourists that visit protected areas.

Source: Cochrane, 2003.

TYPES OF TOURIST	MAIN FEATURES
Explorer	Adventurous & Individualistic, solitary, needs no special facilities. May be relatively well-off, but prefers not to spend much money. Rejects purpose-built tourism facilities in favour of local ones.
Backpackers	Travels for as long as possible on limited budget, often taking a year off between school/university and starting work. Hardship of local transport, cheap accommodation, etc. may qualify as travel experience, rather than understanding local culture. Enjoys trekking and scenery, but often cannot visit remote areas because of expense. Requires low-cost facilities.
Backpacker plus	Often experienced travellers, and generally in well-paid profession. More demanding in terms of facilities than Backpackers and with a higher daily spends. Genuinely desire to learn about culture and nature, and require good information.
High volume	Often inexperienced at travelling, prefer to travel in large groups, may be wealthy. Enjoy superficial aspects of local culture and natural scenery and wildlife if easy to see. Need good facilities, and will only travel far if the journey is comfortable. Includes cruise ship passengers.
General interest	May travel as Free Independent Travellers (FITs) on tailor-made itineraries with a tour operator, and often prefer security and company of group tour. Usually have limited time available for holiday. May be relatively wealthy, interested in culture, keen on nature/wildlife when not too hard to see. May be active and enjoy 'soft adventure' such as easy trekking and low-grade white-water rafting. Dislike travelling long distances without points of interest. Need good facilities, although may accept basic conditions for short periods.

Special interest	Dedicated to a particular hobby, fairly adventurous, prepared to pay to indulge hobby and have others take care of logistics. Travel as FITs or groups. May have little interest in culture. Requires special facilities and services, e.g. dive-boats, bird-guides. Accepts discomfort and long travel where necessary to achieve aims. May have active involvement, e.g. environmental research project. Prefers small groups.

2.8 EPILOGUE

In this chapter, a literature review of the wildlife tourism industry was presented. The encounter of human beings with flora and fauna in their natural environment forms the basis of wildlife tourism (Shackley, 1996). In most of developing countries, wildlife tourism is a major source of foreign exchange (Rodger and Moore, 2004). Wildlife tourism has close relationship the environment, sustainability, ecotourism, and entrepreneurship. The association between tourism and environment is fragile in that it calls for careful handling of the two to ensure that they co-exist. The environment is affected both negatively and positively by wildlife tourism. Among other advantages, wildlife tourism facilitates environmental conservation as well as the improvement of infrastructure especially in location where the tourism activities are concentrated. On the negative side, wildlife tourism can alter the behaviour of the animals and adversely affect the cultural practices of the community in the host destination (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997).

Several developing issues form the basis on which a recreational relationship with wildlife is grown and developed (Duffus and Dearden, 1993). The first issue is the growing societal wildlife and nature re-evaluation and their place in the society. The second issue is its part of the growth trend in nature and wildlife related tourism with the third issue concerned with the change in the attitude of the society towards certain species as wildlife education becomes increasingly accessible and entertaining. From a traditional perspective, research in this area has to focus on either:

> ➢ *Effects on the tourist of the experience*, while performing measurement of satisfaction/enjoyment and change in lifestyle behaviour (Kellert, 1980, 1989; Berry and Kellert, 1980 or Bitgood, 1987).

> ➢ *Effect on the natural environment* – both negative and positive. Action should be taken against negative effects to mitigate environmental disturbance; (Dalal- Clayton *et al.*, 1997).

> ➢ *Carrying capacity as a way* of setting the number of visitors that use a particular site (Sharkey, 1970; Wagar, 1964 or Williams and Gill, 1991).

Going beyond these traditional boundaries has lately been characterised the approaches towards the management of tourists with these approaches falling into three broad categories which are:

- Identification of participant and constituent parts of the wildlife tourism process: identification of those who are involved as well as those affected by the process, and what contributes to the attractiveness of wildlife tourism as opposed to other forms of activity. Thorough examination of this facilitates the consideration of human wildlife use as either consumptive or non-consumptive (Duffus and Dearden, 1990; Orams, 1994 or Johnston, 1998).

- *Satisfaction management*: in this area, there is examination of both the demand side and the supply side. The demand side looks at who wants to participate in the interaction, the place and conditions under which they want to interact, and their expectations out of that encounter. On the other hand, the supply side looks at the information on resources, social needs and managerial conditions which make it possible for the participants to realize their desires (Blamey and Hatch, 1996; Cumbow *et al.*, 1996).

- *Impact and trade-off analysis*, including biological and social impacts arising out of development and preservation strategies (Tisdell, 1993; Decker and Enck, 1997 or Bright *et al.*, 1997).

However, more research is needed in the role that wildlife watching experiences have on the satisfaction of tourists in wildlife tourism. It is suggested that the role that a tourist plays towards the conservation of wildlife, their level of loyalty towards the visited destination as well as their satisfaction with the destination is impacted by the quality of engaging experiences that a tourist has when visiting a destination.

Given the importance of tourism experiences to the everyday consciousness of the human spirit, this research proposes that non-consumptive wildlife tourism is a useful vehicle for (a) re-engaging people with nature, (b) understanding why nature is so significant to people, and (c) assessing how the creation of memorable wildlife experiences and environmental interpretation can instil new ways of thinking about humankind and nature (Ballantyne *et al.*, 2011; Orams,1995; Curtin and Kragh, 2014). Answers to these questions strengthen the argument for conservation, informs construction of environmental policies, and proposes new insights into the human dimensions of wildlife.

CHAPTER THREE: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QUALITY OF TOURISM EXPERIENCE AND PERCEIVED DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS

3.1 PROLOGUE

In this chapter, a literature review on the constructs of the theoretical model proposed in this study is provided regarding the quality of the tourism experience and competitiveness of a destination. The discussion of these concepts as discussed in this chapter provides the background of the objectives of this study as well as the research questions.

3.2 QUALITY OF TOURISM EXPERIENCE

3.2.1 Tourism Destination Product

Kotler (1984) defined a product as anything that can be taken to the market for use, acquisition or consumption to satisfy a particular need or want. The product may be a person, place, service, physical objects, and ideas. This definition also applies to tourism. As an industry, tourism possesses various unique generic product and production processes; it provides the product as services, place, organization, persons, and ideas with the function of facilitating travel and activity of individuals away from their home environments (Smith, 1994). A comprehensive review of tourism product research was provided by Smith (1994).

In their work, Medlik and Middleton (1973) indicated that tourism products are a bundle of activities, services as well as the benefits that when put together constitute the tourism experience. The bundle was noted to contain the five bundles that include the following components: destination facilities, destination attractions, images, accessibility, and price. Other researchers such as Wahab *et al*. (1976), Schmoll (1977), and Gunn (1994) have adopted the component model

Different approaches have also been applied by researchers in refining the concept of the component model of the tourism product. Two levels of the tourism product were proposed by Middleton (1989), and these are: the "specific" level and the "total" level. The "Specific" level of the tourism product entailed a discrete product that is offered by a single business such as an airline seat or a hotel room. On the other hand, the 'total' level was used to refer the entire experience that a tourist has from the time they leave their home to time they return to their home (i.e. the "components model").

Regarding a service product, a different approach was taken and mapped a service product as comprising the following three components: explicit intangibles, implicit intangibles, and

facilitating goods (Sasser *et al*., 1978). In the context of a tourism operation, a hotel room could be taken as a facilitating good while the good rest that is provided by the room is considered the explicit intangible with the implicit intangible being the service, ambience, relaxation, and socializing. Another approach related to this one was put forward by Normann (1985) and consisted of core services and secondary services (peripheral services). Applying this approach in the tourism industry, a good example would be in an airline industry where the flight of a tourist from an origin to a destination is a core service while the in-flight meals, reservations, check-in, cleaning, baggage handling, comfort, and the general attitudes of the staff could be considered as peripheral services (Smith, 1994).

Lewis and Chambers (1989) also conceptualised tourism product as comprising components that include the environment, goods, and services. The authors noted that a tourism product has three levels which are different, and these are; the 'formal product, core product, and augmented product'. While the tourist believes he/she is buying the formal product, the 'core product' is what the tourist is actually buying. The augmented product puts together the core product and added benefits or features to a product. The concept of product levels as suggested by these authors bear similarity to that proposed by Levitt's (1981). Levitt's model had the "core product" which is the essential benefit or service from the product, tangible product" (which is the service that the customer actually purchases and consumes), and the "augmented product" (consisted of the tangible product and features with added value). Levitt's typology was cited and used in tourism marketing by Middleton (1988) and by Kotler (1984) general marketing.

Two views on the definition of the tourism product were provided by Jefferson and Lickorish (1988). Jefferson and Lickorish indicated that a tourism product is basically a collection of features, both physical and services that present a symbolic association that are expected to meet the wants and the needs of the buyer. The second view defined a tourism product as an activity in a destination that satisfies the buyer. Commenting on this concept, Smith (1994) indicated that it has an intuitive appeal but fails to provide an adequate description of the structure of a tourism product and how production is done. Further, Smith (1994) concluded that there is relative complexity in the structure of the services and entails different service levels with the consumer having some form of connection to service provision.

Using literature on tourism product, an attempt was made by Smith (1994) to develop a model comprising the various elements of a tourism product and the process of assembling those elements. From the model, Smith described tourism products as comprising five elements which are service, hospitality, physical plant, freedom of choice, and involvement. In doing so,

the role of such travel services in creating a product experience was acknowledged by Smith (1994) and as such he described how the destination "inputs" could result into an experiential "output for tourists". Seemingly, various visible components such as food, hotel rooms, beverages, souvenirs, admission tickets, and tour-bus rides, etc., constitute tourism products, but of great importance is the tourist experience which is the final output of the generic tourism production process. The role that human experiences play in a tourism product is acknowledged explicitly by this model and it is claimed that it can either be applied to a package of commodities or to discrete commodities that represent a tourist experience. How well each of these elements of a tourist product are designed and integrated with others determine success of a product in meeting the needs of a tourist. The combination of the five elements is important in forming a tourism product but a complete product is obtained when the elements have a synergistic interaction among them.

Similarly, a discussion of tourism as an extension of commodification of the modern social life under a capitalist economy was discussed by Watson and Kopachevsky (1994). This entails the production of a commodity as well as its exchange, standardization of products, tastes, and experiences as well as the mass manipulation of the commodity sign. This means that as a complex social cultural dimension of the modern life, tourism is subjected to the same principles of a capitalist consumer culture, but the obvious justification is that tourism should be taken as a special product, a product of experience and its delivery as commodities. Therefore, a tourism destination is a complex experiential product in the entire system.

In the examination of the products in a tourism destination, the supply and demand side have been incorporate in some of the approaches that describe how more than one component of a destination interact with travellers during their trip. The model of the Tourist system indicate that a tourism product is a complex consumptive experience that arises out of a process where multiple travel services are used by tourists during their visit to a destination (transportation, attraction services information, and accommodation). The assertion that tourism is an experience in its right have also been generated by other researchers (Mayo & Jarvis, 1981; Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Ross, 1994).

Compared to a product that has been manufactured, a tourism destination may be considered as a combination different individual product and experiences that come together to form a total experience of an area that is visited (Murphy *et al*., 2000). Similarly, Hu and Ritchie, (1993) conceptualised a tourism destination as a package comprising various tourism facilities and service with various multidimensional properties. However, a study by Cohen (1979a) indicated that the experience that is obtained out of a tourist destination is not solely attributed

to the consumption of various travel services. Tourists also desire novelty-familiarity experiences from the physical setting as well as well as the service infrastructure on which these facilities are anchored. In the international tourist experience, Mo *et al*. (1993) indicated that there was the primary factor which was the destination environment (e.g., social and culture features) and the secondary factor which was the service infrastructure (e.g., transportation, food and lodging services).

From the literature, a conclusion that tourism destination products are fundamental experiences could be made. The design, packaging, and delivery of the whole experiential content to the tourists determines the success of the tourism product (Smith, 1994). Ensuring quality visitor experience and a high customer experience is what the tourism industry is bound to do. It is therefore very important that a product should appeal to the fond desires of a tourist as well as the tourist imaginative associations that include culture, history, service and activities plus the physical infrastructure and facilities.

3.2.2 Tourist and Tourism Consumption

Compared to other consumption activities, tourism is considered a special consumptive activity in that people, by using their money and time, voluntarily move away from environments that are familiar to them to environments that they consider less familiar where they carry out various activities before returning to their homes (Laws, 1995). In tourism literature, tourism product and its consumption have an important place. Jensen and Lindberg (2000) indicated that service marketing-related literature and socio-cultural and geographical based studies form the basis for the conceptualization of the tourists as consumers. Since the early 1960s, there has been a continuous examination of the concept of "tourist" from several researchers who have attempted to answer the question of who exactly is a tourist and what does s/he look for? (Boorstin, 1962, 1964; Cohen, 1972, 1974, 1995; Smith, 1989; Leiper, 1979; Pearce, 1982; Dann, 1996; MacCannell, 1976, 1992). The issue of authenticity in tourist consumption is addressed by many of these research.

In an early study, Boorstin (1962, 1964) indicated that replacement was one time an important part of travel constituting pre-packaged spectacles and "pseudo-events". In his arguments, Boorstin noted that the authentic product of a foreign culture is rarely liked by a tourist, but instead tourists prefer their own provincial expectations- Boorstin considered this unintelligible. He concluded that scenes or experiences that are custom to the demands and preconceptions of the tourists is what is of great interests to them.

In response to the notion by Boorstin, MacCannell (1976, 1992) argued that everyday life is itself inauthentic and alienating and therefore authenticity in voyages is actually demanded by tourists. In response to this, staged authenticity is usually provided by tourism establishments and therefore tourists receive the authentic experiences that they are constantly searching. Routines staging of several tourism activities that include cultural festivals, museums, natural scenes and historical monuments could be made and offered to tourists.

Contribution to this literature was also made by Cohen (1979a, 1988) who introduced the concept of phenomenological inquiry and suggested that based on various factors, tourists are alienated for their on cultural origins and this is evident in the variedness of their quest for authenticity in distant places or different exotic contexts and thus the different interpretations by different tourists. In his later work, Cohen (1995) provided an examination of this issue from the tourism impact perspective. He noted that sustainability and "staged authenticity" are raised as a measure for protecting a destination when modern tourists especially from western countries seek authentic and natural experiences in the travelling that may have adverse effects on the local community. With no seriousness for authenticity, he noted that a travel mode of playful search for employment is followed by post-modern tourists resulting in the spread of numerous imaginary "contrived" attractions. A significant threat to contemporary tourism is posed by virtual reality created by advanced simulation technology and may even lead to blurring of the boundary between tourism and leisure as a result of change of "placeness". An argument was presented by the author that tourism will receive new, but unforeseeable meanings, form and direction due to the changing nature of tourist attractions.

In conclusion, the discussion on the tourist and tourism consumption has led to the identification of two main perspectives - a modern and a post-modern perspective. The modern perspective involves the search for authenticity by tourist by the experience of phenomena presented in an authentic manner. On the other hand, post-modern tourists significantly focus on entertainment and enjoyment with little care for the origin of a presentation (MacCannell, 1976, 1992; Urry, 1990; Lash & Urry, 1994; Cohen, 1995). From the two perspectives, two main assumptions about a tourist come out; first, a tourists is an experience-oriented person (the post-modern tourist). Secondly, a tourists is a cognitively oriented person (the modern tourist). The latter assumption describe the consumption of products by tourists based on knowledge and experience that stems from the expectancy-disconfirmation logic/process while the former indicates that tourists are individuals who are driven by affection, consumptive behaviour and are always in constant search for "good", "high quality" experiences and entertainment (MacCannell, 1976; Cohen, 1995; Urry, 1990).

A third approach known as "existential encounter perspective" was put forward by Jensen and Lindberg (2000). This approach focusses on the living existing individual. Additionally, this approach does not view a person as a perceiver of the world outside himself or herself, but as a being with certain meaning as a member of the world. Therefore, this theory considers a tourists as an adventurer who considers consumption as part of life experience and therefore sees tourism as a consumption experience. A study by also provided a summary of three approaches to authenticity of the experience of the tourist and these are constructivism, objectivism, and postmodernism. Existential authenticity is considered an alternative source in tourism irrespective of the authenticity of the toured object.

Generally, it has been demonstrated by researchers that tourists seek to stay away from their unchanged ordinary lives with an aim of pursuing life on the other side which is considered adventurous, exotic, and spectacular, albeit temporarily. Based on the needs for these experiences, tourism establishments and enterprises should design their services alongside these lines and sell the much-needed experiences to tourists.

3.2.3 Tourism Experience and Its Quality

Since its conceptualization in the 1960s, the topic of tourism experience has attracted a lot of significance and therefore received a lot of attention in the tourism world. Overall, an observation of four major trends in tourism experience conceptual development has been observed, according to Uriely (2005). According to Uriely (2005), one should view the development of tourism experience as: a re-examination of tourism as distinct from the experiences of everyday life; a shifted focus from the displayed objects that are industry provided to the subjective negotiation of meanings as a determinant of the experience; a shift to pluralizing depictions of a tourist that capture the multiplicity of the experience from the homogenizing portrayals of the tourist as a general type; and a shift toward relative and complementary academic interpretations away from the contradictory and decisive discourse that conceptualizes a tourist experience in terms of absolute truths.

Tourism experience is thought to be constituted by an individual consumer and therefore considered as a phenomenon that is not only obscure but also diverse. Various perspectives have been adopted in studying tourism experience due to the complexity of the construct itself and the lack of agreement on its meaning and usage. In the same way, different meanings have also been attached to quality and this has seen the use of this term in various contexts within the tourism literature. Quality has been linked to various concepts such as quality assurance/auditing, quality control, service quality, quality perceptions at various levels

including at individual level as well as business and community level (collectively referred to as stakeholder level) and in respect to market and product differentiation (Jennings, 2006). Frequently, quality is used to define consumer demands and wishes as well as the benefits that are received. A summary of topics within the literature associated with quality tourism experience and part of the representative articles (Jennings, 2006) is provided in Table 3.1.

The complexity of tourism experience has caused a lot of debate on the definition of tourism experience (Li, 2000). As mention in the sections above, tourism experience were considered differently by different researchers. For example, MacCannell (1973) perceived it as an active the response to the difficulties that the modern life presents arguing that these difficulties are the cause for tourists' search for authentic experiences. On the other hand, Boorstin (1962, 1964) viewed it as a popular consumption act, and an artificial prefabricated mass tourism experience. This debate paints a picture of common tourist experiences indicating consistent tourist needs which is not true irrespective of the different backgrounds (including social and cultural) that constitute those needs. Cohen (1979a) argument that different people need different experiences and this presents a different meaning for tourists and their societies. Deriving the meaning of the term experience from the person's worldview depending on whether the person adheres to a "centre', the meaning of tourism experience is suggested as the relationship between a person and various "centres". Cohen's mode of tourism was followed by many other researchers in the studies (Hamilton-Smith, 1987; Nash & Smith, 1991; Nash, 1996; Page, 1997; Pearce, 1982; Ryan, 1993, 1997; Smith, 1989; Urry, 1990; Kivel, 2000). Therefore, there is a common belief that tourism is a multifunctional leisure activity that involves either entertainment or learning, or both for an individual (Ryan, 1997).

In this study, the term tourism quality is taken as a classificatory term that tourists use to describe their (re)construction of their experience. As claimed by Jennings and Weiler (2006), the term tourism quality may denote excellence, the matching of expectations to lived experiences or a perception of an individual of getting value for their money, or whichever way an individual tourist may choose to define it. Regarding the use of terms authentic and authenticity, postmodern writings support the social constructionist perspective. In many aspects, the term authenticity parallels the term quality especially on the condition of who is deconstructing and subsequent (re)construction or interpretation (Jennings & Weiler, 2006). Likewise, Urry (1990) stated that *"Tourism is a game or rather a whole series of games with multiple texts and no single, authentic [quality] tourists' experience"*. Using this approach, quality can be thought as a self-defined term and might be derived from a postmodern theoretical underpinning as well as social constructionist perspective.

Table 3.1:   Overview of literature related to quality tourism experience.

TREND TOPIC	EXAMPLES OF REPRESENTATIVE ARTICLES
Importance of quality products for quality tourism experiences	Onome, 2003; Weber & Roehl, 1999; Laws, 1998; Murphy, 1997; Vaughan & Russell, 1982
Quality tourism experiences and satisfaction	Yuksel & Yuksel, 2001; Laws, 1998; Murphy, 1997; Chadee & Mattson, 1996; Uysal *et al.*, 1994
Quality tourism experiences and management of tourist experiences and associated environmental issues, degradation of environments in different locations (marine, cities, terrestrial, and heritage sites) and consequences for quality tourism products	Bhat, 2003; Lawson et al., 2003; Boyd, 2002; Font, 2002; Schneider, 2002; Bauer & Chan, 2001; Harborne *et al.*, 2001; Ross & Wall, 1999; Mak & Moncur, 1998; Murphy, 1997; Ayala, 1996; Moscardo, 1996; Weiler & Davis, 1993; Laws, 1991; Vaughan & Russell, 1982; Smith & Webster, 1976
Service delivery and quality	Warden *et al.*, 2003; Lennon & Harris, 2002; O'Neill *et al.*, 2002; Ryan, 2002; King, 2001; Lennon & Graham, 2001; Yuksel & Yuksel, 2001; Gyimothy, 2000; O'Neill *et al.*, 2000; Ekdahl *et al.*, 1999; Weber & Roehl, 1999; Laws, 1998; Kandampully & Duddy, 1997; Chadee & Mattson, 1996; Turco & Riley, 1996; Larsen & Rapp, 1993; Braithewaite, 1992; Bitner, 1990; Sheldon & Fox, 1988
Quality tourism experiences and reputation	Keane, 1996
Sustainability and quality tourism experiences	Boyd, 2002; Font, 2002; Ross & Wall, 1999; Cooper & Morpheth, 1998; Moscardo, 1996
Quality tourism experiences and host-guest relations	Perdue *et al.*, 1999; Cooper & Morpheth, 1998; Timothy & Wall, 1997; Howell, 1994
Quality of life	Neal *et al.*, 1999; Perdue *et al.*, 1999; Howell, 1994; Kim, 2002
Quality and profitability	Ayala, 1996; Braithewaite, 1992
Modes of experience	Ryan, 1997, 2002; Urry, 1990, 2002; Lengkeek, 2001; Cohen, 1972, 1979a, 1988
Place and identity	Campbell, 2003; Bricker & Kerstetter, 2002; Schneider, 2002
Quality tourism experience and motivation	Onome, 2002; MacCannell, 2002; Ryan, 1997; Uysal *et al.*, 1994

With the same contestable nature as "quality", the term experience may be used to refer to various aspects from a process to a product or end state/outcome. Experience could be described as the inner state of an individual that arises out of the encounter or the life that this individual has lived through (Cohen, 2000). It could also be a product or a package tour that can be bought.

Additionally, in literature it is generally supported by many authors that when tourism experience is regarded as a process that involves various stages and that an individual goes

through these stages to have the experience. These states start with the anticipation that the individual has, followed by planning, then travel, and having an interaction with the site. Repeating travelling multiple times and interacting with various activities on the site as well as recollection constitute the actual experience (Jennings, 1997; Jennings & Weiler, 2006; Killion, 1992; Clawson, 1963). The experience of a tourist as claimed by Jennings and Weiler (2006) is diverse and entails interactions that are not only numerous but also complex.

A special issue in the *Journal of Leisure Research* (Vol. 30, No. 4) presented empirical research on tourist/leisure experience based on an examination from different perspective and particularly on psychological issues that included information use (Vogt & Stewart, 1998); satisfaction (Hultsman, 1998); perception of risk and competence (McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998); and the various meanings that are associated with the challenges that are encountered in a leisure environments. Other researchers have also examined the concept of tourist experience from a personal growth and self-renewal perspective, the sense of community, harmony with nature (Arnould & Price, 1993); and moods/emotions (Hull *et al*., 1992). In his work Uriely (2005) indicated that in their everyday life, the meaning that individuals give to their experiences is what constitutes tourist experience especially in industrialised societies. Research conducted recently by different researchers on leisure or tourist experience are based on psychological meaning and emotions that the various tourism activities and perspectives elicit (Jackson *et al*., 1994, 1996; Borrie & Roggenbuck, 2001; Pennington-Gray & Kerstetter, 2001; Deng, King, & Bauer, 2002; Li, 2000; Prentice *et al*., 1998; Manfredo *et al*., 1996; Stewart & Cole, 2001; Tian-Cole & Crompton, 2002; Sternberg, 1997; Lee & Shafer, 2002).

The complication associated with tourism experience research was somehow illustrated by Jackson *et al*. (1994). Jackson *et al*. (1994) conducted a study in which data collection was focussed on both positive (456 views) and negative (434) tourism experiences which resulted in three major themes with 69 basic concepts. Positive concepts were 89.4% of the concept while 96.9% were negative concepts. The study by Jackson *et al*. (1994) indicated that personal items, interpersonal items, and external items were mainly mentioned in positive stories. The interpersonal stories that contained the positive concepts included and friendly interpersonal relationships and positive host and other tourism relationships. The personal items that revealed positive stories included cultural and heritage understanding, appreciation of food, being in control, being with people, and feeling relaxed as well as having freedom. External items that revealed positive stories included heritage buildings, sporting activities, natural scenery and beaches, well-organized theme parks, and packaged tours.

In contrast, these three aspect also revealed negative stories. For example, personal items revealed frightening policies and poverty, the failure to understand culture, the feeling of being lost and isolated, the lack of the sense of freedom, feelings of fear and boredom, and suffering from health problems. The interpersonal items that revealed negative stories included negative interpersonal relations such as drunkenness, crime, and overcrowding and negative relationships with people such as families, friends and hosts. The external items that indicated negative stories included transportation hassles such as delays and loss of luggage, mechanical breakdowns, accidents, bad weather, and poor accommodation and facilities (Jackson *et al*., 1994, 1996).

The measurement of the experiences of tourists with various tourism products has several methodological and conceptual difficulties. For this reason, alternative approaches to this issue has been promoted by various researchers. A review of factors to be considered in research on satisfaction as well as various methodological and theoretical approaches that could be employed was done by Pearce (1988) and Ryan (1995). The different experience stages determine the different options. These experiences include the processes during pre-travel stage, on-site experiences as well as post-travel stage (Vitterso *et al*., 2000).

Tourism activity, like any other, takes place within a certain time frame. There is a period for planning as well as organizing aspects on travel arrangements. This period might be longer compared to the actual vacation and has a significant influence on the experience of tourism at a later time. The marketing and promotion of a destination are likely to have a lot of impact during this period. The time of the trip and staying on-site is the actual vacation phase and can last for days or a few months. The tourist would reflect either positively or negatively about the actual experiences during the final phase of the tourism experiences and it is at this stage that the image and the perception of the destination is seriously impacted (Jennings, 2006; Laws, 1995; Clawson and Knetsch, 1966).

Regarding the temporal and chronological aspects of tourism experience, a proposal was made by Clawson and Knetsch (1966) in the context of recreation experience and the experience was described as multiphasic. Five interacting phases are identified, and these are; (1) the anticipation phase, (2) travel to the site, (3) on-site activity, (4) return travel, and (5) a recollection phase. From each of these phases, Clawson and Knetsch (1966) suggested that outdoor recreationist gain some form of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Additionally, with the exception of failures in the delivery system of outdoor recreation, there is a common patter of increasing level of satisfaction, joy, and benefit in the first three phases. There may be some

aspects of dissatisfaction or a reduction in the satisfaction in the return travel phase but in the recollection phase, one recover considerably.

Further, Clawson and Knetsch (1966) noted that the whole recreation experience should be taken as one package in which all the parts are needed for a quality experience to be achieved. As such, the whole experience could be taken as a unit of study and therefore be analysed. It was also suggested that research as well as planning and operations of recreational programs and areas should take into consideration all the key phases and not just the on-site phase. Drawing from the findings by Clawson and Knetsch (1966) a conclusion can be reached that a quality tourism experience results from the pleasurable components that each phase provides. For example, in the planning phases this could be the availability of adequate information, travelling well and comfortably to and from the site, and pleasant stay in the destination. These experiences help individual to have an accurate as well satisfactory recollection of their experiences with tourism activities.

Using the findings by Clawson and Knetsch (1966), Killion (1992) provided a definition of tourism experience as a circular model that comprises various phases that include "planning" phase, the "travel to" phase, the "on-site activities" phase, the "return travel" phase, and the "recollection" phase. This model is a representation of a continuous as well as an on-going framework for several phases and can therefore be applied to a multi-destination travel.

A more simplified model was provided by Craig-Smith and French (1994) in which three linear phases are considered to describe tourism experiences with the future experiences being informed by past experiences. These phases are the anticipatory phase, experiential phase, and reflective phase. Other researchers also pointed out to the dynamic nature of tourism experiences and indicated that these experiences can be studied by looking at a series of events or stages (Arnould & Price, 1993; Hull & Michael, 1995; Hull *et al*., 1992).

In the same way, an examination of tourism experience with the destination in a series of phases that include "pre-travel" phases, "journey and arrival" phase, "destination stay" phase, and "after return home" phase was conducted by Laws (1995). This implies that the process comprises various phases that start with the creation of the intention to visit, then staying at a destination with and experiencing various services, and destination memory culmination. A summary of the phases in the flow chart forma on the activities and influencers related to tourism experience is provided in Table 3.2 (Laws, 1995).

An alternative approach referred to as the flow-simples method was used by Vitterso *et al*. (2000) to measure the on-site experience of a tourist. Vitterso *et al*. (2000) model was based on a model in the work of Eckblad (1980, 1981a, 1981b) on scheme theory. Various affective experiences were the focus of the study. These experiences were mainly those that result from cognitive information processing and made the assumption that flow-simplex exhibits various affective responses as provoked by different attractions. Questionnaire were used for collecting data on onsite experiences at six Norwegian attractions. Little differences among the six attractions in regard to overall tourist satisfaction were found.

Tourist operators and destination managers would find it important to develop their understanding of what components of tourism tourists consider to be high quality tourism. As noted by Laws (1995) the quality of tourism experience from a tourist perspective is reached through a comparison of the quality of services that the tourist receives against what they expected at first in their selection, purchasing and anticipation of the experience that they would obtain from the tourism activities. while the properties of the service itself are important in deciding the quality of experiences, they are not the only aspect that should be considered. Consumer experiences as well as personal values that dictate the expectations of the tourist also contribute to the quality of tourism experience (Garvin, 1988; Engel *et al*., 1986).

Table 3.2:   Influences on tourists' destination experience and satisfaction.

Source: Laws, 1995

PHASE	ACTIVITY	INFLUENCERS
Pre-travel	Purchase decisions	Advertising
		Brochures
		National Tourism Organisation (NTO) information
		Travel agents
	Planning	Travel writers
	Anticipation	Friends
Journey (en-route)	Travel	Airline staffs
		Airport staffs
		Immigration/customs
		Baggage handlers
	Transfer to hotel	Courier
Destination stay	Accommodation	Hotel staffs
		Restaurant staffs
	Catering	Courier
		Coach driver
	Entertainment	Tourist Information Counter (TIC)

		Guide books
		Casual contact with residents
	Excursions	Other visitors
After-trip	Re-collection	Photographs
		Video
		Souvenirs
		Discussion with friends
		Travel writing
		Advertising
		Brochures

Based on the literature on tourist experience, this study defines the quality of tourism experience as the perception of the tourist of the extent of the pleasantness of the experience in relation to the products as well as the services that they received during the various phases of the whole vacation process. Chronological and temporal perspectives are used in approach tourism experience. It is considered a multiphasic phenomenon that is related to pre-trip planning experience, en-route (travel to the destination and return travel) experience, on-site experience, and after-trip reflection (Jennings & Weiler, 2006; Vitterso *et al*., 2000; Clawson & Knetsch, 1966; Killion, 1992; Laws, 1995).

3.3   DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS
3.3.1 Competitiveness in the General Literature
In literature, according to Dwyer and Kim (2003), competitiveness generally focusses on three main groups of thought that include strategy and management perspective, comparative advantage and/or price competitiveness perspective, and historical and socio-cultural perspective. Micro (firm level) and macro (national level) perspectives have also been used in the examination of competitiveness. Useful insights in the examination of various determinants of "firm" or "national" level of competitiveness issues is provided in the wider literature issues (Porter, 1980; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Dwyer & Kim, 2003).

Competitive advantage and comparative advantage are discussed in the general literature (Porter, 1990), but there are claims that comparative and competitive advantages have not been clearly distinguished in general literature (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Additionally, generally literature discussions are also limited in that they did not present the special considerations that are related to the determination of the competitiveness in the service sector (Sapir, 1982; Porter, 1990; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003).

Relevant to tourism destination, proposals on the concepts of comparative and competitive advantages have been made by various researchers (Ritchie & Crouch, 1993, 2003; Dwyer & Kim, 2003). Comparative advantage in a tourism destination would relate to various factors

that include endowed or inherited resources such as fauna, flora, climate, scenery, etc., while competitive advantages entails the items that are created as the infrastructure for tourism activities and this includes the transport network, attractions, hotels etc. other competitive aspects of a destination include management quality, festivals and events, government policy, and employees' skills among others. Furthermore, there is a perception that comparative advantage entails the resources that a destination has while the competitive advantage of a destination relates to the ability of a destination to make effective utilization of resources.

The competitive advantage of a destination is measured in terms of customers and competitors. Aaker (1991) noted that assets and skills provide important sources of competitive advantages for a destination. To those possessed by the competition, an asset is a very important resource whereas a skill is something that is effectively done compared to competition. Thus, for competitiveness of a tourism destination, both resource availability and resource audit are needed (Pearce, 1997a; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000a).

There is an essential difference between the traditional goods and services and the nature of the tourism product. The perception of a tourist on quality and performance of a destination play an important role in the determination of positive word-of-mouth or repeat business based on the experiences that they gain from various destinations that are in competition directly or indirectly (Laws, 1995; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). A comparison between facilities, standards service or attractions is implicitly or explicitly made by tourists (Laws, 1995) and for this reason the characteristics of a tourism destination related to the nature of the product or the service sector should form the basis of examining the competitiveness of that tourism destination

3.3.2 Definition of Destination Competitiveness

While the general literature has defined competitiveness in various ways, a definition that is generally accepted among scholars is non-existent (Porter, 1990; Spence & Hazard, 1988). For this reason, the concept of destination competitiveness has a large number of variables attached to it. These variables include objective measures such as market share, employment, visitor numbers, tourist expenditure, and the value added by the tourism industry. Subjective factors that affect the destination competitiveness include cultural richness of a destination and the quality of tourism experience among others.

Using various approaches, different researchers have provided various definitions of destination competitiveness. Using the economic prosperity of the residents in a destination, Crouch and Ritchie (1999) as well as Buhalis (2000) provided the definition of destination competitiveness that is consistent with that of the World Economic Forum (Porter *et al*., 2001).

This definition is mainly applicable to destination that are considered to have attained an international status. Using an economic approach to define the competitiveness of a destination is considered to be reasonable given that various destinations in the world aim at fostering the economic well-being of the hosts and promote the country as an ideal place to live, invest, trade, do business and generally lead a good life (Dwyer & Kim, 2003).

Competitiveness was defined by d'Hartserre (2000) as the destination ability to maintain its position in the market while at the same time working to improve its status over time. Another definition of competitiveness was provided by Hassan (2000) who noted that it is the ability of a destination to create and integrate value added products with the objective of sustaining its resources while maintaining its position in the market relative to competitors. The competitiveness of a tourism destination, according to Dwyer *et al*. (2000a), entails various variables that include price differentials tied together with the shifts in exchange rates, productivity levels of various aspects in the tourism industry and qualitative aspects that impact destination attractiveness. The definition of destination competitiveness was also proposed by Dwyer and Kim (2003) as the ability of a destination to provides goods as well as services that depict better performance than those provided by other destinations on the various aspects of tourism experience that are considered important by tourists.

Based on the above definitions and the objectives and perspectives of this study, the competitiveness of a destination is the defined as the ability of a destination to create and provide products with added value and quality tourism experience that tourists consider to be important while ensuring that its resources are sustainable and at the same time maintaining its position relative to competition in the market (Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Hassan, 2000).

3.3.3   Different Approaches to Destination Competitiveness

With the global tourism market becoming very competitive by the day, maintaining a competitive advantage very another is a big challenge. Ritchie and Crouch (2000a) claimed that the competitiveness of a destination is "tourism's holy grail". However, studies examining the competitiveness of tourism destinations iis limited with a few studies cropping up since the 1990s.

A special issues on "The Competitive Destination" has been published by the *Tourism Management* academic journal (Vol. 21, Issue 1, 2000). The issue covers various topics and this indicates the complexity that comes with studying the competitiveness of a destination. These topics include:

- ➢ Marketing the competitiveness destination of the future (Buhalis, 2000)

- ➢ Responding to competition (Kim *et al.*, 2000)
- ➢ Environmental management (Mihalic, 2000)
- ➢ Price competitiveness (Dwyer *et al.*, 2000a)
- ➢ Regional positioning (Uysal *et al.*, 2000)
- ➢ Sustainable competitiveness (Ritchie & Crouch, 2000b)
- ➢ The role of public transport in destination development (Prideaux, 2000)
- ➢ Managed destinations (d'Hauteserre, 2000)
- ➢ Integrated quality management (Go & Govers, 2000)
- ➢ The destination product and its impact on traveler perceptions (Murphy *et al.*, 2000)

Additionally, several articles at the level of the destination were featured on an issue on tourism and travel competitiveness in Tourism (Vol. 47, Issue 4, 1999) and this include the competitiveness of Alpine destinations (Pechlaner, 1999); price competitiveness (Dwyer *et al.*, 1999), and the role of public administration in the competitiveness of tourism industry in Spain (Bueno, 1999).

Even though there are many definitions of destination competitiveness, there is evidence of the development of a framework for the assessment of the competitiveness of a destination (Hudson *et al.*, 2004). An argument was presented by Bordas (1994) who noted there is no competition between the various clusters of tourism business and therefore to gain a competitive advantage, there is need for a strategic plan that entails the following: specialization, differentiation and low cost. On a similar note, four main principles for a destination were suggested by Poon (1993) if the destination has to attain competitive advantage and these are make tourism a leading sector; put the environment first; build a dynamic private sector; and have strong distribution channels in the marketplace. These approaches seem practical but have received a lot of criticism for being too general and broad and therefore of little meaning to stakeholders and policy makers in the tourism industry (Dwyer and Kim, 2003).

Chon and Mayer (1995) also developed a model for destination competitiveness by adapting the generic competitive model put forward by Porter to the tourism industry. Chon and Mayer (1995) proposed that the competitiveness of the tourism industry comprises five dimensions that include appeal, organization, management, information and efficiency. Tourism-specific issues were incorporated into the model by this study and this included the intangibility of tourism products. In measuring the competitiveness of South Australia, this model was adopted by Faulkner *et al.* (1999). Competitive Destination Analysis (CDA) was also introduced by Pearce (1997b) to measure the competitiveness of tourism destinations.

According to Pearce (1997b) CDA is a tool for systematic comparison of the various attributes of destinations within the context of planning. A more objective basis for the evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of a destination could be provided by this the systematic appraisal and comparison and therefore help in the generation of better appreciation of its competitive advantages. In the identification of specific competitive features of a destination CDA is considered to be a better approach because of its element-by-element basis (Hudson *et al*., 2004).

As a unique experiential product, the competitiveness of a tourism destination is also perceived by tourists based on price competitiveness. A detailed series of studies on price competitiveness of a destination were provided by Dwyer *et al*. (2000a, 2000b; 2002). In considering the competitiveness of a destination on either price competitiveness or non-price competitiveness, the measurement of the price competitiveness of a destination is still crucial. An examination of the price competitiveness of 19 destinations with Australia as a base country was done by Dwyer *et al*. (2000a). In their study, Dwyer *et al*. (2000a) selected a bundle of tourist goods and services in the competing destinations and then developed an indices of the competitiveness in terms of the international price.

The study also identified and distinguished two major categories of prices: travel cost and ground cost. Travel cost is the cost of travel to and from a destination while the ground cost is the price that the tourist pays for the various products in a tourism destination. The competitiveness of a destination in terms of price was observed to vary based on the tourist perspective from different origin markets. Indices on tourism price competitiveness was also constructed by the authors to provide more understanding of the various factors that determine the price competitiveness of a tourism destination (such as price changes and exchange rates) and described the influence they had on the indices. The comparison of the price competitiveness of a destination relative to the price competitiveness of the domestic tourism in origin markets and for its overall price competitiveness relative to major competitors is also made possible by the method. The examination of the 19 tourism destinations was done from 1985 to 1998 (Dwyer *et al*., 2002).

In addition to the price aspect of a destination, a tourism destination acts as a product with a high environmental sensitivity. A competitive model that focusses on environmental sustainability factors in a tourism destination was introduced by Hassan (2000). Four determinants of the competitiveness of a market were observed and these are; demand orientation (the ability of a market to respond to variations in market demand), comparative advantage (including factors associated with macro and micro environment essential to the

competitiveness of a market), structure of the industry (the presence or absence of organised industry that offers tourism products/services), and environmental commitment (relates to the commitment that a destination shows towards the environment). Understanding these determinants by a tourism industry is key to ensuring the competitiveness of the market and the sustainability of growth and vitality. However, it was observed that this model does not identify the key variables essential for measuring the sustainability of the market as well as the environment – the two main components of the model (Hudson *et al*., 2004)

In respect to the business-related competitive aspects of a tourism destination, the three organizational strategies proposed by Porter (1980) were employed by Evans *et al*. (1995) to examine the competitiveness of the destination. These strategies are cost leadership strategy, differentiation strategy and focus strategy. Destination management organizations (DMOs) was the focus of the study. It was suggested that DMOs needed to identify their core competencies and build their strategies around those competencies. A tourism enterprises perspective was also used by Jones and Haven-Tang (2005) in the examination of the competitiveness of a tourism destination. In their study, Jones and Haven-Tang (2005) put emphasis on the role of SMEs in the destination competitiveness framework. In their stud, Jones and Haven-Tang (2005) suggested that a destination should be taken as a hierarchy of entities. These entities are the destination, tourism business (including SMEs) and the employee as well as the interventions provided by the public sector in supporting and coordinating the development of a destination to have an image desired by potential tourists.

Other researchers also studied the competitiveness of a destination based on specific types of sites. For example, conference site selection was examined in a study by Go and Govers (1999). The competitiveness of a destination was shown to be indicated by several factors that included the following: accessibility, overall affordability, facilities, service quality, location image, attractiveness, and climate and environment. These factors are specific to conventions sector tourism and therefore they may not be generalizable.

An examination of destination compositeness has been done in the context of at least two competing locations at the global level. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques were used by Kozak and Rimmington (1999) in an effort to develop a set of competitive aspects for destinations at the international level. Turkey's direct competitors for the summer tourism were revealed by the study. An examination of Turkey's destination attributes and competing destinations for the assessment of their comparative competitive positions was also done. Kozak (2004) provided a further investigation of the competitive positions of international tourism destinations including Mallorca and Turkey in addition to

other self-selected destinations as reported by British tourists. The actual perceptions of tourists on several self-reported destination attributes on the strengths and weakness of these destinations was obtained using open-ended questionnaires.

The approach to the competitiveness of a tourism destination was argued by Enright and Newton (2004) to extend beyond the conventional attributes of a destination to include generic business competitive factors. The study developed an instrument comprising both competitive aspects relating to the tourism industry and those specific to the attractions in the destination through a survey of Hong Kong Tourism practitioners. The statement by Enright and Newton (2004) was further reinforced in their recent study in which they generated sets of both attributes by developing an assessment methodology for the assessing their significance as well as conducting an examination of the degree to which the significance of these attributes varied across locations. Support for both destination level and industry level attributes in studies of the competitiveness of tourism destination was provided by the study findings (Enright & Newton, 2005). This means that the competitiveness of a destination is assured if the destination can attract and satisfy potential tourists, with the competitiveness being influenced by specific factors for that destination as well as a wider range of factors affecting the provision of tourism services.

A common agreement is expressed by researchers such Enright and Newton (2004, 2005) and Huddon *et al*. (2004) that of Crouch and Ritchie (1999) and Ritchie and Crouch (2000b, 2003) conducted the most detailed research on the overall competitiveness of a tourism destination. Porter's (1990) famous framework of the "diamond of national competitiveness" forms the basis on which the conceptualization of tourism destination competitiveness is built and is an indication that the success of a given industry in international competition is depended on the strength of the economy in a set of business-related features or "drivers" of competitiveness that include "demand conditions"; "factor conditions"; "firm strategy, structure, and rivalry"; and "related and supporting industries". Their approach is an extension of pioneering studies by researchers such as Pearce's (1997b) who studied the technique of "competitive destination analysis". Competitive Destination Analysis was proposed as a method for the systematic comparison of the attributes of diverse competing destinations while paying attention to the need for comparisons across competitors. Additionally, these approaches are also considered to go beyond the mainstream research that focusses mainly on the image or attractiveness of a destination (Chon *et al*., 1991; Hu & Ritchie, 1993), which is taken as a tradition in destination research.

Generally, an examination of the applicability of tourism destination competitiveness research and models in other contexts was done by Ritchie and Crouch (1993, 2000a, 2000b, 2003). These contexts ranged from national industries, companies and products, national economies in addition to competitiveness related to service industries. These researchers claimed that a destination is only successful if it brings the greatest level of success, i.e., it addresses all the aspects of well-being for residents sustainably. For a tourism destination to be competitive it is suggested that it must be sustainable in five main areas – socially, economically, culturally, ecologically and politically. The main focus of this research was on the long-term economic prosperity of the destination and the sustainability of the well-being of the residents in respect to the competitiveness of a destination.

Six dimensions of the competitiveness were revealed by Ritchie and Crouch (2003). These are economic, political, social, cultural, technological, and environmental dimensions. Ritchie and Crouch (2003) suggested that a destination that is truly competitive is that which has the ability to increase tourism expenditure by attracting a higher and increasing number of tourists by providing satisfying and memorable experiences in a profitable way while ensuring that the well-being of the residents in that destination is enhanced in addition to preserving the nature capital for future generations.

A very comprehensive framework for the competitiveness of a destination was proposed by Ritchie and Crouch (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000b, 2003). The model integrated macro (national) and micro (firm) elements of competitiveness in addition to competitive and comparative advantages of a destination. The competitiveness of a tourism destination, according to Ritchie and Crouch (2003), is determined by five major components: "destination management", "core resources and attractors", destination management", "supporting factors and resources", "destination policy, planning and development", and "qualifying determinants".

The core resources and attractors mainly comprise the key elements of appeal for a destination and therefore acts as the main reasons that tourist choose one destination over others. In this component there are seven categories that hold the various factors: culture and history, special events, physiography and climate, mix of activities, market ties, and entertainment and the tourism superstructure. Except the market ties, these factors are consistent with studies on mainstream attractiveness of a destination (Kim, 1998).

The determinants of the competitiveness of a destination are extended by the other components of the model through the addition of a wider range of factors that play a crucial

role in linking the destination attractors with others that are commonly found in the study of the competitiveness of generic businesses (Enright and Newton, 2005). On the other hand, the "supporting factors and resources" are those that provided a solid foundation for the establishment of a successful tourism industry. They include the extent as well as condition of the infrastructure in a destination, a range of supporting resources, as well as factors that impact the accessibility of a destination. The "destination policy, planning and development" entails the positioning/branding, vision, philosophy/values, competitive/collaborative analysis, development, monitoring and evaluation, and audit of the destination. Its formulations should be done on the basis of an integrative system of mechanism that are designed to work in concert such as the achievement of overall competitiveness and sustainability goals can be made possible (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003).

The component of "destination management" focusses on the implementation of a framework for policy making and planning aimed at enhancing the appeal of core resources and attractors, adaptation to constraints that are imposed by "qualifying and amplifying determinants" as well as for strengthening the quality and effectiveness of the supporting factors. Although destination marketing is the most widely researched aspect of management, it is argued by authors that consideration should be given to a much wider set of management activities that includes organization, services, and maintenance of key tourism resources as well as attractors. The "qualifying and amplifying determinants" component involve factors that can cause the modification of the influence of the other three components in a negative manner. The modification can negatively affect the capability of a destination to attract as well as satisfy potential customers and hence affect the competitiveness of a destination. Variables contained in this component include overall costs, location, and safety – these are out of control for the tourism sector but are a major player in the competitiveness of a destination (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003).

Enright and Newton (2004, 2005) observed that Crouch and Ritchie's approach differs from other studies when these more generic business-related factors contained within destination management and qualifying determinants, supporting factors and the tourism-specific factors captured in the core resources and attractors are added to models that primarily focus on the image of a destination or the tourist product (Schroeder, 1996; Formica, 2002). Studies that utilised Porter's basic framework and paid less attention to more tourism-specific elements differ from that used both tourism-specific and generic determinants (Go *et al.*, 1994). For this reason, a more comprehensive assessment on factors that influence the capability of a destination to attract and satisfy customers can be offered by the study (Enright and Newton, 2004, 2005).

Ritchie and Crouch's model on the competitiveness of tourism destination is agreed by many researchers to be the most comprehensive and the most rigorous of all models of this type (Hudson *et al*., 2004). Given that it is a multifaceted model, it is critical in helping the comprehension of complex, uneven and interrelated nature of the tourism industry as well as the internal relationships that exists in the industry. However, this model has not been tested empirically by an adequate number of studies and this could be attributed to its dynamic and complex nature.

3.3.4 Determinants/Indicators of Destination Competitiveness

Besides the models covered in the earlier section on the competitiveness of a tourism destination such as Ritchie and Crouch's model, other researchers specifically conducted an examination of the factors that determine the competitiveness of a tourism destination. Dwyer and Kim (2003) proposed a model of the competitiveness of a tourism destination based on the work by Ritchie and Crouch (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000b, 2003) as well as other related literature. A list of items that determine the competitiveness of a destination are provided below (Dwyer and Kim, 2003);

- ➢ Destination management – marketing, management organizations, policy, environmental management, human resource,
- ➢ Market performance – visitor arrivals, expenditure, contribution to economy, investment, price, government support
- ➢ Endowed resources – natural, cultural, historical resources
- ➢ Supporting factors – general infrastructure, quality of service, accessibility, hospitality, market ties
- ➢ Created resources – infrastructure, activities, shopping, entertainment, festival, events
- ➢ Situational conditions – micro environment, location, global environment, price, safety/security

Using a survey of the tourism industry stakeholders in Korea and Australia (including tourism research academics, government officials, and industry operators), Dwyer *et al*. (2004) employed factor analysis to investigate the underlying dimensions of the competitiveness of tourism destinations. The survey presented 83 compositeness indicators with a revelation of 12 factors. These are nature-based and other resources, quality service, tourism shopping, location and access, night life, amusement parks, destination management, heritage resources, efficient public service, government commitment, E-business, and visa requirements.

Using the sources of comparative and competitive advantage of Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), the determinants of the competitiveness of destinations was also demonstrated by Pike (2004). From the research, Pike (2004) indicated the following aspects to be sources of comparative advantages for a destination:

➢ Natural resources: Climate, Location, landscape features etc.

➢ Goodwill resources: friends and/or relatives; the ancestral links of the traveller to the destination; level of previous visitation and satisfaction; novelty of the destination; and perceived value

➢ Cultural resources: language, history, cuisine, music, arts & crafts, traditions and customs

➢ Human resources: Industrial relations; skills and availability of the region's labour force; industry service standards; and attitudes of locals

Additionally, competitive advantage was indicated to arise from the following sources:

➢ Developed resources: infrastructure, accessibility, and the scale, range and capacity of man-made attractions and other superstructures

➢ Legal resources: licenses, brand trademarks, and visa policies

➢ Financial resources: DMO budget size and certainty; marketing resources for the private sector; government influence on fiscal policy such as, investment incentives and capital expenditure on infrastructure developments and taxation; size of the local economy; access to capital for product

➢ Organization resources: governance structure and policies; staffing levels, training, experience, skills and retention; organizational culture; innovation; technology; and flexibility

➢ Information resources: marketing information system

➢ Relationship resources: stakeholder co-operation; internal/external industry integration and alliances; political influence; and distribution.

➢ Implementation resources: ease of making reservations; sustainable tourism development planning; brand development, positioning and promotion; consistency of stakeholders' delivery

From the review of the various studies on the indicators/determinants of the competitiveness of a tourism destination, it can be concluded that the destinations share common features. The findings of the above research are adopted by this study to develop a scale for measurement of the competitiveness of a destination.

3.3.5 Destination Competitiveness and Quality of Tourism Experience

Tourism could simply be regarded as a system that involves the combination of an origin and a destination. The nature of the production as well as the consumption of tourism goods and services rightly reflect this feature (Gunn, 1994; Leiper, 1979; Mill and Morrison, 1985). The origin of the tourism is considered to be the demand side of tourism while the demand is considered to be the supply side. Additionally, the supply side and the demand side has various links and this includes the availability of information, transportation, and marketing activities. These links facilitate the making of buying decisions as well as ensuring that the decisions made by customers is directly impacted by the industry through product development, promotion and pricing strategies. The origin and destination have a reciprocal relationship and has an influence on the intensity as well as the interaction (Fesenmaier and Uysal, 1990; Uysal, 1998; Formica and Uysal, 2006).

A tourism destination, according to various studies, entails a collection of various products and experience opportunities whose combination form a total experience of the area. The competitiveness of a destination is therefore defined by the "total experience" of the visitor and therefore it is difficult for researchers to fully articulate this experience (Dwyer *et al*., 2004). In the overall tourism system, the destination is itself a unique product that contains several segments: infrastructures, tourism resources (cultural, natural attractions, historical sites, etc.), food service, activities, accommodation, and so on. The experience of a tourists from various activities such as entertainments, sightseeing, food consumption, hotel stay, and interaction with the local people as well as the staff in a destination is what creates the overall perception among tourists of the destination and therefore impacts the competitiveness of a destination.

According to Jafari (1982), the supply side of tourism has three elements: background tourism, tourism oriented products, and resident-oriented products. Tourism-oriented products are those attributes that are used directly by visitors to facilitate the achievement of tourism activities and practices. These include food service, accommodations, travel agencies and tour operators, transportation, recreation and entertainment, and other travel-trade services. In case tourists prolong their stay at a destination site, they may increase their consumption of resident-oriented products. Resident-oriented products are those products that are normally used by the residents on a daily basis and this includes book stores, hospitals, and barber shops etc. While patronizing these local businesses, the tourists experience or get exposed to background tourism elements such as sociocultural attractions, natural attractions, and man-made attractions that often are the main reason why tourists travel to certain destinations.

Collectively, these elements generate the ultimate experience for a tourism and can be examined in the same context concurrently (Pyo *et al*., 1991).

Tourism experience is considered a very dynamic and comprehensive concept as it has a lot of elements that present different challenges in defining and measuring. According to Jennings (2006), tourism experience is depended on different individuals and is therefore subjective. It is related to the meaning of places, perception, motivation, value, satisfaction, quality of life, and so on. In the examination of the tourism experience, different approaches have been proposed but the chronological and temporal method has been found to focus on the whole process of the tourism activity right from the planning stage to the after-trip reflection. For this reason, it is considered a well-defined as well as a manageable approach when it comes at looking at the overall tourism experience. Investigation of the tourism activities as well as experiences in this approach is done along the actual happening in a timely order. As such, this study considers the temporal approach to be the suitable method for examining the tourism experience and how it is related to the competitiveness of the destination.

From a behavioural perspective, the interactive nature between supply and demand indicates that people participate in tourism activities or travel to destinations because of the pull or push of the motivation and attributes of a destination (Dann 1977; Crompton, 1979; Pyo *et al*., 1989; Yuan and McDonald, 1990). The search for a destination that could provide the highest quality of tourism experience is usually done in the pre-trip planning phase of the leisure vacation. At the same time, the overall experience of a tourist could be affected by their interaction with the travel agencies, tour operators, destination management companies as well as when making arrangements for accommodation and travel. Similarly, during the en-route and staying phases of the tourism experience, tourism also demand for goods and services that meet their desired quality and this greatly influence their after-trip reflection of their overall tourist experience and generally their perception of the destination. From these explanations, one could say that the demand of a tourist in a tourist system is basically the pursuit of quality tourism experience. On the other hand, to gain a competitive advantage in comparison to other tourism destinations, a tourism destination needs to pay particular attention to the competitive advantages of its resources if the improvement or change of the comparative advantages may not easily be achieved. For example, natural resources such as historical/cultural sites, mountains or natural wonders. The competitiveness of a destination as well as its position relative to other competing destination is directly influenced by the supply of the attributes of a destination.

3.4   EPILOGUE

A tourism destination that provides superior tourism experience in comparison to that of other destinations is considered to be a competitive tourism destination (Dwyer and Kim, 2003). In this respect, there is an interrelation between tourism experience and the competitiveness of a destination. That is to say, the competitiveness of a destination is considered a function of perceived quality of tourism experience that that destination provides.

The wildlife tourism industry is significantly influenced by quality. Quality has an impact on the profitability prospects as it influences tourist buying decisions (Rabin, 1983; Gavin, 1988). To deliver a quality experience in wildlife tourism, a destination needs to identify the needs and wants of the tourist as the products that the destination offers have to meet these requirements. Tourist satisfaction can only be achieved by understanding the experiences of tourists (Webb, 2003). Given that wildlife tourists interact with the environment at various stages, a destination has to ensure that a tourist is satisfied at each stage. As part of service quality, ensuring that tourist get a memorable experience contributes to the overall satisfaction of the tourist.

For a tourist to be satisfied with a service, he/she has to conduct subjective assessment. This form of assessment has an impact on the loyalty of the tourist and can therefore contribute to increasing the number of potential tourists. By achieving tourist satisfaction, the sustainability of the industry is assured. For this reason, having knowledge on the satisfaction level of tourists is important for a tourist destination in managing good performance (Akama and Kieti, 2003). Perception of the quality of experience that a tourist received is based on whether the initial expectations of the tourist were met. In Chapter 4, a discussion of animal-based encounter experiences to provide more understanding of the quality of experience in Sabah as a wildlife-based destination.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS AS EXPERIENCES: WILDLIFE-BASED TOURISM

4.1 PROLOGUE

In the competitive market of tourism destinations, revisit intention has been shown to be a very significant research topic. Revisit intentions has several antecedents that include perceived service quality, overall satisfaction, perceived attractiveness, and value for money (Um *et al.*, 2006). The quality of experience that people get in a destination is what motivates them to make repeat visits. In this chapter, the researcher discusses tourists perceived experiences in a destination. In the context of this study, animal-based experiences are examined in a wildlife-based destination.

4.2 DEFINITION OF EXPERIENCE

The Oxford dictionary defines experience in the following way;

Experience – noun:

- ➢ practical contact with and observation of facts or events
- ➢ the knowledge or skill that a person acquires during a period of practical experience of something, especially that gained in a particular profession
- ➢ an occurrence or event which leaves an impression on someone

From these definitions, experience is something that is unique, kept in memory, rich and can be created. However, it cannot just be picked up or reserved. Additionally, experience is specific to a situation and has a very strong impact that can even have a lasting impact on a person. According to Komppula and Boxberg (2002) experience is always subjective and therefore one cannot question its rightness or wrongness. Additionally, Komppula and Boxberg (2002) indicated that experience can be created through different means of participation and provided three main levels: (1) physical, (2) mental and (3) social. The physical level is mainly characterised by activities, elements of adventure, relaxation, and well-being. Mental level entails aesthetic experience or spiritual experiences while the social level entails spending time with family or friends. These three levels normally occur together as one cannot be ruled out.

Tourists mainly travel to other destinations to satisfy the needs that they cannot satisfy at home. This is because experiences are something that has to be sought and cannot be obtained at home. Experience entails meeting new people, feelings of togetherness, social, relaxing or encountering new things (Mossberg, 2003). Experiences could also be considered

as the opposite of ordinary and everyday life (Hanefors and Mossberg, 2003). It is during leisure time – on holiday, time off or evenings that experiences happen (Mossberg 2003). Experience must be characterised by a sense of freedom as well as relaxation.

Experience is different for different people because it is a personal, individual and spontaneous event. The time span of an experience cannot be measured as they are considered to be short fleeting moments (Mossberg, 2003). Additionally, experiences are based on emotions with various situations having different levels of emotions. Situations last for short time followed by individual adaptation and therefore they become less exciting.

Experiences have been claimed to be positive and to stimulate several senses (Tarssanen and Kylänen, 2006). However, Kostinen (2002) questioned this by noting that negative travel experiences are more memorable. For example, wars, accident and crimes and other historical attractions are memorable but have some element of negativity. Therefore, experience may not be necessarily positive or negative experiences.

From personal travel experience, positive experiences are not recounted as many times as negative experiences with negative experiences remaining ingrained in the mind longer. As the old saying knows: "memories grow sweeter with time". This could mean that with time, negative experiences could be considered as sweeter and one that came with some lessons. Eventually, an experience, even how grim at the moment, is memorized in a positive sense. For this reason, surveys on the experiences of tourists should be done immediately the tourists are from a site.

Additionally, multiple senses are not necessarily stimulated by an experience, but this is usually the case. Also, more senses are usually engaged if the experience is more overwhelming (Aho, 2001). The stimulation of multiple senses by a situation implies that the experience is felt by different senses: sense of smell, visual sense, hearing, taste and touch, and solidly embedded in memory. It is critical that these senses work together and in balance (Tarssanen and Kylänen, 2006). However, some mixture of senses can be very disturbing and wanted especially when they are very strong. The plausibility or authenticity of experience is also an important part of experience. The idea of searching for authentic experience as put forward by MacCannell has been adapted to tourism research.

In an experience, authenticity implies that the activity or the situation has to have a very high level of conviction or it may not be taken as an experience. Bielski (2004) observed that a customer does not want to feel anything unreal as they need the experience to be authentic

and reliable. However, according to MacCannell (1976, 1989, cit. Del Casino and Hanna, 2000), the real, original and authentic side of an experience (referred to as the backstage) can never be fully achieved by a tourist.

The aboriginal performances for tourists is an example of a situation that illustrated authenticity or lack of it. If performed well, these aboriginal performances can elicit strong and positive tourist experience that may combine various senses. In another case, the performance may be considered only as an entertainment for tourists or has been modified to please the tourist. In this later case, the experience loses its authenticity as well as plausibility.

Most of the time, the feeling of excelling/succeeding in something creates experiences. Experiences are usually achieved from the something that has not been tried before. In the most memorable cases, an individual tourism experience can result in personal growth. This can be in the form of adopting new lifestyle, attitude or hobby from a tourist trip and practising it at home (Tarssanen, 2005). The adoption of new lifestyles or attitude can also occur by experiencing new cultures or experience. These daring activities can include extreme sports.

The concept of experience is often attached to adventure, activities, and speed. People usually seek adventure and risks to experience. As mentioned in the paragraphs above, experiences are created by active participation and through overcoming one's fears. All these comprise adventure tourism which is a significant creator of tourism experiences (Komppula, 2002).

Speedy adventures are more favoured and accepted compared to slow experiences which have been greatly neglected by tourists as captured in the tourism literature (O'Dell, 2005). While many people seek adventure, a section only seeks to move away from their daily activities and relax somewhere else. These kinds of consumers mainly frequent spas and wellness tourism destinations.

Earlier consideration of the different attributes as well as attributes and qualities related to experience and experiencing in this study illustrate close relationship to levels of experiencing. Four levels of an experience were provided by Komppula and Boxberg (2002):

- Improvement experiences (enhancing one's skills)
- Consciousness experiences (include learning and educational aspects)
- Transformational experiences (personal changes in the state of mind, physical state or living habits)
- Emotional experiences (short or long-term impacts on emotional states)

The attributes of experience as mentioned above can occur at the same time and do not rule out the existence of others. For example, an individual can learn new information, acquire a new skill and at the same time experience a change in the state of mind and this can affect one's emotional state. All these feelings can occur at the same time due to the effect of another or on their own. An experience that comes with all the three level of experiences has a higher likelihood of being very powerful as it likely to involve more than one stimuli (Komppula and Boxberg 2002).

According to Pine and Gilmore (2011), the active engagement of tourist into the experience is important when it comes to the production of experience. This occurs as illustrated in the model in Figure 4.1. Experience can either be passively-lived-through or actively-participated. In the passive state of experience, the customer waits for the experience to be brought to them while in active participation, the customer seeks experience. The other extremes are absorb or immerse. In the absorbing of the experience, the tourist mainly observes the experience and is therefore more passive while immersing entails the tourist being actively involved into the various tourists activities and therefore gets immersed into the experience (Pine & Gilmore, 2011).

The different types of experience are *educational*, *aesthetic*, *escapist* and *entertainment* experiences. Educational type of experience is an active form of experience, but it may not be immersing. It entails dragging the customer to learn both physically and mentally. *Entertainment* type of experience is the oldest form of experience in the tourism industry and is passive and absorbing. Examples of e*ntertainment* type of experience is watching a show. The Aesthetic type of experience is a passive form of experience in which the customer has no role to play in experience production but is highly immersed in it. The aesthetic type of experience is associated with some form of danger in that it involves the creation of some disturbance to create the experience given the lack of plausibility of the surroundings. On the other hand, the escapist experience requires the tourist to actively participate as well as be immersed into the situation. For example, scuba diving. The activities that are provided and the participation level of the customer determine the level of experience. There are some things that the management of a destination can try and influence the tourist but other depend on the tourist. The best type of experience results from the combination of the four types of experience (Pine and Gilmore, 2011).

The concept of experience realms as presented by Pine and Gilmore (2011) is illustrate in Figure 4.1.
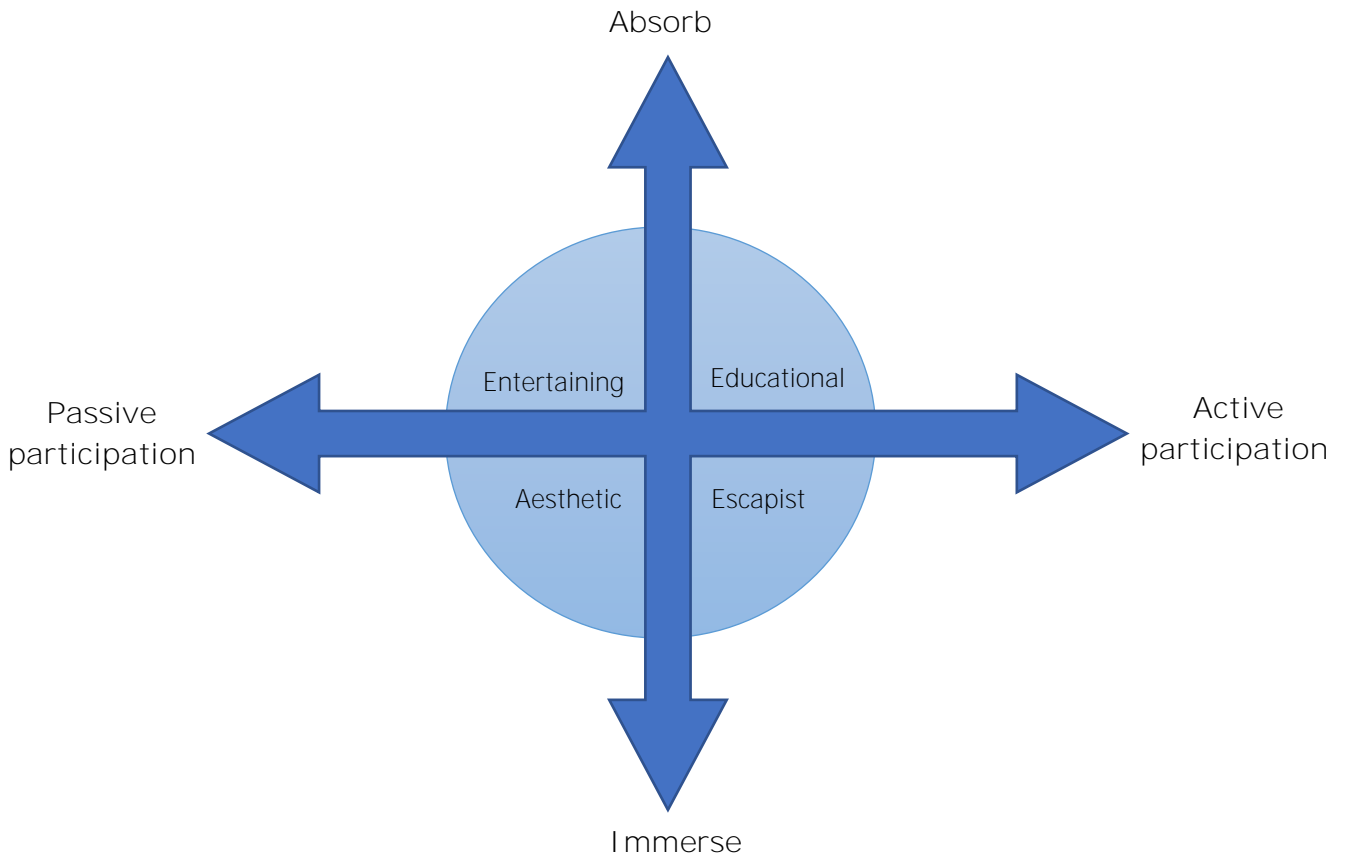
Figure 4.1:   Experience realms model.
Source: Pine and Gilmoore, 2011.

From the above discussions it can be concluded that experiences are unique, personal, and individual as caused by an event or situation. While they are memorable, experiences can also be subjective and can result in emotional effects that can change the personal life of the person having the experience. People usually seek new experiences with the objective of getting away from their daily lives, activities or homes. Experiences can either be negative or positive or happen in fleeting moments. In experiencing a tourism destination, it is important that the experience is authentic and should evoke feelings of success or overcoming an obstacle. Often there is a relation between physical activities and experiences, but so are quietness and peacefulness. Experience comes in different forms – they can be aesthetic, educational, escapist or entertaining. Experiences allow someone to learn new skills, get useful ideas, feel strong emotions or alter their life. In travelling and tourism, experiences are powerful and very essential.

4.3   PRODUCING EXPERIENCES

In tourism, experiences can be produced and sold. When it comes to creating experiences in tourism, the sky is the limit. In the 1990s, experience was only related to nature and adventure

tourism, but the term has evolved with time and is now used for almost all forms of tourism. The word experience was initially related to speed, adventure and nature, but recently the word can be seen in wellness tourism, spa and other forms of slower and more relaxing forms of tourism (Komppula, 2002). It is not simple to produce experience, especially powerful experience. As presented earlier, the concept of experience is complicated and subjective. As experience is built with many different forms, there is no single solution when it comes to experience. In this chapter, a discussion of the factors in experience tourism literature is presented.

Experience has four stages/phases: (1) before the purchase, (2) the actual purchase, (3) the consuming experience and (4) the post-experience. In (1), a person plans and dreams about the product. In (2), experience is achieved when the purchase is made. In (3), the experience is related to the different senses and impressions involved in the situation (whether satisfied or not). Recounting the trip and the evoked emotions constitute the post-consuming stage (Caru and Cova, 2003). While this model helps in understanding the many sides of the experience concept, it should be noted that experience is more of a process than levels.

In a study by Saarinen (2006), production of experience is presented as the next level of modern consumer behaviour. Experiences constitute an important part of boosting the hidden customer needs, producing new ideas and images, and answering needs that are already existent. Like in other forms of businesses, experiences in tourism are part of the Post-Fordist model where a product has to be adjusted to meet the specific needs of a customer. Ooi (2005) indicated that that experiences can be packaged implying that a single model of action or operation can be considered suitable for every person. Given the very challenging qualities of tourism experiences, Ooi considers this opinion to be debatable. Many of the experiences have some relation with factors associated with the customer such as education level, sex, age, expectations, previous experiences, and behaviour. These factors are important when producing experiences (Liedes and Ketonen, 2006). Additionally, Borg *et al*. (2002) noted that in producing experiences one has to consider the everyday life of the customer, the interaction between the customer and service provide, and the background of the customer.

The social and cultural context in which a product is used, according to Aula *et al*. (2006) also affects the level of experience that is derived from using that product. If the use of the product leaves the customer with feelings that are not satisfactory (therefore negative), the experience is considered to have failed. From the discussion presented in the earlier sections of this paper, it is difficult for one product to meet the needs of various tourists. However, the producer cannot have influence on all elements.

Nonetheless, there is the possibility of creating a basis for producing experience complete with a system, service process and a specific service concept. However, given that the customer plays an important role in creating experiences, this approach can reduce the role of the customer or make it more standardised - this is not the way to go because the participation of the customer is key in producing meaningful experiences. Researchers (Gupta and Vajic, 2000; Mossberg, 2003) observed that for the experiences to be successful the participation of the customer in certain ways is needed. It was also claimed by Pine and Gilmore (1999) that without the participation of the customer, the experience is considered incomplete. Additionally, the participation of the customer is associated with psychological and functional effects which in the end is key to defining customer experience (Mossberg, 2003).

A big role is also played by programme services in the experience industry because of the aspect of active participation and the likelihood for new experiences they inquire. Verhelä and Lackmann (2003) observed that programme services are mainly guided activities, built entertainment destinations, and recreational services. The opportunities for unforgettable experiences is enhanced by the level of participation.

As mentioned previously participation can active, mental or physical. To participate at a mental level, the customer should be present mentally. For example, admiring a landscape. In the next level, there is the physical satisfaction in which another sense is involved. For example, listening to a concert in the admired landscape. The active part is the highest level of participation and requires a person to be actively involved. For example, hiking the admired landscape (Mossberg, 2003). The model of dimension of experience as presented by Pine and Gilmore in the previous section of this chapter also includes participation levels.

The Lapland Center of Expertise for the Experience Industry (LEO) created a triabular model of the production of experiences (presented in Tarssanen and Kylänen, 2006) as illustrated in Figure 4.2. The model is a representation of a 'perfect' product and represents all the elements of an experience - the customer experience and the elements that cause the experience.
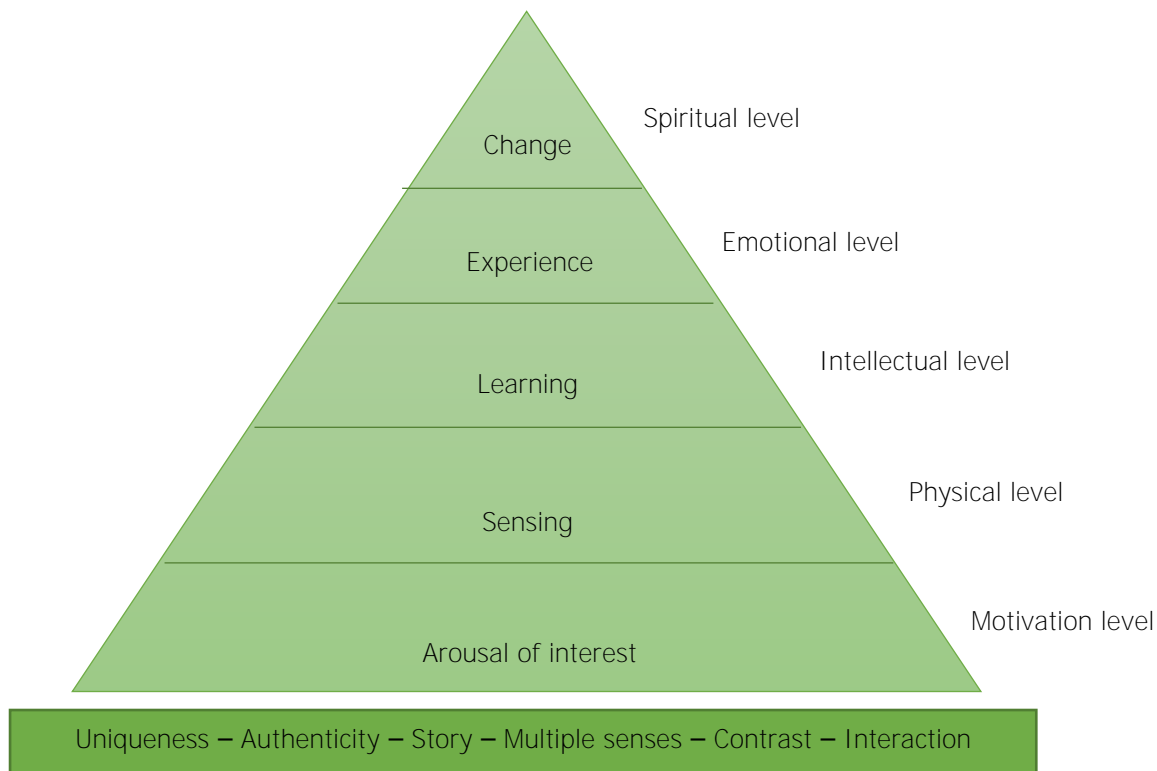
Figure 4.2:   Experience triangle model.

Source: Tarssanen and Kylänen, 2006.

A good product experience that evokes memorable experience has all elements (authenticity, multiple senses, individuality, story, contrast and interaction) felt across the vertical levels of experience. This allows the creation of the best possible circumstances for evoking of experiences (Tarssanen and Kylänen, 2006).

When a model is said to be unique, this implies the uniqueness of the product and may include the tailoring of a product. The difficulty arises in planning of a product that can be repeated easily as well as costed efficiently, but still retails the personal touch and customised enough (Tarssanen and Kylänen, 2006). *Authenticity* is a significant part of tourism and definitely of experiences. *Authenticity* implies that the plausibility of a product. Given that authenticity is subjective, it is depended on a person having the experience meaning that even fictional 'experiences' can be considered to be authentic if the customer considers it to be so. According to Tarssanen and Kylänen (2006), this is a delicate issue and the experience of authenticity can be destroyed.

Closely related to the concept of authenticity is *story*. The story defines the reason behind why this experience is worth it and why it is essential for the customer to see it and be part of it. This means that the experience is justified by the story by giving it some level of importance.

For example, in a city, there are many beautiful buildings. However, only a few are considered to be sights. For this reason, tourists will have a reason or reasons of why they should see this building and why it is considered to be an important part of the city.

Products resenting aboriginal cultures are considered to relate to story and authenticity. For example, in Lapland the Sámi people and their customs, reindeer herding etc. The Sámi product may have some activities that have to do with reindeer herding traditions. Then, this tourism activity can be extended by offering the customer some traditional lunch. Behind this, there is a story that is set in the tradition and the customs of another culture. The tradition also provides some aspects of authenticity. If the snowmobiles did the herding, then the expectations and the stories that the customer hears are distorted. The included lunch could probably be considered not local and therefore the overall experience can be considered not to be satisfactory and this could be attributed to lack of plausibility

The utilization of more than one senses implies that the senses are part of the product offering. For this reason, Tarssanen and Kylänen (2006) indicated that these senses should not be disturbing as they should exist in harmony. The product for the customer may be a new, exotic, or something out of the ordinary. The level-of-*contrast* defines the difference from the everyday life that the customer lives. Contrast makes it possible for the customer to see herself or himself from a different perspective and therefore have a feeling of being free from the routines of a home. The last element is *interaction*. Interaction is the part of experience that result from the customer contact with the product as well as other people.

Sometimes, an individual can have experience on his/her own, but most of the time, experience is something that a person shares with others especially family and friends. The togetherness implies that experience is accepted, valued, and justified. Someone who has not been there to experience the experience cannot describe someone else's experience. However, recounting an experience with someone who had the same experience verifies and boosts the experience further (Tarssanen and Kylänen, 2006).

The first level of experience, the motivational level in Tarssanen and Kylänen's (2006) work, the interest of the customer is aroused. This is achieved by making the product look alluring to the customer. At this level, the advertisement about a destination should bring out the elements of authenticity, uniqueness, contrast, and story.

Tarssanen and Kylänen's (2006) second level of experience is the physical level. In this level, the customer experiences, feels, and observes the environment as well as the possible activity

physically. Thus the plausibility of the surroundings provides authenticity while uniqueness is observed in the variability of the settings. The availability and the social nature of the place constitutes the aspect of interaction.

The third level of experience is the intellectual level. In this level, the customer contemplates the experience and reaches a conclusion of whether it was good or bad and whether some lessons were gained from it. In this level, authenticity is the satisfaction that is brought by the plausible surroundings while the difference that the customer feels about everyday life amount to the contrast. Additionally, experiencing something challenging and interesting intellectually amount to the uniqueness of the experience. The intellectual side of the customer is evoked by the story. At this level, multiple senses work in harmony. The fourth level, the emotional level, is where the experience is really felt. Working of all these elements means that a positive experience is had.

Tarssanen and Kylänen (2006) highest level is the spiritual level. This level is associated with a strong positive reaction that may cause a change that may be physical or mental and which can translate to a permanent change in someone's living habits.

To sum this section, the subjective and participant-dependent nature of experience implies that it is not possible to produce experiences. However, it is possible for the right conditions which are needed to produce experiences to be created. Experience has many sides and therefore it is difficult to explain. Nonetheless it is important for the tourism industry. The analysis of the results in this study will be based on the 'experience theory' particularly using the triangle model and the experience level model.

Significant and strong emotions among tourists especially wildlife tourists can be created by animal encounters. These encounters as well as the experiences are very important for the stakeholder, the visitor, animals, and the entire tourism industry.

4.4   ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS AS EXPERIENCES

In the animal-based tourism studies, the experience theory has not been used a lot. Some studies carried out in Sabah put into consideration the experience of visitors in a specific animal attraction and about the type of experience that is created by the place. The Sabah literature generally focusses on the conflict between humans and the wildlife but this is not really suitable for the purpose of this study. Therefore, the focus of this study is on animals and studies about them.

Some studies on animal encounter experience have been carried out, but they mainly focus on Australia and note related to attraction or destination. These studies are mainly based on the modified version of the experience theory – which is also suitable for the purpose of this paper in studying the animal experience. The theories and result of the aforementioned studies are presented in this study. The 'animal encounter theories' as well as the experience theory are used as a theoretical framework for this study. The theories support each other and provide a good opportunity for contemplating and discussing the results of the study.

There are various forms of animal-visitor encounters in animal-based tourism. Some encounters provide specific experiences. Some animal species have qualities that make tourists more attracted to them compared to others. Some encounters produce experiences while some involve an activity related to the animal. Similarly, some destinations are preferred over others because they provide the opportunity to see either a large group of animals or endemic animals. Other destinations have unique qualities that on their own act as an attraction to tourists. Though animal encounters generate different experiences, some are stronger than others.

Elements for production of experience similar to those in the triangle model of LEO in Figure 4.2 were introduced by Reynolds and Braithwaite (2001). In the triangle model, there are six discrete elements which are: (1) uniqueness, (2) authenticity, (3) story, (4) multiple senses, (5) contrast and (6) interaction. However, Reynolds and Braithwaite introduced four elements which they considered to be specific to tourism (uniqueness, authenticity, intensity, duration) with an additional two elements (species status and species popularity) which they indicated are typical for wildlife tourism.

The definition of uniqueness and authenticity are as par the triangle model – uniqueness and individuality together with plausibility are significant factors when it comes to the production of experiences. On the other hand, while the triangle model does not mention intensity and duration, the two are important when it comes to generating experiences. In relation to animal encounter, intensity is defined as the excitement and the thrills that result from the animal encounter. Duration is also refers to the fleeting moment where the level of an activity may become saturated to appoint where it does not produce experience as the people "get used to it". The idea that some animals are preferred by tourists more than others is capture by the concept of species status and popularity with rare or endangered animal being more popular.

4.4.1   Settings in Animal Encounters

The setting or the environment in which the animal encounter occurs add meaning to the experience gained from the encounter. A clear relationship between as setting and experience were observed by Floyd and Gramann (1997, cit. Newsome *et al*., 2005). The setting was noted to either help in restricting or creating experiences. Moscardo and Saltzer (2005) also noted that a highly desirable feature of wildlife tourism experience is *the seeing of the wildlife in their natural environment*. About 67% of tourists interviewed by the study selected this option as one of their three most important features. It was also noted by Moscardo and Saltzer that the natural environment of the animals do not necessarily mean *"pristine or untouched environments"*. Only 26% of the study respondents chose the option of *an untouched natural environment.* A study by Bulbeck (2005) also indicated that authentic encounters had more contribution to experiences and there was a higher likelihood of the encounter being described as unique. Emphasis on interaction with animals, touching or feeling them was given more emphasis is captive settings as well as the more unnatural settings.

The preference of settings was also presented Newsome *et al*. (2005). In their study, Newsome *et al*. (2005) noted that for a section of tourists, a satisfactory experience is achieved by the feeling of safety and control that is provided by semi-captive or captive settings. With lack of resource and/or opportunities to see animals in their natural environment, some people are only able to see animals in captive settings which provide the opportunity to see wildlife in a sanitized, controlled, and non-threatening way.

Citing the work of Hvenegaard (1994), Bulbeck (2005) noted that sites such as zoos and captive settings attract a large population of "mainstream" tourists while sites that are more demanding attract specialist tourists. For another section of tourists, seeing the animals in their wild environment is the only way to be satisfied.

A study by Moscardo and Saltzer (2003) indicated that the option of *feeling safe in the presence of animals* was the least chosen feature in the list of the desirable destination features. This option was chosen by only 8% of the respondents. Pearce and Wilson (1995, cit. Moscardo and Saltzer, 2004) also observed that tourists in New Zealand valued two main features which are proximity to wildlife and the natural environment. Depending on the settings, Mullan and Marvin (1987, cit. Bulbeck, 2005) also noted that encounters are considered differently by different tourists. Mullan and Marvin gave an example of a lion drinking and how tourists in a safari would spend a lot of time watching this behaviour because the tourists consider this activity to be a natural one.

The demand for action in a captive setting is higher except in cases where the species is a special favourite. Bulbeck (2005) observed that some settings are more favourite than others with more favourite setting being those with exotic mega-fauna, active animals or those where interaction with animals is possible. In conclusion, this study indicated that the main key drivers of experience among tourists are the concepts of *authenticity*, *uniqueness*, *intensity* and *contrast.* Moscardo and Saltzer (2003) observed that tourists prefer to be natural therefore the concept of authenticity and plausibility of a tourism setting are very important. As noted in the paragraphs above, for a setting to be considered to be natural it does not necessarily need to be in nature and untouched. By planning and managing captive settings in a good way, one can also create a natural and authentic experience.

Intensity relates to the feelings of safety and/or excitement. Given that not everyone is an adrenaline-rush seeking tourist, a section of tourists gain the best experience by watching animals from a distance that they consider to be safe. For people who are not familiar with animals, encountering animals in captive-setting can sometimes evoke the feelings of thrill. Newsome *et al*., (2005) indicated that the concept of thrill depends on the previous experience that one has had.

The triangle model also mentions contrast as an element that is important in providing experiences. The experience should be something that is different from the everyday life of the visitors and therefore the setting should create this difference. For example, for an urban dweller, providing the natural wilderness environment constitutes a big contrast. The addition of various elements to captive setting may probably improve the level of contrast. Experiences also determine the level of contrast – like seeing a lion feeding within its zoo enclosure create a thrill for some while for others getting close to a wild animal in its environment is a form of contrast.

4.4.2 Searching for Success, Looking for Thrill

In their study, Newsome *et al*. (2005) claimed that nature plays a significant role in making one feel in control, competent, self-reliant, self-confident, and with good self-esteem. This is particularly true for those who do hunting and therefore get their skills challenged in an environment that is far from their daily life. Immediate feedback was also mentioned as it provides learning about the abilities that one has. These are also related to the *intensity* of the experience as well as its *contrast*.

Different levels of experiences were proposed by Komppula and Boxberg (2002) and these are *improvement experiences, transformational experiences*, *consciousness experiences,*

and emotional experiences. Improvement experiences is adaptable and enhances one's skills while in transformational experiences, one self-confidence and image are enhanced.

For some wildlife tourists, Swarbrooke *et al.* (2003) proposed that the adventure and the feelings of risk, fear and awe" are important, but the study also indicated that not all wildlife tourism is about having these feelings. Compared to previously where animals were targeted and killed, these days, cameras are used to target animals and take photos. The chase for the best picture can provide a similar sense of thrill in the same way as the chase for trophies. Also, the act of seeing an animal that one may have desired to see and "tick it off" from the list of wishes could provide similar feelings of success.

4.4.3   Affiliation with Animals: Bonding and Companionship

Human beings often use animals as food or as pets. Animals are also used by some people as a form of therapy in that they are used to relieve stress, provide company and generally have a relaxing effect on people (Newsome *et al.*, 2005). Additionally, Kellert (1996, cit. Newsome *et al.*, 2005) indicated that human beings are always craving for companionship and that encounter with animals meet this need. The human bonding with animals is also much sought after especially in developing a mutual understanding.

A study by Moscardo and Saltzer (2005) found that when the question "*what could be improved about a wildlife experience"* is posted to tourists, one of the responses is that there should be more interaction with the wildlife. An earlier study by Moscardo (1996, cit. Woods, 1998) found that visitors get attracted to animals if they can interact or touch them. This emotional attachment to animals occurs through actual encounters rather than through a magazine or television (Newsome *et al.,* 2005: 88). Touching of the animals can be considered as a way of conversing with the animal. In saving the animals, Bulbeck (2005) claimed that for tourists to want to save animals they have to touch and hold them.

In non-captive settings 48% of tourists indicated that their most memorable animal seemed to know that it was being watched. In her study, Bulbeck (2005) claimed that when the animals that is being watched does not pay attention to the people gazing at it or does not see the people observing it, then the interaction does not happen. There is controversy in the need for touching the animals because some studies have indicated several responses that are contradictory. Positive responses from visitors on touching animals in a children zoo were reported by Bulbeck (2005). Bulbeck's studies also found feeding of the animals to be a very important feature. Still, a study by Moscardo and Saltzer (2005) found that only 7% of tourists

indicated that *being able to touch or handle animals* was one of the three features that were important in a tourist wildlife experience.

In her book, Bulbeck (2005) has a strong focus on human animal relations as well as the main discourse in the search for human contact with animals. Bulbeck concentrates on human deep connections with dolphins. In the hearts of many people, whales and dolphins have a special place attributed to their perceived intelligence, caring for their young ones, their friendliness, being endangers, and singing as claimed by Kallard (1994, cit. Bulbeck, 2005). The interaction with dolphins, according to Bulbeck, is different from the interaction with other animals as it is deeper and there is no differences hierarchically between the person interacting and the dolphin. According to Bulbeck (2005), while in their world, the dolphins allow people to interact with them. Interaction with dolphins was also noted to result in higher user satisfaction when the interaction happens in their natural habits as compared to captive settings (Shackley, 1996).

A study of 700 people by Wood (2000) found that the most favourite animal among people was the dog. This choice was not a surprise at all because of the strong connection and closeness that this pet has with human being. According to Woods, the element of human-animal relations significantly depends on interaction. Also, the need by visitors to give food to animals in zoos and parks is also taken as the need for interaction (Moore, 1997; Kreger and Mench, 1995, cit. Woods, 2000).

The element of experience in relation to affiliation and bonding between human beings and animals is categorised as interaction, but also to *multiple senses* and *intensity* as well as *contrast*. Human beings seek interactions with animals for various reasons – in the earlier section of this chapter some ideas were presented. As an active, social interaction has a significant contribution to engagement experiences and draws on more than one senses and thus ensuring a thrilling feeling – by overcoming fears of handing animals. These activities compliments the experience of a tourist.

4.4.4   Animal Attributes

Preferred animals attributes has been covered by several studies. Some of the larger studies are those by Bart (1972) and Kellert (1980 and 1986). Woods (2000) only added to these studies. The majority of the studies have been done in-situ and this includes those by Shackley (1996), Moscardo and Saltzer (2005; 2003) and Woods (2000). All these studies presented similar findings with very little variation. Studies that were conducted later involve sites where

the encounter with the animals occur and this include watching, feeding, touching, and photographing. There is a shortage of in-depth analytical studied in hunting, fishing and riding.

The main qualities of animals to which tourists are attracted are as follows: (1) aesthetic appeal, the status of being rare or endangered; (2) level of intelligence – similarity to human beings; and (3) the size and "cuteness" or "cuddliness" (Moscardo and Saltzer, 2005; Woods, 2000; Reynolds & Braithwaite, 2001). Vertebrates are more studied in tourism compared to other animals (Newsome *et al.*, 2005). Vertebrates are the most preferred species in wildlife tourism.

Large species of mammals that attract tourists are known as charismatic mega fauna. Some tourists' destinations have taken advantage of their mega fauna and created very profitable tourist attractions around them. In the African safaris, mega fauna are mainly "the big five" and this are: lion, buffalo, leopard, rhino and elephant. On their safari trips, tourists are mainly interested in seeing the big five with the other animals only being an addition. Some animals are iconic creature for a whole destination country. For example, in Australia the kangaroos and the koalas are the main tourist attractions. Studies on charismatic mega fauna have mainly been conducted on in the context of conservation. This is because, these animals are considered iconic species for the protection of national parks, specific areas etc.

A big role is also played by a section of invertebrates in tourism and therefore, they should not be underrated. Some of the invertebrates that play a significant role as tourist attractions are fireflies, butterflies, and some marine species that include the coral reefs. The important factor items for the presence of certain animals are provided in Table 4.1 by Kellert (1989, cit. Woods, 2000). In the table, it is clear that the attribute of intelligence, aesthetics, and similarity to humans as presented above are present. In the use of animals as tourist attractions, Kellert (1989, cit. Woods, 2000) noted that the following attributes related to animals should be put into consideration: *danger to humans*, *likelihood of inflicting property damage* and *predatory tendencies.* However, Kellert does not address whether human beings prefer animals that are dangerous or not.

Table 4.1:   Factor items important to preference of animals.
Source: Kellert, 1989 cited in Woods, 2000.

1.	Size: larger species more preferred
2.	Aesthetics: animals considered "attractive" are more preferred

3.	Intelligence: animals considered to have capacity for reason, feeling and emotion are preferred
4.	Danger to humans
5.	Likelihood of inflicting property damage
6.	Predatory tendencies
7.	Phylogenetic relatedness to humans
8.	Cultural and historical relationships to humans
9.	Relationship to human society: pet, domestic animal, game, pest etc.
10.	Texture: bodily appearance and structure. The more unfamiliar to humans, less preferred
11.	Mode of locomotion: generally, the more unfamiliar to humans, the less preferred
12.	Economic value of the species to humans

Newsome *et al*. (2005) noted that animals have similar thinking to that of human beings as well as portraying similar cognitive and emotional abilities. These similarities have contribute to the improvement in the way human beings treat these animals. People tend to be attracted to this similarity, but not just physically but also behaviourally. Human beings are specifically attracted to the nurturing and caring behaviour that animals show to their young ones. The intelligence factor displayed by the animals is in a way tied to human beings, but also links to the physical differences that animals have with human beings. Examples of animals that are admired for their perceived intelligence are dolphins, whales, and cetaceans.

The aesthetic appeal that human beings have towards animals is related visible features of the animals, their colourfulness, movement, and size. According to Newsome *et al*. (2005), animal features such as being cuddy, cute and childlike attract people more because of the natural response that these animals exhibit to their children and because of their social qualities and personal nurturing. These kinds of animals were referred to as "baby releasers" by Bulbeck (2005).

Generally, aesthetic elements tend to "please the eye" and it is therefore natural for people to look for them and prefer them. Searching for aesthetics is evident in all tourism destinations e.g. Attractions like art museums and beautiful landscapes. The search for aesthetics is also present in animal-based tourism with rare or endangered species considered to be more attractive than the rest. Rare is used to imply special or unusual while endangered is used to mean scarce. Tourists do not want to miss opportunities to see creatures like these (Newsome

et al., 2005). To attract tourists, one travel agency has a slogan that says "Go before it's too late!" and a poster of a fake cardboard rhinoceros on a savannah with safari tourists taking its picture. The slogan is meant to pass messages to people that the authenticity of this destination is in danger as well as the animals are constantly being hunted and can be extinct any time. A book titled *Last Chance to see* was written by Douglas Adams and Mark Carwardine on species that are on the brink of extinction. The book has also been made into a BBC documentary and a television series. Adams and Carwardine chases these animal species around the world. Factors that can lead to extinction include the following: food shortages, changing habitats, hunting, loss of biodiversity, and strenuous competition. People have been made more aware of these endangered animals species through the media (Valentine and Birtles, 2004).

The aspect of being endangered or rare is parallel to one of the elements of experience making – it is the story that makes the animal interesting. Being rare or endangered gives the tourist a purpose when they go seeking to see these animals. The need by tourists to enhance their social status may be attributed to the wanting to see these special type of animal that other people may not have seen. In a way, this has a relationship to the concept of contrast in that it is a special experience that one cannot have in their everyday life or at home. Additionally, another section of tourists can be said to be specialists. For example, birdwatchers who want to "tick something off their lists" and take pleasure in seeing an endangered or rare species that they consider to make their trip successful.

The key features of memorable animals were examined in studied by Woods (2000) and Moscardo and Saltzer (2005). In the research by Moscardo and Saltzers, tourists were asked to use three words/phrases to describe their most memorable animals. Woods made use of an open ended survey approach to ask respondents to describe their favourite animals. Results from these studies are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2:   Key features of the preferred animals.
Source: Moscardo and Saltzers, 2005 and Woods, 2000.

Moscardo and Saltzer	Woods
Big/large	Beautiful
Beautiful	Intelligent
Cute	Large size

Interesting	Powerful
Graceful	Cute
Colourful	Fluffy
Intelligent	Nice personality
Amazing	Friendly
Funny	Graceful
Fascinating	Faithful/loyal

The majority of the features in Table 4.2 are related to either admirable or aesthetic features of the animals. Woods research also included domestic animals with qualities such as loyalty and faithfulness arising. Wild animals were mainly described using words of admiration.

Words such as 'scariness' or 'danger' were not used to describe the animals but some studies indicated that these features also played a role. The attributes of 'danger' or scariness' were also not included in Kellert's ideas (Table 4.1) of the animal qualities that affected tourist's level of preference. For this reason, there is a possibility that the features of animals were considered to be negative features with dangerous animals being less liked by humans. Yet, the study by Woods indicated that some earlier studies indicated that dangerous animals are also appealing to tourist not only because of the danger that they pose but also due to their difference from human beings. This idea was originally presented by (1988, cit. Woods, 2000) who developed a matrix for the classification of animals into two dimensions that are different but intersecting.

The appeal of dangerous animals to a section of tourists can be related to the search of thee tourists for *contrast* (something new and different in the experience) and *intensity* (the thrill of the encounter with a dangerous animal). This study also indicates that *story* is also another meaningful element. For example, the animal is seen as interesting because of its dangerousness – and this has a story behind it. It was claimed by Bulbeck (2005) that people have "a love of fear" – this is enough explanation of why people find encounter with dangerous animals interesting.

4.4.5   Preferred, Most Memorable and Most Liked Species

A study by Shackley (1996) on visitors to a zoo in London indicated that they preferred apes, big cats, penguins, monkeys and seals. Deans *et al*. (1987, cit. Woods, 2000) also indicated

that children loved monkeys, big cats, zebras, and polar bears. The display of the animals and the impact on the levels of preference constituted the difficulty with the studies: more naturalistic or interactive the settings were, the more preferred or attractive to the preferred to the viewer are the animals (Bitgood *et al*., 1986, cit. Woods, 2000). Moscardo and Saltzer (2005) also mentioned that while some species may attract visitors, they may not be liked or preferred. For this reason, when studying preferences for zoo species, the word memorable may be more fitting than favourite or preferred.

Research by Moscardo and Saltzer (2005) on the memorable species was done on 11 different animal-based tourism sites. They found that large animal species as well as those that were described as cute and cuddly were the most memorable with the exception of spiders and crocodiles. The animals on the list had a close relation to Australia, the country of the destination. Similar results were obtained by Woods when he asked international tourists to describe their favourite animal. Woods study also included domestic animals. A tabulation of the results from the study by Moscardo and Saltzer is not provided here because they have a very close connection to the 11 places and the specific species variety that these places offer.

Woods study is different in that it was carried out in many different places with the survey involving people who were not necessarily tourists. Thus, Woods' international visitor's responses are also considered in this study. The choice of multiple species by respondents is shown in table 4.3. In concluding his study, Woods (2000) indicated that unexpectedly, the animals on the list were somewhat tame, easily anthropomorphised, and ones to interact with. Surprisingly, Woods observed that snakes, sharks, crocodiles, and frogs were among the top 20 favourite animals in contrast to previous research findings (not provided in the Table 4.3).

Table 4.3:   Favourite animals of international tourists.
Source: Woods, 2000.

ANIMAL	% OF RESPONDENTS SELECTING ANIMAL AS FAVOURITE
Dog	46.1
Koala	39.2
Dolphin	34.6
Cat	24.4
Kangaroo	24.0
Whale	18.9

Horse	18.4
Birds	16.6
Fish	13.8
Tiger	13.4

This study mentions data animals, but they are not necessarily preferred or the most liked. Still, it is presumed in this study that the animals which are listed in the articles are example of species that can be seen in a destination and are likely the least of those most memorable, and worth mentioning. In comparing the list of animals in this study, it is worth mentioning this presumption.

4.5   THE RESEARCH MODEL

The consumptive behaviour that is displayed at wildlife tourism destinations is supported by the involvement theory (Havitz and Dimanche, 1997; Gursoy and Gavcar, 2003; Pearce and Kang, 2009). Involvement is built up from a deep intensity established through direct experiences or from a pent-up motivational commitment. It is a consumptive acquisition process that is built the simulation of interest that is acquired through the participation in engaging activities and experiences. Ratchford and Vaughn (1989) observed that involvement makes tourists develop certain opinions that is likely to affect the way they behave.

A tourist's relations, beliefs and behaviour are linked through their reasoned action when the Involvement theory is put together with the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Aijen, 1991) and incorporating reasoned action. Here, a tourist conducts an evaluation of their evaluations as positive (attitude) and also sees the people around him to perceive similar effects (subjective norm), and this results in a heightened intention (motive). This adjustment is what sets the motive, expectations and the behaviour of the tourist.

This behavioural process entails the consumption of something by the tourist with the tourist perceiving the components of value in the activities and wildlife encounters provided by the destination set against their pre-conceived expectations. The tourist perceptions about the destinations is influenced by expectations that result from the pre-involvement that sets the motive in place (Fodness and Murray, 1997; Vogt and Anderick, 2003).

Using the Users and Gratifications Theory, users within the wildlife setting are allowed to intentionally choose an environment that meets their wildlife knowledge, needs, establishes a degree of loyalty, and leads to a general satisfaction or opinion. This implies that when a tourist

comes to a destination they come with their attitude, set of norms and behavioural control mechanisms.

The planned behaviour and the involvement approach is adopted by this study, but there is the movement of the tourists set behaviours downstream from motives and expectations towards consumption and gratification. This approach allows the planned behaviour of tourists of attending a wildlife tourist destination downstream and linking this tourist experience and activities to a trust in the need for loyalty towards its wildlife, habitat conservation, and overall satisfaction across the entire suite of tourism-related issues. This is illustrated in Figure 4.3 as the proposed wildlife tourism behaviour framework for the study.
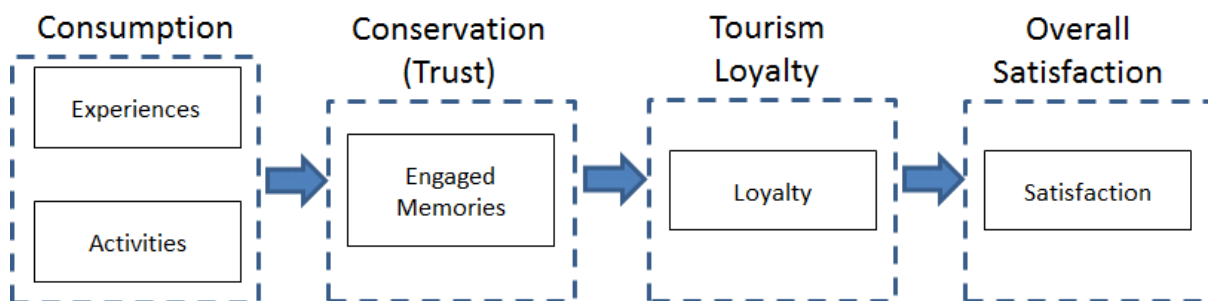
Figure 4.3:   Proposed Wildlife Tourism Behaviour Framework

The initial "pull" constructs (activities and experience) that a destination provides to support a tourist are illustrated in Figure 4.3 (Coghlan and Prideaux, 2009). A destination needs to provide activities, wildlife species, environmental attributes, and behaviours that facilitates a tourist response that is aligned as well as preferential so as to better understand the preferences of a tourist in wildlife tourism context (Newsome et al., 2005). These responses should be physical as well as behavioural (Eddy et al., 1993; Kellert, 1996; Plous, 1993; Tremblay, 2002).

Table 4 presents tourists engagements that are considered to be key by authors. Though largely experiential, the occurrence of these engagements requires various activities to take place. For example, tourists are offered successful wildlife conservation programs in protected areas in Sabah. In this area, tourists are offered various things including species movements, environmental sensory walks, behaviours and feeding stations as well as education. Sabah wildlife species are strictly protected to protect its endangered species. The protection reduces the damage to the habitat, promotes the survival of the endangered species, and drives awareness for conservation among tourists (Syamlal, 2002) by preventing poaching and other destructive activities (King and Nair, 2013).

In studies on the conservation of species in the wildlife tourism industry, one of the most relevant study areas is the understanding what creates satisfaction in wildlife watching tourism. This is because a tourist who gets positive experiences with wildlife encounters is likely to transmit such experiences to others as well as plan to revisit such destinations. Eventually, this plays a role in increasing the awareness of the watched species and helps in the creation of long term conservation values certain species (Shackley, 1996; Moscardo & Saltzer, 2004; Newsome et al. 2005; Higginbottom, 2004).

Table 4.4:   Wildlife Tourism Characteristics.

CHARACTERISTICS	REFERENCES
Seeing wildlife in natural environment	Moscardo & Saltzer (2004), Duffus & Dearden (1993), Schanzel & McIntosh (2000), Moscardo et al. (2001)
Wildlife behaving naturally	Moscardo & Saltzer (2004)
Rare and unique wildlife	Moscardo & Saltzer (2004), Reynolds & Braithwaite (2001), Shackley (1996)
Large variety of wildlife	Moscardo & Saltzer (2004), Higginbottom (2004), Hammit et al. (1993), Moscardo et al. (2001)
Easily seen wildlife	Moscardo & Saltzer (2004)
Presence of infants	Schanzel & McIntosh (2000)
Human-like	Tremblay (2002), Plous (1993), Eddy et al. (1993), Moscardo et al. (2001)
Large	Shackley (1996), Davies et al. (1997), Johnston (1998), Sagan & Marguils (1993), Newsome et al. (2005)
Popularity of the species	Reynolds & Braithwaite (2001)
Aesthetic appeals	Tremblay (2002), Kellert (1996), Newsome et al. (2005)

Thus, this study proposes the model shown in Figure 4.4. This model is developed throughout the literature review. Additionally, the following literature gaps are proposed by the study as needing more investigation

1. What type of destination product is preferred by tourists?
2. What are tourists' wildlife preferences?
3. What generates tourists' satisfaction?
4. Do positive experiences translate into positive considerations to return?
5. Is there any direct and/or indirect relationships between the destination product and wildlife value with tourists' awareness of wildlife conservation?
6. Does the expectation of destination activity products depend on visitors' expectation of wildlife value?
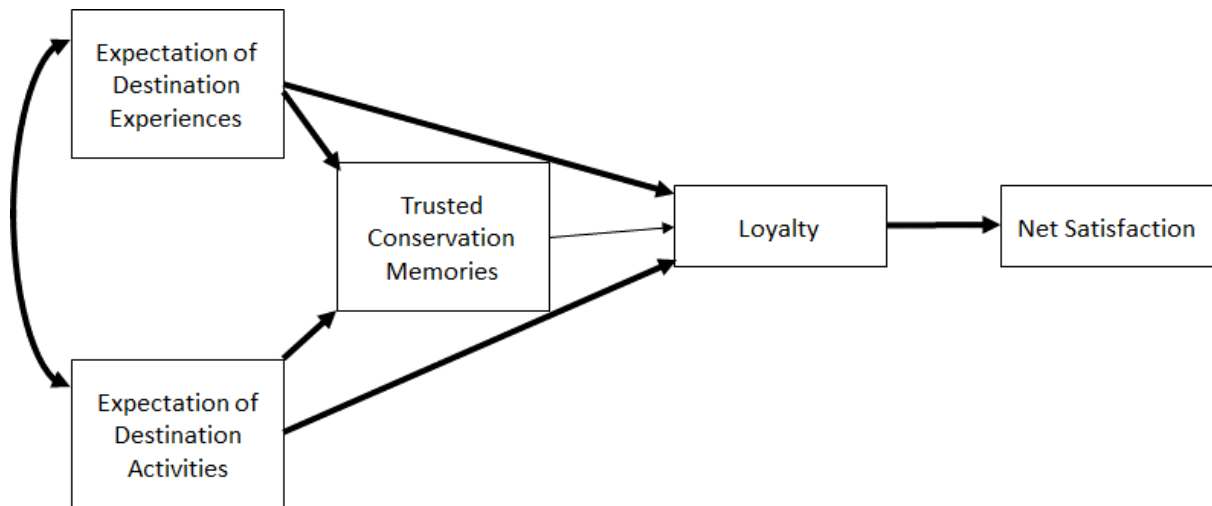
Figure 4.4:   Proposed Wildlife Tourism Behaviour Model

Activities and expectations which are the main consumables items that a tourist expects to find in a destination are linked in Figure 4.4. Based on the outcomes that comes from this expectation, a trust in the environmental conservation is created. When there is an alignment of all the three factors, a solid loyalty to a wildlife tourism destination may be created. With a suitable alignment of all the factors, an overall satisfaction measure of tourism time in Sabah is created. Chapter 6 tests this proposed wildlife/location behaviour model.

4.6   EPILOGUE

In conclusion, the themes that this study engages in through the collection of data is captured by this chapter on experience. These themes are addressed through various theoretical approaches that include the following: (1) animal encounter theory, (2) involvement theory, (3) biodiversity hotspots theory, (4) users and gratification theory, (5) scheme theory, (6) experience theory, and (67 theory of planned behaviour (this also incorporates reasoned action). The experience model presented by Pine and Gilmore (educational, aesthetic, entertaining and escapist experiences) is used by the researcher to define the different kinds of experiences as well as drawing from the ideas presented by Komppula and Boxberg on the four different levels of experience (consciousness, improvement, emotional and transformational experiences).

The LEO's triangle model (Figure 4.2) in combination with Reynolds and Braithwaite's elements (uniqueness, authenticity, multiple senses, story, contrast, interaction, intensity, duration, species status, species popularity) are also used to help in the understanding of the production of a positive experience. The importance of special attributes (cuteness, similarity, cuddliness, aesthetics, baby releaser, size, intelligence, admirable qualities), and the setting of the encounter as well as the participation level of the tourist.

In the final section of this chapters, the involvement theory, the theory of planned behaviour and the experience theory are applied in the wildlife tourism behavioural path model presented in Figure 6.12 for the tourists visiting Sabah, Malaysia.

CHAPTER FIVE: DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 PROLOGUE

While the interactive nature of visitors with wildlife is considered and important aspect of tourism, it remains an under-researched area when it comes to sustainable tourism. To attain sustainable tourism in the wildlife sector, information that is reliable, detailed and relevant on the visitors involved in such interactions is required. A lot of research on the growth and the size of wildlife tourism also exists (see Barnes *et al*., 1992; Amante-Helwey, 1996; Roes *et al*., 1997; Newsome and Rodger, 2013), but there is no adequate information on the nature of this market and the characteristics of visitors (domestic or international) who search for wildlife tourism experiences in Sabah, Malaysia.

Destinations that provide sustainable wildlife tourism experiences aim at attracting appropriate visitors and provide quality experiences. However, the goal of providing the visitors with quality experiences has to be balanced against the goal of eliminating or minimising the negative impacts that such experience on the wildlife as well as their habitats. Thus, the study of wildlife tourism markets is done for two main reasons. The first reason is aimed at the determination of the nature of visitor markets as well as factors that contribute to tourist satisfaction with opportunities provided by a wildlife destination – to provide experiences considered quality by the tourist. The second reason is to understand the behaviour of visitors and how such behaviour can be influenced. This is aimed at the effective management of the adverse impacts of wildlife tourism while encouraging positive behaviours such as greater awareness and support for conservation.

Therefore, this thesis pays attention to the nature of visitors in wildlife tourism. A methodology for the investigation of these crucial relationship is presented in this Chapter. The main aim characterises influences of wilderness experiences on wildlife conservation in Sabah, Malaysia.

Sabah state is found in Malaysia and is located on the NE of Borneo Island and is bordered by various seas such as Celebes Sea, South China Sea, and Sulu Sea. Due to its richness in various tourist resources as well as protected areas, Sabah, since 1995, has developed into a premier destination that provides adventure and attractions to tourists from all over the world. The richness in sea and land biodiversity has also placed Sabah among the top eco-tourism destinations.

Under the Sabah Wildlife Department, there are 13 wildlife-based tourism opportunities. Hence, Sabah is more appealing to tourists who seek activity-based destination attraction as opposed to those seeking destination travel (King and Nair, 2013). In this respect, this research makes use of the following primary research questions:

1. What kind of wildlife-based tourism is sought by the tourists in Sabah?
2. What kind of elements evokes emotions and experiences in wildlife-based tourism?
3. What kind of experiences do the presented animal encounters evoke?

The methodological processes that underpin this research are explored in the rest of this research. The researcher first discusses the research design, then epistemology, followed by theoretical perspectives, study boundaries, research family, research-approach and research techniques.

5.2   RESEARCH DESIGN PROCESS

In the design of this research, specific gaps are explored to provide new insights into the component items as well as derived factors that influence wildlife-based experiences of individual tourists when visiting Sabah. In planning this research, the researcher encountered several decision points with the chosen option influencing the decisions in other areas. Thus, loop-forward and look-back links between are used to avoid circular patterns of thinking. The researcher undertook a complex thinking network as outlined in Figure 5.1. Therefore, several revisions were done to the original process outlines as well as clarifying on specific research questions.
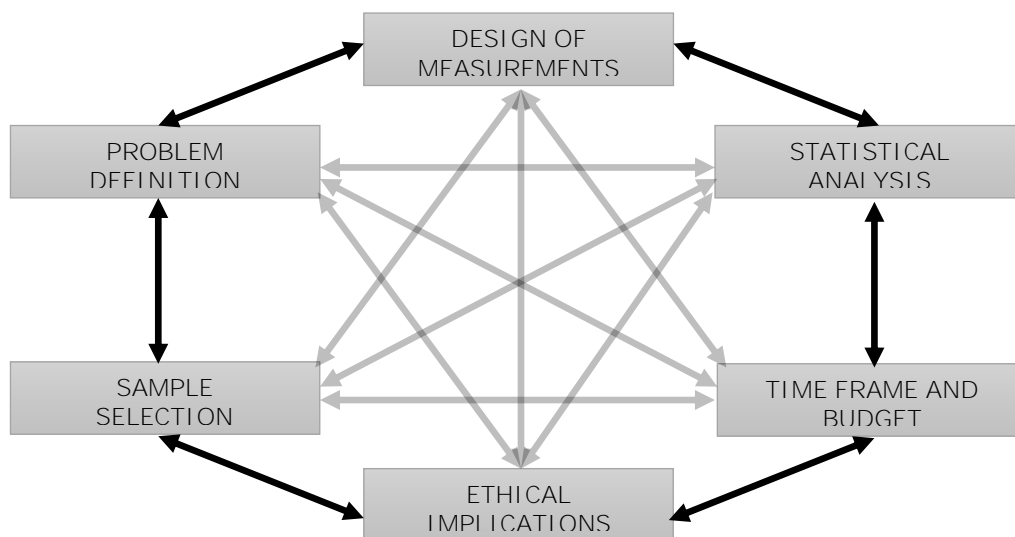
Figure 5.1:   Research planning framework.

Source: Adapted from Sapsford, 1999.

5.2.1 Overview of Methodology

DePoy and Gitlin (1998) noted that different kinds of knowledge claims as well as criteria are derived from different research perspectives as to what constitutes significant knowledge variation from one to another. The research methodology employed in this study is presented in Table 5.1. The rationales for the utilization of each of these research methods is provided in the following sections.

Table 5.1:   Overview of research methods.

METHODOLOGICAL STEP	OUTCOME
Epistemology	Constructionism
Theoretical perspective	Critical theory, grounded theory
Study boundaries	Time, money, availability of samples, access to situations, gaining co-operation, familiarity with topic, study location and target population
Research family	Qualitative and Quantitative: Mixed methods, Fieldwork
Research approach	Survey with case study attributes
Research technique	Questionnaire & face-to-face interviews

5.2.2 Epistemology

The basis for making a decision on what knowledge is possible from a research is provided by an epistemology characterising an investigation. Additionally, an epistemology allows a researcher to determine if the discovery they make in their research is adequate and legitimate (Crotty, 1998; DePoy and Gitlin, 1998). There are three main epistemological styles; objectivism, constructionism, and subjectivism. These different styles have different outlook on how knowledge is obtained.

Primarily, this research examines the interaction between the respondent and the setting and how the wildlife-based experiences characterise such interaction. For this reason, constructionism is considered the best style of epistemology for this research.

The researcher finds out subjectivism is not the appropriate style of epistemology as this states that meaning is not derived out of the interaction between an object and subject, but such meaning is imposed by the subject on the object (Crotty, 1998).

Also, the researcher observed that objectivist epistemology is not suitable for this study as it states that meaning and therefore meaningful reality exists apart from the operation of any consciousness (Crotty, 1998). This implies that the values as well as the understanding of the

respondents are objectified and therefore carrying out the research in the right way leads to the discovery of the objective truth (Crotty, 1998). Given that respondents characterise their own influence of experiences of the wildlife in this research, this epistemological approach is not suitable.

Constructionism is described by Crotty as how different people construct different meaning in different ways in relation to the same studied phenomena (1998). It is how objects or events are viewed by a respondent and the meaning that the give to such that is important for the researcher in this study (Rubin and Rubin, 2005).

For example, the researcher expected that some of the study respondents would see wildlife tourism sites is Sabah as remote and isolate. The classification of Sabah by the respondents based on their experiences provided greater insight as seen from the data base on the time that the tourist spends on the site. *"In this sense, multiple and even conflicting versions of the same event or object can be true at the same time"* (Rubin and Rubin, 2005).

Besides getting the understanding the epistemological underpinnings behind this research, which facilitate the interpretation and evaluation of the research quality, it is also important to look at the theoretical perspectives as discussed in the following section.

5.2.3   Theoretical Perspective

According to Crotty (1998), the theoretical perspective of a research project is the underlying philosophical stance of the methodology that is applied in the study. Thus, in areas such as sociology, psychology or economics, empirical research based on an educational setting (Whitehurst, 2002) may utilise grounded theory, critical theory as well as interpretive approaches. The elements of critical theory are used by the study in understanding the human experiences as a way of changing the world (DePoy and Gitlin, 1998). A lot of investigations that make use of critical theory seek to obtain knowledge about the experience of human beings as a way of promoting social change and how social situations impact such thoughts and actions (DePoy and Gitlin, 1998; Miller and Brewer, 2003). The knowledge for creating support programs as well as initiatives that catalyse the promotion for social change in terms of wildlife conservation can be obtained by collecting data on tourists' perception of their own experience of the wildlife in Sabah with respect to their animal-based experiences.

This study also employs grounded theory. DePoy and Gitlin (1998) defined grounded theory as the systematic discovery of theory from social research data. The investigator structures and directs this approach as well as representing the integration of quantitative and qualitative

thinking perspectives (DePoy and Gitlin, 1998) which is the purpose of this study. DePoy and Gitlin (1998) described grounded theory as an approach that starting with extensive descriptive interests and through the collection of data and the analysis of that data, facilitates the discovery and verification of relationships as well as principles.

A broad range of interpretive approaches as well as the factors and the components that influence the experience of a person in a natural environment and eventually impact on the individual wildlife-based experiences is outlined in the literature review. The collection of data is done against the combined theoretical framework comprising the following; (1) scheme theory, (2) experience theory, (3) biodiversity hotspots theory, and (4) animal encounter theory. As the process of data collection followed by analysis is done, relationships that exists between variables as well as common trends become evident. These relationships and trends can be applied in substantiating principles as well as theories and probably inform new theory development for the studied population. Various limitations had to be put into consideration before developing further methodological steps on the determination of the epistemological views and theoretical perspectives underlying this study. An outline of this is provided below in reference to this entire research.

5.2.4   Study Boundaries

In sections 5.4 and 5.5, the researcher discusses the framework for the study that entails the constructions of individual meanings by the study respondents from their wilderness experiences with the researcher using a highly specified research population to understand this specific human experience. The selection of the research questions for this study are also guided by the aims of the study and the research questions. The features of wildlife that are responsible for creating quality wildlife-based tourism experiences are investigated in this study. The influence of this wildlife experience among tourists against the conservation of wildlife in Sabah Malaysia is characterised in this study. Therefore, the population of the study is limited to visitors undertaking wildlife-based tours of Sabah, Malaysia.

Several practical factors have to be put into consideration before progressing. The first factor is the aspect of *time* (Blaxter *et al*., 2002). This project will take about 5 months to complete. This limits the study to that which can be implemented faster to make sure that adequate time is left for conducting data analysis as well as reporting. *Money* is the second most important consideration (Blaxter *et al*., 2002). The total budget for this project is MYR 1000. This caters for production, transportation, and material costs leaving out labour.

The other considerations that must be taken into account is the *availability of samples*, *access to situations* and *gaining co-operation* (Blaxter *et al*., 2002; DePoy and Gitlin, 1998). This study received good support due to the relationship that exists between the Sabah Tourism Board and the University. The study also built a relationship with Kota Kinabalu airport where the survey for the study was done. The researcher had an easy time accessing the study respondents because of the relationship that existed between these organizations. In section 5.6.1 provides the reasons for choosing these groups.

The final practical consideration taken in this study is the *familiarity with the subject under study* (Blaxter *et al*., 2002). Though the study started with minimal familiarity with the topic of research as well as the targeted population, consultation of a huge amount of literature, experts as well as scholars in this field was done to guide the research design of the study. Studies conducted previously in Sabah looked at conservation, livelihoods and the role that tourism play in Sabah. Very valuable insights were obtained from a case study by Fletcher (2009) which studied Sukau Village, Lower Kinabatangan District. The selection of the methodology of this research was guided by Fletcher's study.

5.2.5   Research Population

A research population is that which is adopted by the researcher for sampling purposes. The population must share common characteristics that can be represented by a well-defined collection of components (Arber, 2001; DePoy and Gitlin, 1998). The first criteria for the selection of the population of study was that the person must have attended and completed a wildlife-based tour in Sabah, Malaysia. Additionally, given that one of questions raised by this study was the determination of if the degree of the tourist satisfaction from a wilderness experience was related to the attributes of the wildlife, the researcher found it important to select tourists that were from outside Sabah and preferably tourists from international destinations. This approach provided the study with an opportunity to see which component of the respondent population (and which factors) likely influenced the revisit behavioural intention of the visitors.

5.2.6   Research Setting

The Kota Kinabalu International Airport (KKIA) was the site for the collection of data for this research. The reason why KKIA was chosen is because the airport serves a wide range of both national and international tourist given its ease of accessibility. However, KKIA had some limitations in that some of the sections were restricted for passenger who board planes.

The best time for collecting the data was decided on the basis of the constructionist epistemology – the best time was when tourists were waiting for their flights. Potential respondents were given the survey as the airport departing gates, at the food court as well as at the airport lounges. The research survey was conducted using a team of four trained undergraduate students. The surveys were obtained for the various genders, ages and nationalities.

The students were trained to attempt to approach all the departing travellers and requesting them the complete the survey. The survey time had enough time to hand out the survey and the collect completed surveys given that the shift lasts for two hours and thirty minutes. This made it possible to collect the surveys before the travellers started boarding. The respondent completed the survey in 5 to 10 minutes. During collection of he completed surveys, the team thanked the respondents for their time and effort.

5.3   RESEARCHING APPROACHES

Blaxter *et al*. (2002) and Creswell (2003) defined research families the inquiry strategies that are employed by researchers when carrying out their research. Two alternative research dichotomies exist - deskwork/fieldwork and quantitative/qualitative. Practically, the isolation between quantitative and qualitative research does not exist. This is because, research operates in a continuum between the two methods although it tends to go towards one side than the other (Creswell, 2003). Given that the collection of data as well as the analysis combines both methods, a mixed method research is adopted (Creswell, 2003). Using a mixed methods research helps in neutralizing any biases and pitfalls that one method may have by adopting the other method (Creswell, 2003). The focussing of the literature and the utilization of mixed methods research allowed triangulation and convergence of the study by the researcher (Creswell, 2003; DePoy and Gitlin, 1998).

Six major types of mixed method strategies involving the collection of the data exists, according to Cresswell (2003), based on whether the collection of data is done sequentially or concurrently, and whether it is explanatory, exploratory, nested or transformative. This study employed a sequential exploratory strategy. Before the data collection phase, a focus group for collecting qualitative data was held with the collection of quantitative data occurring after the focus group interviews. The information that was collected from the interviews was then utilised in designing, developing, and collecting quantitative data during the phase of the collection of data. This approach has several strengths in that they allow the efficient collection of data as well as helping the researcher gain perspectives that are only different but also complimentary from several data types (Creswell, 2003).

The second general family for conducting a research is distinguishing between deskwork and fieldwork (Blaxter *et al*., 2002). Extensive deskwork was utilised in this study to devise a suitable research questions and this played a big role in research tool development. There was no direct collection of data from the field as the researcher did not want the study to act as a source of disturbance or influence to the tourists during their wildlife trips.

5.4　RESEARCH APPROACH

After taking into account the practical considers of the study, research questions, research aims, and the research family, the researcher settled on a cases study encompassing a survey (Yin, 2003) as the most suitable research approach for this project. The study examined various research approaches. Action research approach was examined and found to be inappropriate for this study as it did not involve the intervention for change (Blaxter *et al*., 2002). The study also found an experimental approach to be inappropriate as it does not involve independent variables manipulation (Blaxter *et al*., 2002).

Given that the study focused on Sabah only, it was considered a case study. The study involved multiple methods for the collection of data, focussed on real-life phenomenon, had little control over the events and had the purpose of describing the phenomena as well as examining the relationships (Blaxter *et al*., 2002; Davis, 1998; DePoy and Gitlin, 1998; Sarantakos, 1993; Yin, 2003). As states above, triangulation is also a basic strategy in case study designs (Yin, 2003).

While a cases study was indicated to be an excellent theory for generating theory (DePoy and Gitlin, 1998), this study tried to provide evidence for theories that have already been specified. As such, there was a deviation from case study methods as noted by Sarantakos (1993) who also proposed that case studies are also characterised by openness with no standardisation or restriction in the methods used for data collection. This was not applicable in this study. This is because, the study had predetermined research questions and used standardised the scales for the survey. Creswell (2003) observed that case studies are used to gather information from participants over a sustained period – this was not the cases for this research. With respect to the study, the context of the study was that it was more of a research model that a method for collection of data (Sarantakos, 1993). This study used a survey for data collection.

Blaxter *et al*. (2002) observed that a survey is one of the most common approaches used to conduct small scale researches. When a specific group of people have to be asked certain questions or pertain to a given areas surveys are the best. A survey collects data by asking a

set of pre-formulated questions (Blaxter *et al*., 2002). The use of this approach provided this study with the following strengths:

- ➢ it provided an account of the degree as well as the nature of the wilderness experience phenomenon (Davies, 1994);
- ➢ the responses from each individual study participant were combined with the responses from other respondents to generate results which were applied to the entire sample (Blaxter *et al*., 2002; Davies, 1994);
- ➢ it allowed the design of questions that were non-leading and unbiased as possible, thus improving results validity (Blaxter *et al*., 2002); and
- ➢ the survey can be used again on similar populations - if replication of the results is necessary (Blaxter *et al*., 2002).

From the discussion presented above, it is evident that a case study that involves a survey is the most suitable approach for this research. It is the best approach in that uses the critical theory as well as the grounded theory in addition to considering the constructivist position adopted by this study. Constructivist grounded theory has application in psychology, education, nursing, but not yet in wildlife tourism, and so, is not engaged. Further, this study does not seek to build grounded theory, but it follows a general approach embracing grounded theory, critical theory and constructivism. The study's relevant theoretical aspects are summarized later in the theoretical findings section of the concluding chapter.

The use of a survey together with a cases study ensure that time, money and access to samples that not compromise the findings of the study.

5.5 RESEARCH SURVEY
5.5.1 Survey Type
According to Sarantakos (1993), there are three types of surveys to put into consideration (1) telephone interviews, (2) face-to-face interviews, and (3) self-administered questionnaires. This study has a wide range of information that is collected from the respondents. Sarantakos (1993) and Creswell (2003) noted that the disadvantage of face-to-face interviews is that it consumes a lot of time and may be subject to researcher influence.

Because the research is conducted in an airport environment, it is difficult to the conduct lengthy face-to-face interviews due to the high background noise and the closeness to other people given that this is a public place. This could influence the responses provided by participant. They could be less articulate and perceptive (Creswell, 2003). Telephone

interviews were also not considered due to high cost associated with it, the extra work that comes with chasing people up and the ethical inability of the researcher to collect personal information (and get rid of any anonymity). A discussion of such ethical consideration is provided in Section 5.10.

A self-administered questionnaire was considered the best method for data collection and therefore chosen as a key survey technique for this study. This type of survey is effective in gathering data that is potentially sensitive given that the researcher is not present when a participant fills the questionnaire (Bradburn *et al*., 2004). The varying levels of literacy and the language skills among the study participants is a limitation in the use of this method (Davies, 1994).

International tourists were part of the study respondents who were surveyed. Therefore, the language employed in the questionnaire is likely to affect the answers provided by those participating in the study. Self-reported data is mainly relied on in the majority of surveys – this could be a problem here if total honesty is not observed by the study respondents (Huffman, 2004). However, the likelihood of under-reporting and over-reporting is not reduced by self-completion (Bradburn *et al*., 2004). Self-reported surveys are also limited in that the respondents did not have enough room to seek clarification on the survey questions (Davies, 1994).

To address some of these limitations, a follow up of the self-administered questionnaire was done using face-to-face voluntary and brief interviews to obtain comprehensive views on some of the issues provided by the respondents (Blaxter *et al*., 2002; Hawe *et al*., 2002). Most of these interviews were done one-on-one with a small section of the participants expressing preference for small groups. The validity of the provided information was checked by triangulating these two methods (Blaxter *et al*., 2002; DePoy & Gitlin, 1998). The methods also facilitated the development of a detailed understanding of tourist's wildlife/wilderness experience (DePoy and Gitlin, 1998).

5.5.2   Questionnaire Design

To design the questionnaire for this study, the researcher developed an outline of themes, categories and variables of interest that were used to guide the process. The focus groups interviews (Table 5.2) and literature review were used to develop the outline. The gaps identified in the literature were used to develop the research questions. The themes for the study were used to guide the research questions with the findings of the literature review on

the factors that influence the individual wildlife-based experiences of those participating in a wilderness tours used for the development of categories and variables (components).

The main themes that came out of this research are as follows: (1) perceptions of the experience, (2) conservation perspectives, (3) motivations and expectation, (4) satisfaction with wildlife-based tours, (5) intention of visitation and the trip characteristics and personal demographics (Appendix A). Next, the researcher consulted existing questionnaires that had similar themes, categories and variables; some of these questionnaires used the similar sample or target groups. Using the questionnaires, a list of the format of the possible questions as well as the various categories of responses were identified followed by a review suing the themes in the table.

The majority of the questions as well as the instruments or the scales selected for inclusion were found to have been employed by other similar studies and/or have existing data at a national level that can be used for comparison purposes. Narrowing down was then done to obtain a group of questions and instruments that were very clear and concise while making sure that inclusion of all the variables identified in the themes. Conciseness and clarity were considered in the design of the questions to make it easy for the respondent to understand and answer. The questionnaire had various response types that include open-ended questions, close-ended questions, and five point Likert scales

The way in which each theme and category were considered and where the appropriate questions were drawn from is presented in the outline that follows. A range of factors to include in the questionnaire were based on the existing literature with the components of other instruments and questions forming the basis on which the instruments of this study were assembled. The logical progression of the topics formed the basis for sequencing of the questions with the aim of reducing the rate of non-completion. Appendix B provides details of the actual questions asked to the participants as well as the order in which they were asked – the Appendix is a copy of the questionnaire.

> *Theme 1: Demographics*
>> In most social studies, the collection of personal demographics is important and most of the time, these are asked at the end of the questionnaire (Bradburn *et al*., 2004). However, this study took a different approach with the personal demographics being the first theme on the questionnaire. This is because the researcher considers this to be easy to answer and will therefore make the study participant more relaxed before tackling more engaging questions. The stratifying variables used for this theme

included: Gender, educational qualifications, work status, current country of residence, and year of birth. These variables could impact the results of the study and may offer options for segmenting the results of the study. Questions addressing this theme were developed from several surveys and questionnaire methodology texts such as that of Bradburn *et al.* (2004), and for example, for the country of residence, the question was open-ended with categorization done using the Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC) developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2003).

➢ *Theme 2: Trip characteristics*

Trip characteristics was the second theme for this study. Some of the questions here asked if this was their first visit to Sabah (Malaysia) or not, who is their immediate travel party, how they know about Sabah in the first place, and the type of travel arrangement. These questions were used to help the researcher characterise the trip to develop a better understanding of the trip type that the respondents took. The Sabah Tourism Board Visitor Survey (STB, 2019) helped in the development of questions for this theme.

➢ *Theme 3: Motivations and expectations*

Matlin (1999) defined motivation as the reason why people behave the way they do. Motivation can either be intrinsic (out of personal enjoyment of an activity) or extrinsic (associated with threat of punishment or external reward) (Huffman, 2004). Whether the motivation is extrinsic or intrinsic, it is important natural environment destination managers identify the type so that they can be able to meet the needs of their visitors and enhance their satisfaction (Graefe *et al.*, 2000). Godbey *et al.* (2005) found that the social and primary characteristics of leisure are the feelings of enjoyment, relative freedom and intrinsic motivation. Compounding factors were considered the main reasons why people travelled to Sabah, Malaysia.

The factors that people consider when they choose Sabah as their destination was included in this themes and addressed by two main questions. The first question sought to establish the main reason for motivation to travel to Sabah, Malaysia. In the second question, the importance of a range of expectations in respondents desire to visit Sabah, Malaysia, was assessed. The second questions assessed aspects such as (1) the activities and attractions that were offered, (2) the importance of the natural aspects of the state, (3) the importance of the personal factors and the social interaction with others, and (4) and the practical importance of venturing to Sabah, Malaysia. Expectation factors were several and therefore an open-ended type of

questions were adopted so that the respondents had a chance to write their own expectations before visiting Sabah.

➢ *Theme 4: Wildlife-based experiences*

The perception of the wildlife around them as well as the wildlife based experience of the tourists in Sabah, Malaysia, was addressed in this theme. The study respondents were asked to indicate what their most important or less important aspect of visiting was in wildlife tourism sites in Sabah, Malaysia. Being the fourth theme of the study, these questions were close to the beginning of the questionnaire and therefore allowed the respondents to rely on their personal perceptions and experiences as opposed to being prompted with previous items on the questionnaire. Here, the researcher assumed that the participants would answer these questions by indicating that the visit had influenced an aspect of their life that is related to animals or it has impacted their perceptions on wildlife species.

The next set of questions sought to identify the personal experiences of the tourists that made them feel memorable the animal based encounters. Four question asked on the direct impact of the wildlife-based encounter experience and the included; (1) animal that they hope to see during their visit, (2) the best and worst aspects of visits amongst the respondents, (3) wildlife species that they had memorable encounter with and (4) the best word that described their memorable encounter with the species.

Another group of questions set at the end of this theme looked at how visiting Sabah's wildlife tourism sites made the tourists feel about zoos and their response about the overall experience of the wildlife tourism. The use of a pre-test post-test research design would have been the ideal way of determining this change; this was not possible this research, however. Therefore, respondents were asked to provide their rating of their overall expectation and satisfaction that made feel about their wildlife-based trips. The researcher was careful in designing these questions to ensure that they were non-leading and therefore make it possible for the respondent to use their own judgment when providing answers.

➢ *Theme 5: Satisfaction with wildlife-based tours*

In the definition of tourist satisfaction, different and yet similar expressions were made by various researchers. According to Ragheb and Tate (1993), tourist satisfaction is the positive perception that tourists gain or form after their engagement in tourism tasks or activities. It may also be considered to be the extent to which a tourist is pleased

with their experiences. Tourist satisfaction was also defined by Tribe and Snaith (1998) as the extent to which the assessment of the attributes of a destination by a tourist exceeds their expectations for those attributes.

The perceived value for money by the tourist and the perceived quality of service that the tourists received during their trip to Sabah was addressed by this theme using several questions. Using a scale of 1 to 5, the tourists were also asked to provide a rating for their satisfaction. A scale of 1 stood for "very unsatisfactory" and 5 stood for "very satisfactory".

> *Theme 6: Conservation perspectives*

The practice of wildlife tourism has a close relationship with the concept of ecotourism. Both forms of tourism entail traveling to natural areas for the purposes of enjoying the natural scenery and the various cultural features that they present. They also insist on promoting awareness about the environment, ensuring sustainability, and are conservation-oriented. Ecotourism is particularly focussed and more concerned about the welfare of the local people. It encourages the hosts of a destination to take part in ecotourism activities by engaging in projects that economically benefits them. Other key characteristic of ecotourism is that it put emphasis on educational aspect and that it is more of a concept than an industry.

To achieve sustainable development, developing countries have increasing adopted the concept of ecotourism. The use of this concept in the world continues to grow because its target is to pass a message on the negative impacts that are associated with mass tourism. In the development of ecotourism projects, three main pillars need to be considered. These are (1) the natural environment, (2) development and (3) experience. Ecotourism acts as a form of encouragement for tourists in that it allows tourists to learn more about the destination as well as its culture and therefore promote tourist responsible behaviour which contributes in reducing environmental damage. However, the perception of a tourist on the quality of experience from a destination and therefore their satisfaction with a destination dictates the success of sustainable tourism especially when it comes to wildlife tourism. To ensure the sustainability of a tourism destination managers have to ensure the satisfaction of tourism. Satisfaction is an emotional concept that involves the feeling of pleasure that is produced when the needs and wants of an individual are met. It was observed by various authors (Taylor & Baker, 1994; Bolton & Drew, 1991; Tian-Cole & Crompton, 2003) that when tourists express satisfaction, it implies that there is addressed and this is as a result of the

intervention of two stimuli: result and reference. Troung and Foster (2006) also indicated that satisfaction is an independent psychological state that encompasses a subjective assessment of the difference between expectations and perceived service. Satisfaction is assessed after the service has been consumed because it is a derivative of accumulated experience, quality of service, fulfilment of tourists' expectations, and value of the service.

In this theme, the questions asked to the study respondents entailed the following: the experience of the tourist, tourist satisfaction, tourist knowledge of the concept of wildlife conservation in the wildlife tourism industry. The respondents were also asked about what have they learnt before visiting wildlife tourism sites in Sabah and how do they think that wildlife tourism can save the species.

➤ *Theme 7: Intention of re-visitation*
In marketing, the construct of perceived value is considered a very important measure for attaining competitive edge (Parasuraman, 1997). As such, some authors have argued that it is the most important indicator of repurchase intention (Parasuraman and Grewal, 2000). In the field of tourism, repurchases intention and the loyalty of the consumer are considered the indicative measures of the satisfaction of the consumer and/or the quality of service received (Petrick, 1999). As Woodruff (1997) observed, if the measurement of the satisfaction of the consumer is not supported with in-depth learning about customer value and related problems underlying their valuations, it may not provide enough of the voice of the customer to guide managers where to respond.

Thus, in this theme, questions posted to the study respondents touched on their views about future trips to Sabah that included the following: their likelihood of returning to Sabah and how strongly that they would recommend Sabah to their friends and family.

➤ *Name of the survey instrument*
At this stage, the researcher had to create a name for the survey instrument after putting into consideration the elements discussed in the sections above. Considering the audience that would be completing the questionnaire and the type of information that they would provide, the following title was chosen: *Wildlife Viewing Preferences of Visitors to Protected Areas in Sabah, Malaysia: Implications for the Role of Wildlife Tourism in Conservation.* The design of this title ensured that it was non-threatening and at the same time collect responses from the participants without pre-empting responses. It should also be noted that at the very end of the questionnaire, the

researcher crafted a small message that thanked each study respondent for taking their time and wishing them the best for their journey home. Bradburn *et al*. (2004) observed that this a great way to end a questionnaire. In wording the questions of the study, the researcher ensure that basic terminology were used to ensure that it reflected the language of the respondent as opposed to that of the researcher. The questionnaire was also broken up into sections that are well manageable with appropriate headings as well as clear instructions that gave the respondents as clear instructions on how to complete the questions.

➢ *Format design of the questionnaire*

The format of the questionnaire was done to ensure the respondents get a good first impression of the research. This effective design ensure that the respondent found it effective in completing the questionnaire and ensuring that the data entry process was efficient. In line with the recommendation provided by Bradburn *et al.* (2004), the questions were printed on professional paper and following the recommendations by Sarantakos (1993) the paper was an A5 booklet (basically an A4 paper folded in half) which gave the impression that the survey was smaller as well as allowing printing on both sides (reduced the cost of printing) and was small and sturdy enough for respondents to fill in without need the support of a table or hard surface. The guidelines pertaining to typeface, colour, layout, style and overall impression of the survey were established by Bradburn *et al*. (2004) and this helped in the developed of the survey booklet for this study.

➢ *Research study information sheet*

The respondents were given the Research Study Information Sheet alongside the questionnaire (Appendix C). The sheet included the description of the research purpose, how the visitors would be involved, the requirement for visitor participation, research beneficiaries, respondent ethical obligations, and the contact information for the team undertaking the research. This document was two A4 pages; the researcher did not expect every respondent to read it word for word and therefore major words were put in bold. The components of the document were required to satisfy obligations to the Human Research Ethics Committee at the James Cook University and were also endorsed as significant sections in Sarantakos (1993).

5.5.3 Questionnaire Administration

In delivering self-administered questionnaires to respondents, four main methods exist: one-to-one, group, semi-supervised and unsupervised. For this study, the most suitable method is

the group self-administration in which the questionnaire is delivered to a group of the study respondents in a setting such as that of the classroom (Bradburn *et al*., 2004). In this case, this setting is the departure hall in the airport where the responded completed an individual questionnaire. Using this method ensures the researcher meets the study objective in the method is relatively inexpensive (Davies, 1994; van Krieken *et al*., 2000) and provides greater ability to ensure the questionnaire is completed by the correct people and returned, though it may consume more time (Bourque & Fielder, 2003). Moreover, it means that all the study respondents had the same environment for completing the survey. Although the primary researcher was supported by different research assistants during the administration of each of the questionnaire, it was ensure that all the assistants adhered to a set of formal administration procedures that helped in ensuring the consistency of verbal instructions and the handling of the various questions and comments (Bourque and Fielder, 2003).

The primary aim of the administration of the questionnaire was to provide a balance between the maximum and successful completion of the questionnaire and that the trip of the respondents were impacted in a positive manner. In selecting the respondents of the study, a random approach was used with the researchers first asking the participant if they had previously participated in wildlife based tours in Sabah followed by a brief introduction into the research study. The time for completing the questionnaire while ensuring the anonymity of the respondents and the fact that the respondents were accompanied by the researchers in the departure hall tool less than 30 seconds. Before the boarding the questionnaire, the respondents had enough time to start and complete the questionnaire. If the time for a potential respondent for boarding came, the researchers ensured these respondents had their way without any interruption such as asking them to take part in the survey. The study targeted only those respondents who were not in rush to board to participate in the study. Once the participant started providing their responses, the researcher and the assistant ensured very minimal interruption and only checked on them after 10 to 15 minutes.

5.5.4   Face-To-Face Interview Design

Non-structure interviews were used by the researcher in this study as a means of getting close to the data and exploring the various opinions and thoughts on the effect that wildlife tourism has on the environment and how it affects the experience and conservation value of an individual (Appendix D). Given the short time available, the interviews were short and took just a few minutes. The first question was *"has there been a particular event that you think influence your perception on wildlife tourism?"* This question was designed to be non-leading as much as possible and to provide the respondent the opportunity to state the moment when they felt more comfortable in their tourism destination (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). The second

and final question was *"do you have any suggestions for management or other visitors to Sabah that would improve the impact on their wildlife-based experience?"* this question was general and therefore easy to answer once the respondent had completed filling the questionnaire.

5.5.5 Face-To-Face Interview Administration

The study respondents were invited for a three-minute interview session with the researcher in the last question on the questionnaire, if there was enough time. It was the intention of the researcher to make these interviews as informal as possible using a discussion format (Blaxter *et al.*, 2002). Occasionally, the researcher found that a one-to-one discussion with a particular respondent grew into a group discussion as other respondents and people joined. When asking for more suggestions, the researcher ensured that the respondents knew that she was associated with the university only and not any other party. At first, it was thought that the discussion would be recorded by the researcher by using a pre-designed paper pro-forma; however, this was not the case as the researcher felt that this acted as a form of intrusion and broke the discussion flow. Instead of the recordings, the researcher spent a little more time at the airport lounge to try and recall the specifics of the discussion – this was a non-threatening approach for the study respondents and made them feel more relaxed.

5.5.6 Summary Table of Techniques

Following the discussions above, an outline of the features of this research are outlined in Table 5.2. These characteristics are classified as qualitative and quantitative. Though this research had a lot of qualitative concepts, a huge portion of these were quantified to ensure ease of analysis.

Table 5.2:   Qualitative and quantitative aspects of this research.

Source: Developed using Blaxter *et al.*, 2002 and Creswell, 2003.

QUALITATIVE	QUANTITATIVE
☐ Exploring a phenomenon in as much detail as possible	☐ Non-numeric answers categorised and coded in numeric form
☐ Constructivist philosophical assumptions	☐ Seeking the causes of social phenomena
☐ Aims to achieve 'depth' rather than 'breadth'	☐ Outcome-orientated
☐ Subjective experience of individuals	☐ Assumes a stable reality
☐ Opened-ended responses from questionnaire	☐ Identification of variables to study
☐ Concerned with understanding a respondents behaviour from their own perspective	☐ Qualitative data often includes quantification eg. excellent, very good, good, fair, poor, very poor.
☐ Grounded, exploratory, and descriptive	☐ Survey using questionnaire

☐ Multiple methods that are interactive and humanistic	☐ Predetermined instrument yields statistical data
☐ Emergent rather than tightly prefigured ie. data collection process evolves to gain greater understanding	☐ Closed-ended questions
☐ Mostly un-generalizable: the data can only be applied to Sabah, Malaysia	
☐ Takes place in KKIA	
☐ Researcher makes an interpretation of the data	
☐ Holistic, broad, panoramic view of phenomena	

5.5.7   Sampling Methods

The sampling methods of this study have features of probability and non-probability theory. Cluster Sampling was used in this research and this entailed the random selection of sampling units (DePoy and Gitlin, 1998), which in this study was the Departure Gates. By using this sampling method, the researcher was able to randomly select departure gates that had smaller sampling units needed for the study – the respondents. However, the use of cluster sampling saw the standard error of the sample go up because of the similarity of the elements in the cluster (Arber, 2001) – in this study the similarity was in people on each of the departure gates who had almost identical tour experiences.

Given that this research did not have a sampling frame, which is defined as the complete list of all people at a certain departure gate on the sampling day, the researcher decided that the number of the participants was not large enough for randomization to be done in each cluster. For this reason, the researcher made use of nonprobability methods involving convenience sampling in which the inclusion and exclusion criteria for study participants (DePoy and Gitlin, 1998). This method worked in attracting volunteers to participate in the study.

5.5.8   Ethical Considerations

Before starting the research, the researcher put ethical considerations in place. The proposal as well as the questionnaire were approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at the James Cook University before implementation. A detailed account of ethical measures for this research is provided in the following paragraphs.

To make the study simple and straight forward, it was decided that those who volunteered would have given their informed consent. This is because of the general nature of this study (Bradburn *et al*., 2004). To increase the rate of participation, the study did not collect any identifying information. This was to give the respondents a strong feeling of anonymity (Bradburn *et al*., 2004). To seek clarification on various issues of the study the Research Study

Information Sheet also invited the respondents to contact the researcher or the chairperson of the ethics committee. Respondents were assured that the research was genuine and that its governing bodies were prepared to be accountable.

The researcher considered that the respondent had the right to know the purpose of the research and what was required of them (DePoy and Gitlin, 1998). The researcher together with the assistants had the responsibility of ensuring that the respondents knew that participation was totally voluntary and ensure their anonymity, before their involvement. If for any reason, the researcher decided to withdraw their participation or not complete the questionnaire, the researcher made sure that she and the research assistants respected such decision without further questioning. Given that all research that involve people may have dire consequences for the researcher as well as the participants (Bulmer, 2001), the researcher ensure that the questionnaire was carefully developed and implemented to ensure that all parties were protected from any harm.

5.6   PILOT STUDY

A draft of the questionnaire was subjected to a pilot test with friends, family and scholars within the University of Malaysia Sabah environment being the main participants. The pilot test was to ensure the appropriateness and understanding of the content and format of the questionnaire. As the study was not able to examine the implementation site of the study, the first trip to KKIA when collecting data was also utilised to collate some information on environment conditions as well as practices of the area. The first stage of data collection was also taken as a pilot test - the researcher examine how respondents handled the questionnaire and the sensibility of their responses. Therefore, the first lot of participants were not aware that their questionnaire was not the final version (Bradburn *et al*., 2004) this would allow the researcher to compare their responses to those in the main study. Close monitoring was also done to questions posted in face-to-face interviews. The first trip also provided the researcher with the opportunity to put into trial the logistical operations of the implementation such as coordinating the flights departures and transfers schedules.

Following the pilot test of the questionnaire, some questions were restructured. The researcher also found that identifying potential respondents in the departure hallways was a difficult task as this area was always crowded. The researcher also found that attempting to hand a questionnaire to potential respondents on the site was challenging as the respondents were busy handling their luggage and flight and anxious to acquire all the check-in, immigration and customs process done first. In the initial procedure, 40 questionnaires were handed out with only 20% returned complete. Subsequent relocation of the study

implementation to the departure gates was done after the pilot run. The departure gates are common areas where you would find potential respondents just waiting around, not rushing, and had the opportunity to ask questions. This also implied that the majority of respondents who indicated they were happy to participate actually did so with some providing their commitment verbally. This also reduced pressure on the researchers and allowed a stress free implementation.

5.7   RESEARCH STUDY ANALYSIS

The research questions posed in this study, the design of the data collection techniques, and the scope of inquiry were used as a guidance for the selection of the analytical methods used in this research. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used for collection of data. An outline of the procedures taken in the analysis is provided in the following sections.

5.7.1   Quantitative Analysis

Statistical techniques can be used to efficiently analyse quantitative data to determine the variances between groups and how the data compares with the general population. The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) was used for the analysis of quantitative data and the qualitative data that could be coded as quantitative

Frequencies, average, medians and a range of histograms were employed by descriptive analyses to summarise data and therefore examine patterns. The presence of a significant relations with the types of wildlife viewing on a number of variables was examined using the Pearson's Chi Square. In Chi square, it is usually assumed that no more than 20% of the cells have a count less than five (Field, 2005; Quinn and Keough, 2002), however, many authors do not agree with this (Daniel, 1999). If cells in the Chi Square analyses had cell counts of less than five, it was ensured that this represented no more than 20% of the categories.

Given that the majority of the responses were based on Likert Scales, non-parametric tests were found suitable. Regarding this, the Mann-Whitney Tests were employed in the determination of the existence of any differences with the types of wildlife viewing. This test is based on the ranks of the observations (Quinn and Keough, 2002).

Some of the questions also had more than one items. These items were reduced using SPSS into components that fitted into the factors. The study used orthogonal rotation called varimax as the principal components of the study. This is because this component tries to maximise the dispersion of factor loadings within factors, whilst making the assumption that the factors are independent (Field, 2005). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) of the adequacy of

sampling was utilised in determining the extent of diffusion or compactness of the relative correlations (Field, 2005).

On finding clusters of large correlation coefficients, the researcher deduced that some items could be measuring aspects of the same underlying dimension or factor. The ratio of subjects to variables was chosen to be close to 10:1 and at a bare minimum of 5:1 to ensure factor analysis was effective and valid. Equal weighting irrespective of the size of the loading coefficient was given to each factor (Gorsuch, 1974). The calculation of the score of each component was then done by simply adding and then averaging. After establishing, the different factors, arbitrary names were assigned to the items – the names closely described the items included in that factor. The calculation of the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each factor was done to establish the internal consistency of the components or items within each factor so as to obtain an alpha of 0.7 - 0.9 (Field, 2005). When the factoring of the items was done and reduced to those with item residuals of under .05 the proposed Wildlife/Location Behavior Model was path model tested using the approach and considerations provided by Hair *et al*. (2013) so as to determine the relative strengths and contributions of the path towards the net satisfaction of the tourist with their encounter in Sabah.

5.7.2   Analysis of Qualitative Data

Throughout the entire questionnaire, open-ended were used. The face-to-face interviews also included open-ended questions. Categorisation of the responses that were received was done into common groups relevant to the research questions. They were coded using SPSS enabling the researcher in the handling and analysis of the data that comes in words instead of numbers. Additionally, the use of SPSS allowed the researcher to develop correlations of the responses to other items or factors. The complexity of the use of qualitative software saw the researcher rule it out as the study required some level of simplicity. A further qualitative study was engaged using 'Leximancer' to assess relationships between consumptive and viewing behaviours.

5.8   ISSUES THAT AROSE DURING THE DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

In collecting the data for the study, several challenges were faced not only by the researcher and the research assistants but also the respondents.

Tourist participation: As noted above, this research depended on voluntary participation of the visitors coming to Sabah, Malaysia from KKIA. This is a risk to the study in that the visitors might not be willing to take part or they may cancel their participation which may affect this study as it is restricted in time because some of the visitors may leave when their coaches

arrive or get into their next flights. To address these issues, the questionnaire was designed using clear presentation with shorter and clear-cut questions.

Language barrier: English language was used in developing the questionnaire. These means that only those who could speak English could be surveyed. This excludes some of the important visitor segments such as Chinese and Japanese visitors. To avoid the loss of important data, sometimes the research assistants were used in the administration of questionnaires. The assistants particularly helped in explaining the questions that the respondents did not understand.

Use of research assistants: This study makes use of research assistant especially during the survey at the airport. Some of the assistant may not possess skills needed to conducted structure interviews and/or carry out self-administered questionnaire (or administered questionnaire if necessary). To avoid the risk of using non-skilled assistants, training on the techniques of asking questions as well ethical principles was done.

5.9   EPILOGUE

Limitations during any study do arise regardless of the method of inquiry used (DePoy and Gitlin, 1998). In other parts of this study, the researcher has presented several limitation but some of them are presented here. The use of the survey had the following limitations:

➢ The researcher and assistants have no means of making sure that the study participants were understanding and interpreting the questions as expected, thus limiting the truthfulness and accuracy of the data (Blaxter *et al*., 2002);

➢ The data obtained from this survey will only give a snapshot of the point in time and fail to capture any underlying processes and changes (Blaxter *et al*., 2002; Davies, 1994);

➢ There could be loss of linkage between data and wider theories and issues, especially when the data become the main focus of the final report (Blaxter *et al*., 2002; Davies, 1994);

➢ The survey may not deal adequately with complex, "real-life" issues (Davies, 1994); and

➢ Relies on the researcher having sufficient knowledge and experience to ask relevant questions appropriately (Davies, 1994).

Both the questionnaire and face-to-face interviews faced the above limitations.

Given that the study was conducted in a public place, other people were around during the face to face interviews. This may have impacted the honesty level of the respondents or maybe not speaking about their concerns about something for fear of retribution for other travellers or nearby staff. Additionally, the Hawthorne Effect could have played a role in that the respondents portrayed themselves in positive light because they were being studied (DePoy and Gitlin, 1998; Sarantakos, 1993). The voluntary nature of the study could also lead to participation bias in that the sampled group may have been of different mix of people as compared to those who declined to participate. This issues was addressed by having a sample that is large enough as well as a good range of respondents.

This Malaysian Government funded Thesis required the tourism survey to be in English or Malay. In 2011 when this study was conducted, English was the most 'universal' language for travelling tourists passing through KKIA.

CHAPTER SIX: RESULTS

6.1 PROLOGUE

In this chapter, the researcher presents the results of the analysis of the data that was collected in this research. It starts by presenting the demographic profile of the study respondents following by the characteristics of the tour. Along with the factors that influence the wilderness experience of tourists, the study also presents the motivations and the expectations of respondents. for the second research question, the analyses focus on the aims of the study to determine the variables of quality wildlife-based experiences that are derived from Sabah's wildlife tourism experiences as an association the level of with the level of acquired satisfaction as well as the level of human-wildlife social in terms of conservation connection experienced while in Sabah. A sample of 646 was used for the study. Additionally, a sample of 22 people were involved in 10 brief interviews.

This study was conducted in April- May 2011. It captures international tourists including Malays from Western Malaysia – who are considered international - as they too must show their passports on entry/exit to Sabah. Hence, they are included as international tourists. In 2011, at KKIA, those who spoke English were asked to participate in the survey.

6.2 RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

6.2.1 Age Distribution

A total of 66.9% of the studied respondents were in the 25 – 44 age group with another 18.9% aged between 15 and 24 years. People in these age groups are considered as the youth. As shown in Figure 6.1 the age distribution for the study is skewed to the right. This age distribution is expected because people in these groups are the one with sufficient personal discretionary funds for spending on tours on venture such as touring wildlife destinations.

6.2.2 Gender

The study had more females (51.6%) than males (48.4%) (Figure 6.2). The distributions of age and gender for the respondents (N = 646) is shown in Figure 6.1.
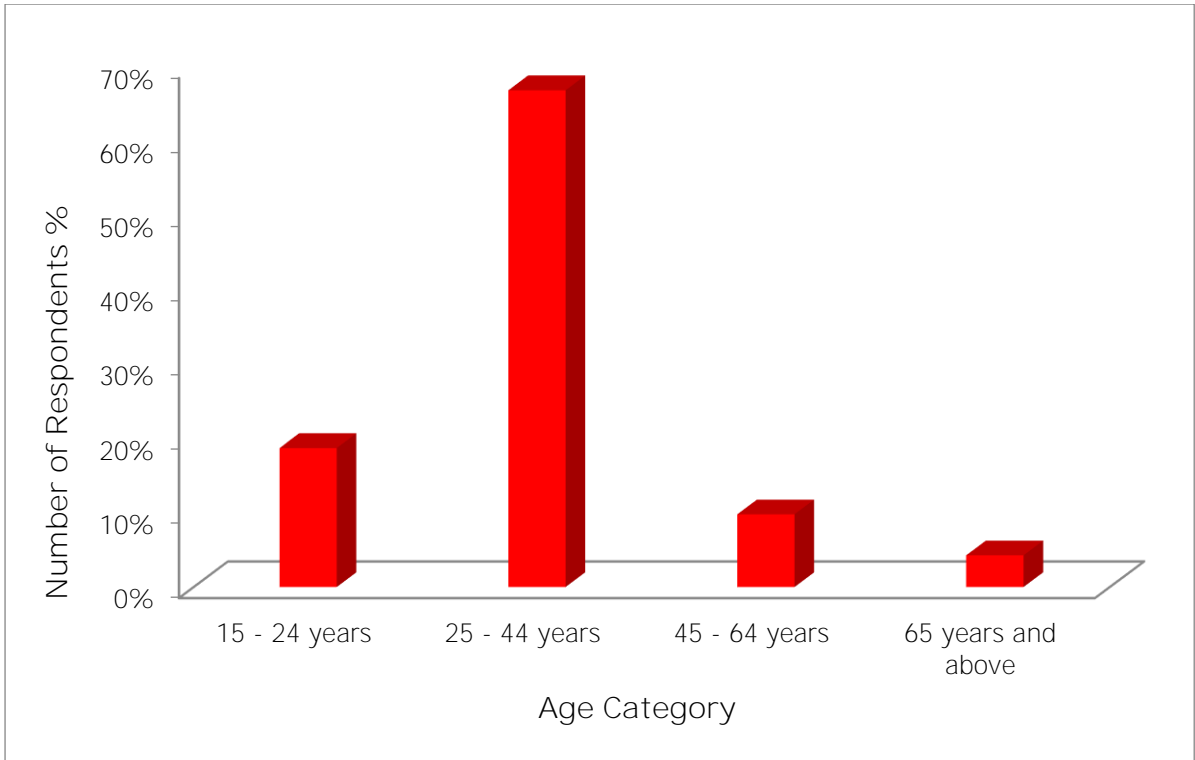
Figure 6.1:   Distribution of ages for the respondents.
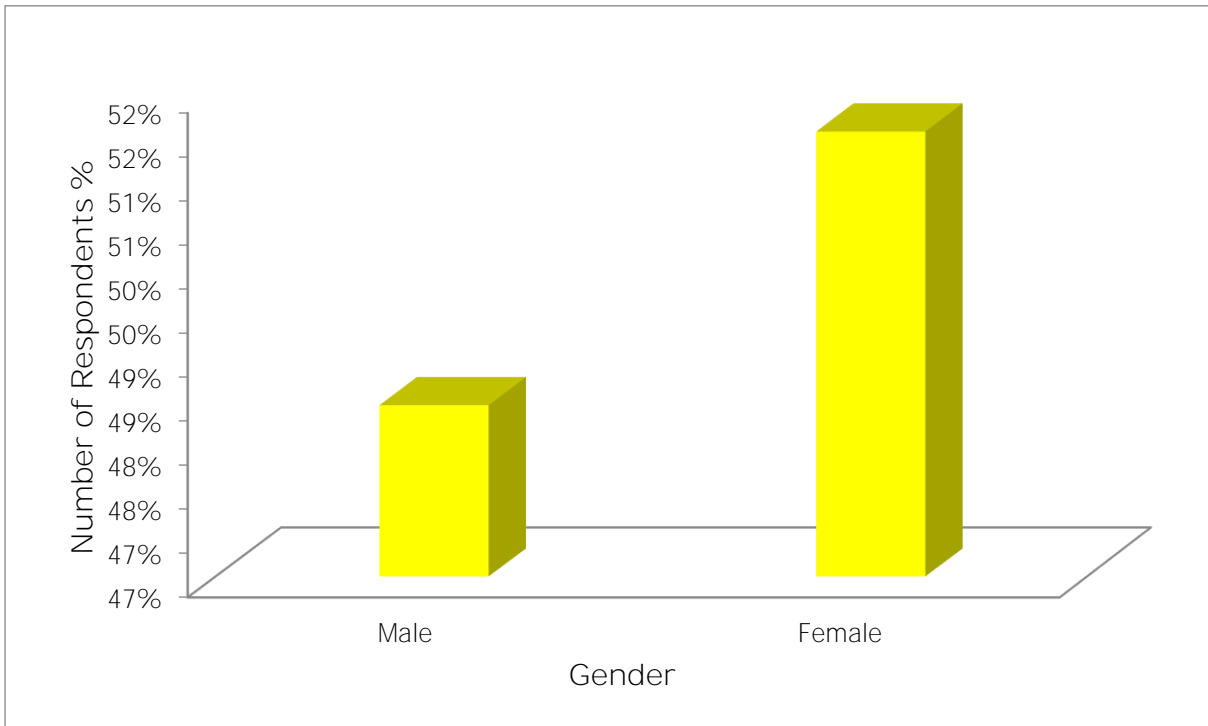
Figure 6.2:   Gender of respondents.

Table 6.1:   Age and gender of the respondents.

| GENDER | AGE CATEGORY | | | | Group Total |
	15 - 24 years	25 - 44 years	45 - 64 years	65 years and above	
Male	64	203	36	10	313
Female	58	229	28	18	333
Group Total	**122**	**432**	**64**	**28**	**646**

6.2.3 Educational Qualifications

The respondents were mostly well educated. About 34.4% of the respondent are holders of bachelor degrees with an additional 17% having a post graduate qualification (N = 646) (Figure 6.3). Additionally, about 20% of the participants were educated up to certificate or secondary level. This indicates that the majority of the respondents have an education with at least a certificate. Thus, the majority of the study respondents at KKIA were well-educated.
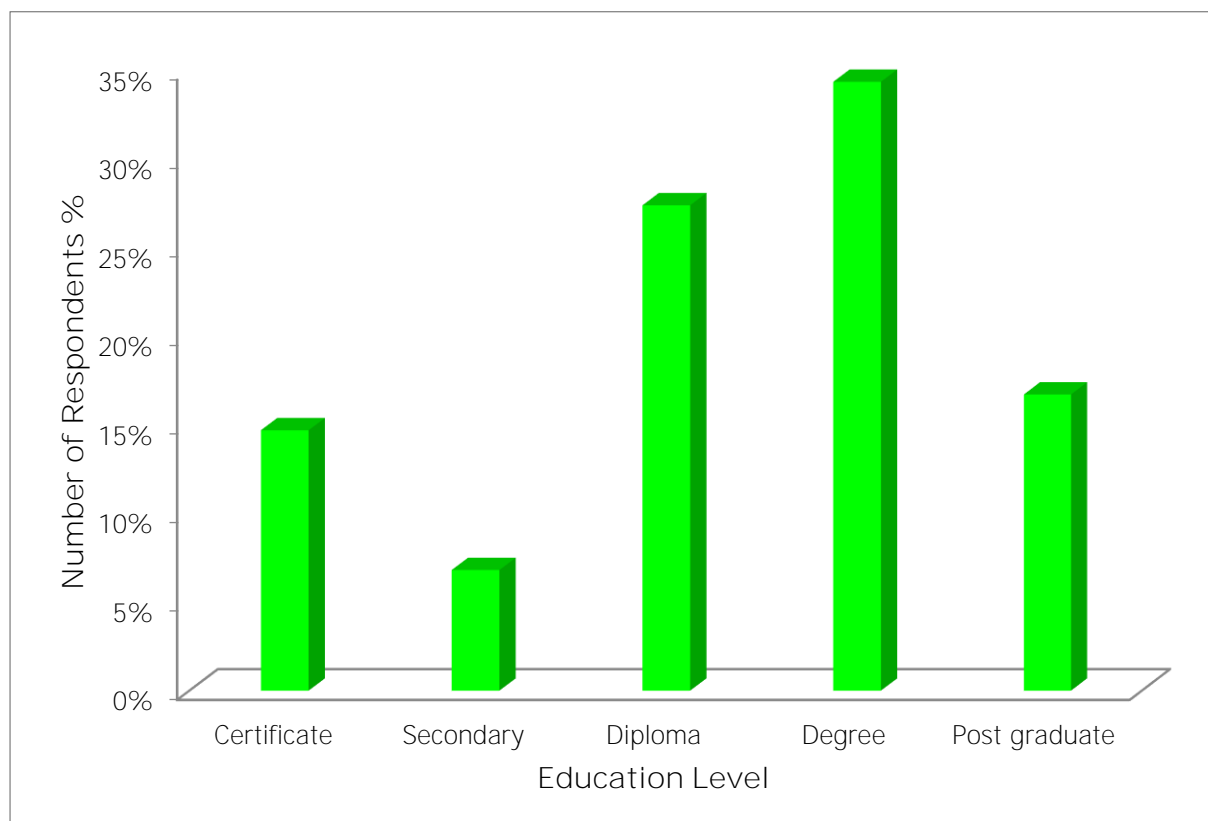
Figure 6.3:   Respondents education levels.

6.2.4 Travel Groupings

A sum of 15.9% of the tourist travelled alone while a 29.1% preferred travelling with their friends and 0.9% like travelling with club members (Figure 6.4). Couples with no children stood at 17.7% with 12.7% of the coupled travelled with their children aged below 15 years. Thus travelling tourists move as groups and their needs should be targeted by local wildlife tourism destinations.

Figure 6.4:   Respondents' immediate travel party.

6.2.5 Types of Occupation

The number of tourists employed at a professional level (e.g. doctors, lecturers etc.) stood at 29.05%. 14.4% of the respondents were students. 4.2% considered themselves retired with 5% as unemployed (Figure 6.5). Again, those with sufficient funds to travel, actually do travel, and they do visit places like Sabah. For this reason, the accommodation, transportation and associated services should be designed to closely target their tourist groups.
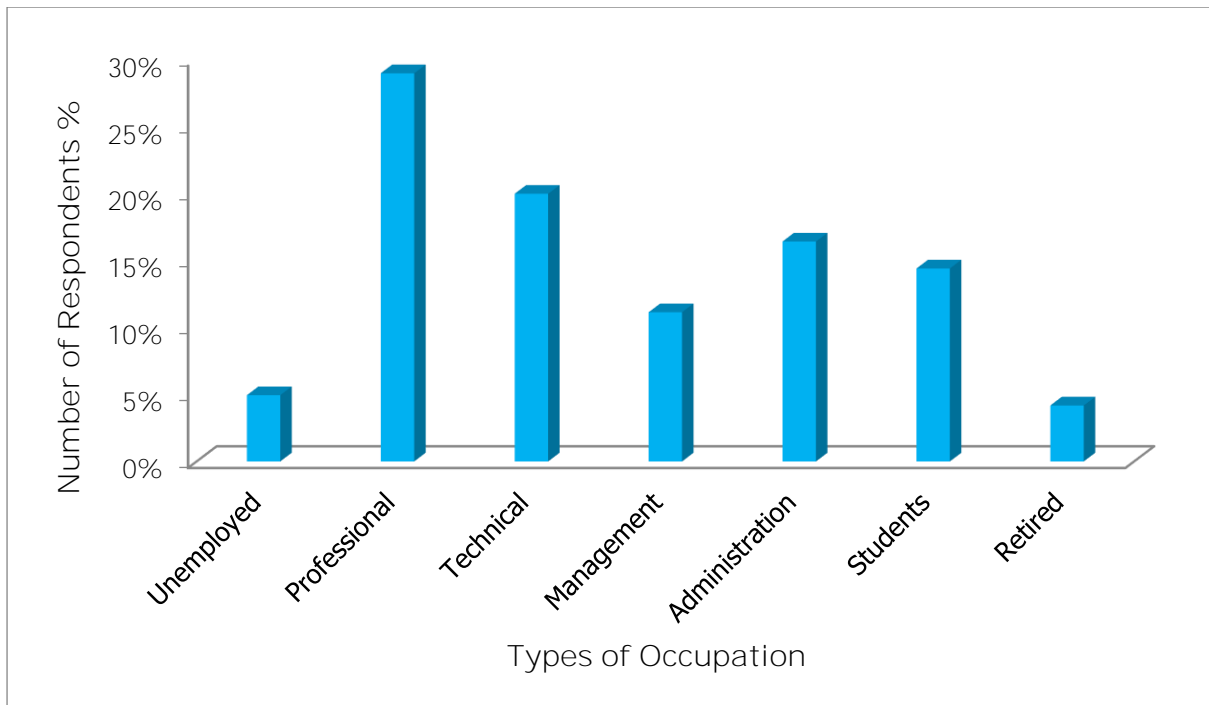
Figure 6.5:   Respondents' types of occupation.

6.2.6   Country of Residence

Approximately 14.2% of tourists came from the United Kingdom (UK) with Malaysia contributing about 8.5%. The least number (0.6%) of tourists were from Indonesia (Figure 6.6). From the pie chart, one can see that the respondent population is drawn from various continents across the world and from different countries but mainly from developed countries where the disposal income is large. Therefore, this study has a good spread and balance respondent population that can be considered representative with their demographic spread indicating that they are relatively well-off financially and can afford to travel, and spend monies on tourism-related ventures.
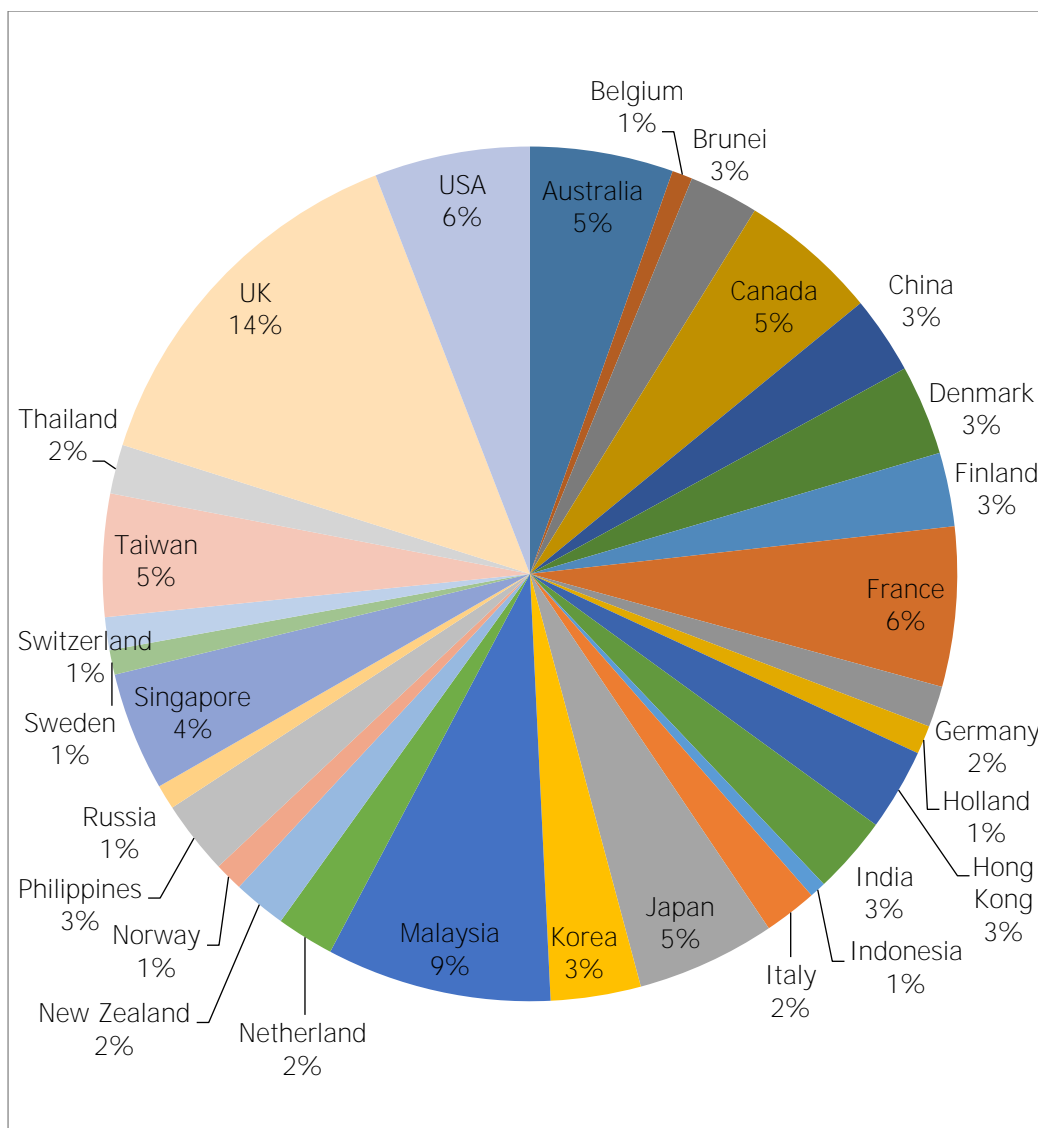
Figure 6.6:   Country of residence of the respondents.

Table 6.2 provides a summary of the information above.

Table 6.2:   Demographic summary of the respondents visiting Sabah, Malaysia.

DEMOGRAPHIC	OUTCOME
Age	Majority of respondents aged 25 – 44 years old and categorized as relatively young
Gender	Majority of the respondents were females
Immediate travel party	Majority of the respondents travel with their friends
Education level	Majority of respondents well educated and most hold a tertiary qualification
Occupation	Majority of the respondents were professionals
Country of residence	Majority of the respondents were from UK

6.3   TOUR CHARACTERISTICS

6.3.1   First Visit to Sabah, Malaysia

A total of 63% of the respondent population indicated that they had visited Sabah for the first time while 37% noted that they have already been to Sabah, Malaysia in the past (Figure 6.7). Of this 37%, 60.2% of them have visited to Sabah only 1 or 2 times (n = 239) (Figure 6.8). This may suggest that the total tourism experience and activities that first time visitors to Sabah expect to receive do not get it and so most of them do not return. This suggests the overall tourism experience needs some local attention.
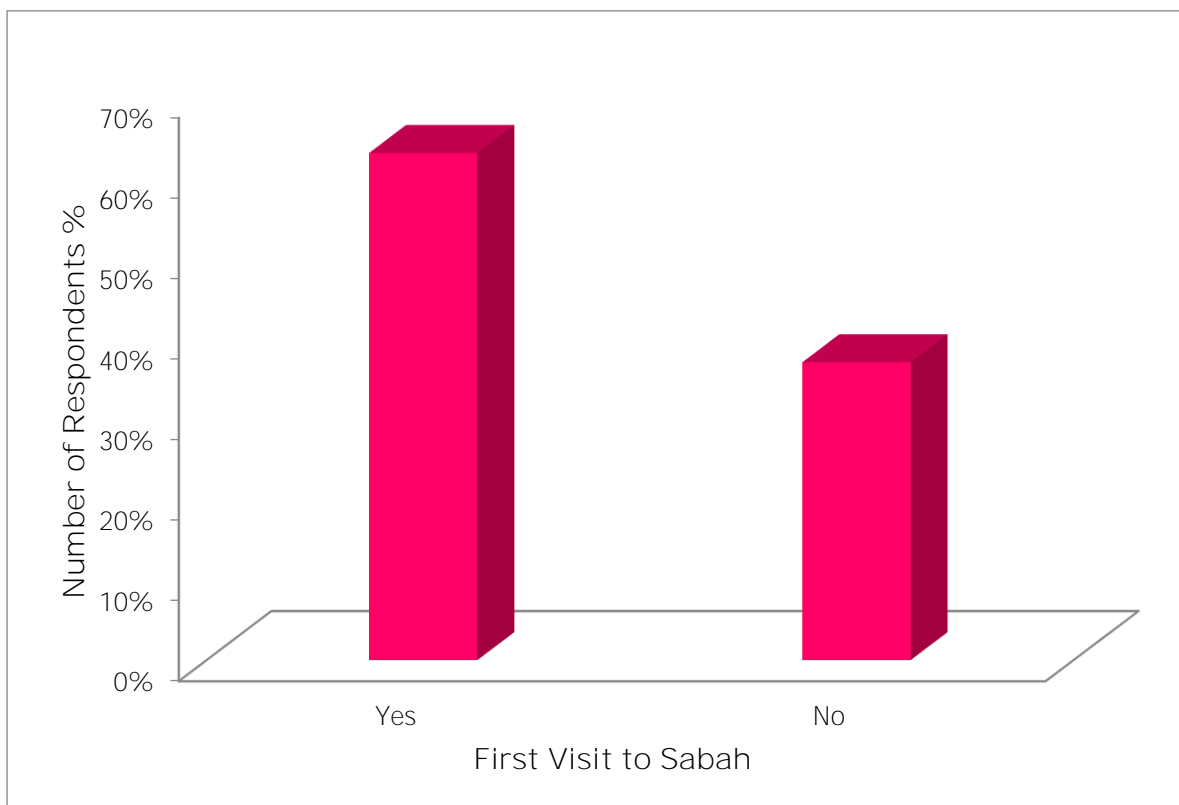
Figure 6.7:   Percentage showing if the respondent's trip to Sabah is first visit or not.
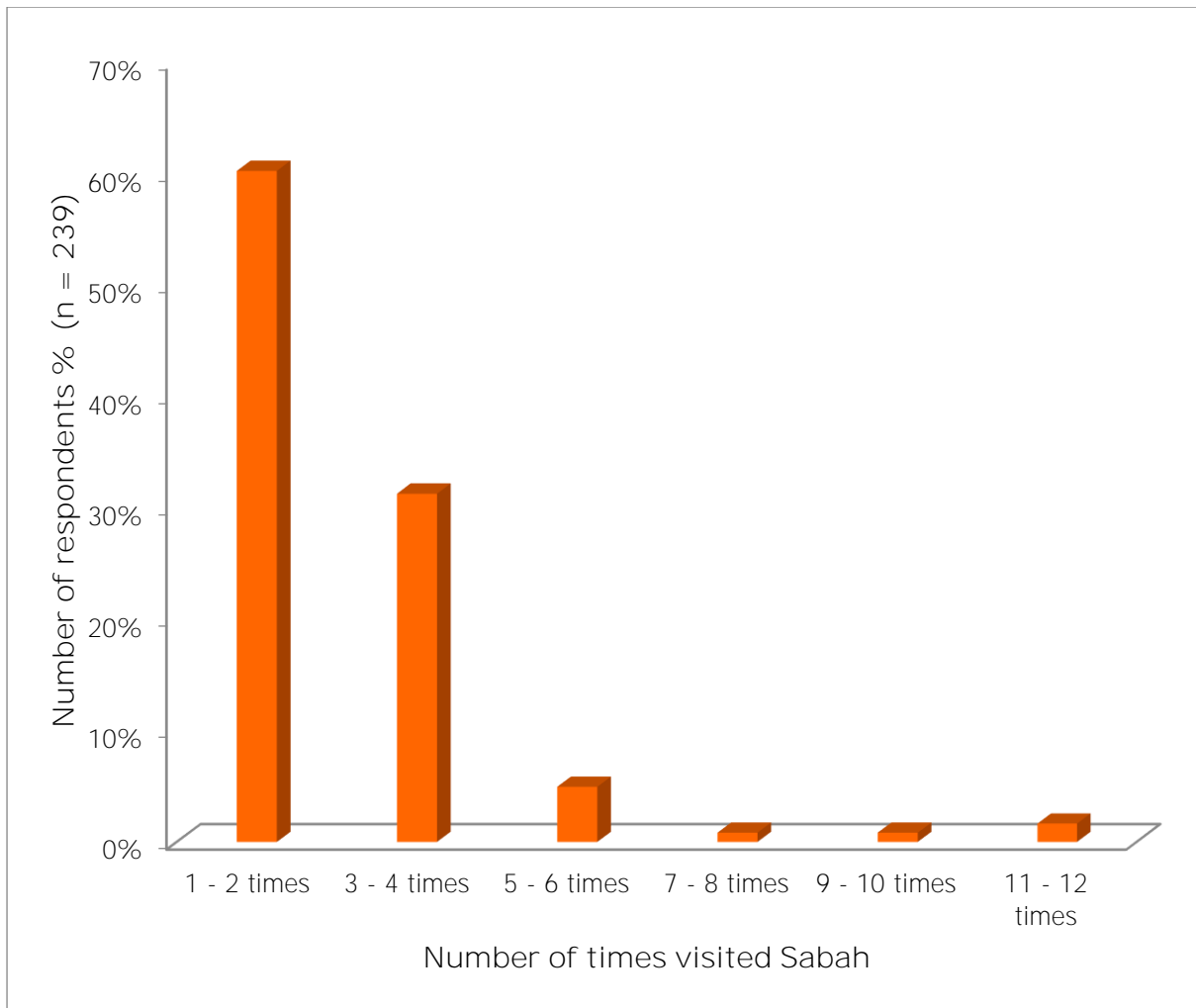
Figure 6.8:   Number of times respondents had visited Sabah, Malaysia.

6.3.2   Travel Arrangement

About 54% of the tourists who participated in the study were categorised as fully independent travel (FIT) because were in charge of their own travel arrangement as they did not seek the help of a tour operator. However, 46% used tour operators (Figure 6.9). This suggests that the majority of KKIA respondents are experienced travellers, and they expect a quality of service comparable to other destinations around the world.
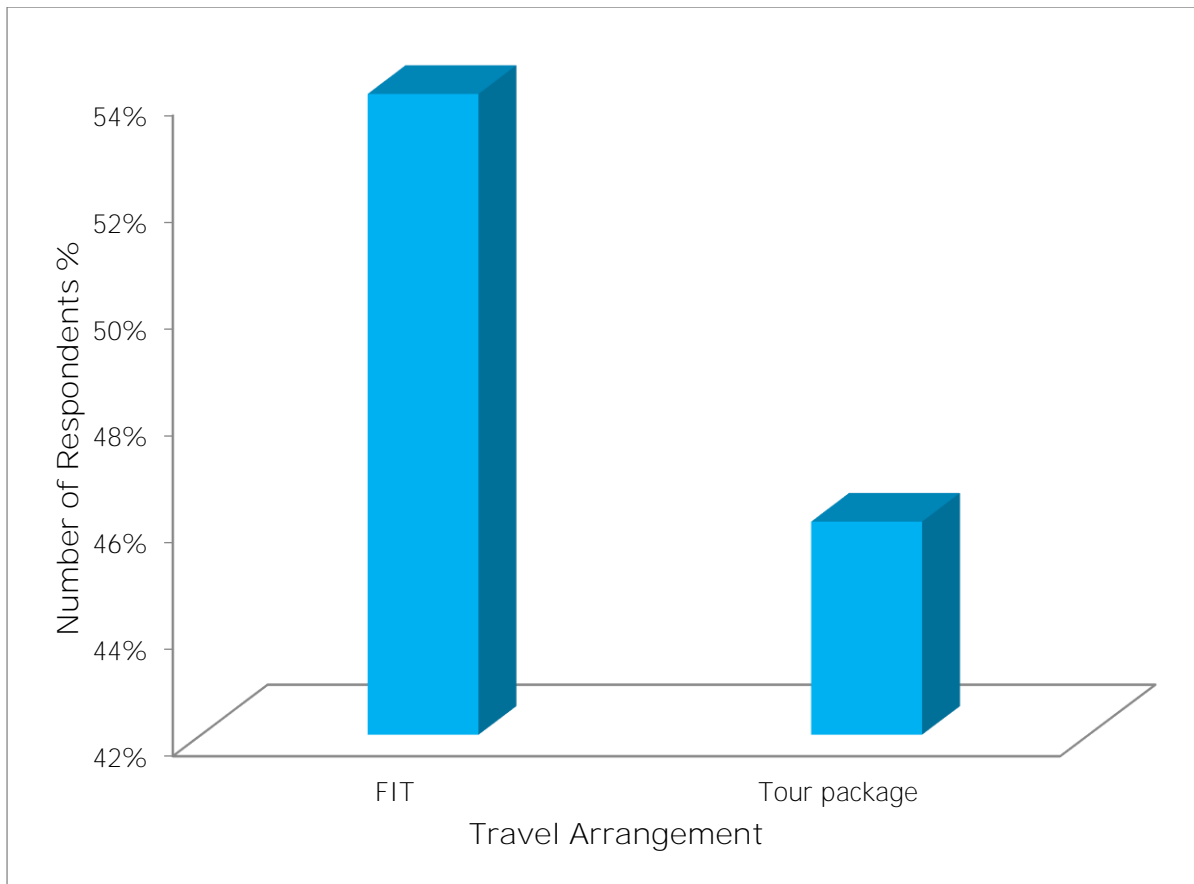
Figure 6.9:   Respondents' travel arrangement.

6.3.3 Information about Sabah, Malaysia

A total of 26.8%, considered a majority, had travelled to Sabah before and therefore they know about it. 20.9% of those who have never travelled to Sabah indicated that they relied on the Internet to know more about Sabah (Figure 6.10). A small portion, 0.6% of the respondents knew about Sabah from printed advertisements. From this it can be concluded that the best way to reach potential tourists is via: (1) the internet, (2) travel guide books or (3) word of mouth (WoM) - from other tourists who have had good tourism experiences. For this reason, each local tourism operator at a wildlife destination needs to have a globally competitive website presence. Additionally, the destination in-situ experiences and activities must be raised so the tourist's WoM opinions are passed to others as heightened perspectives.
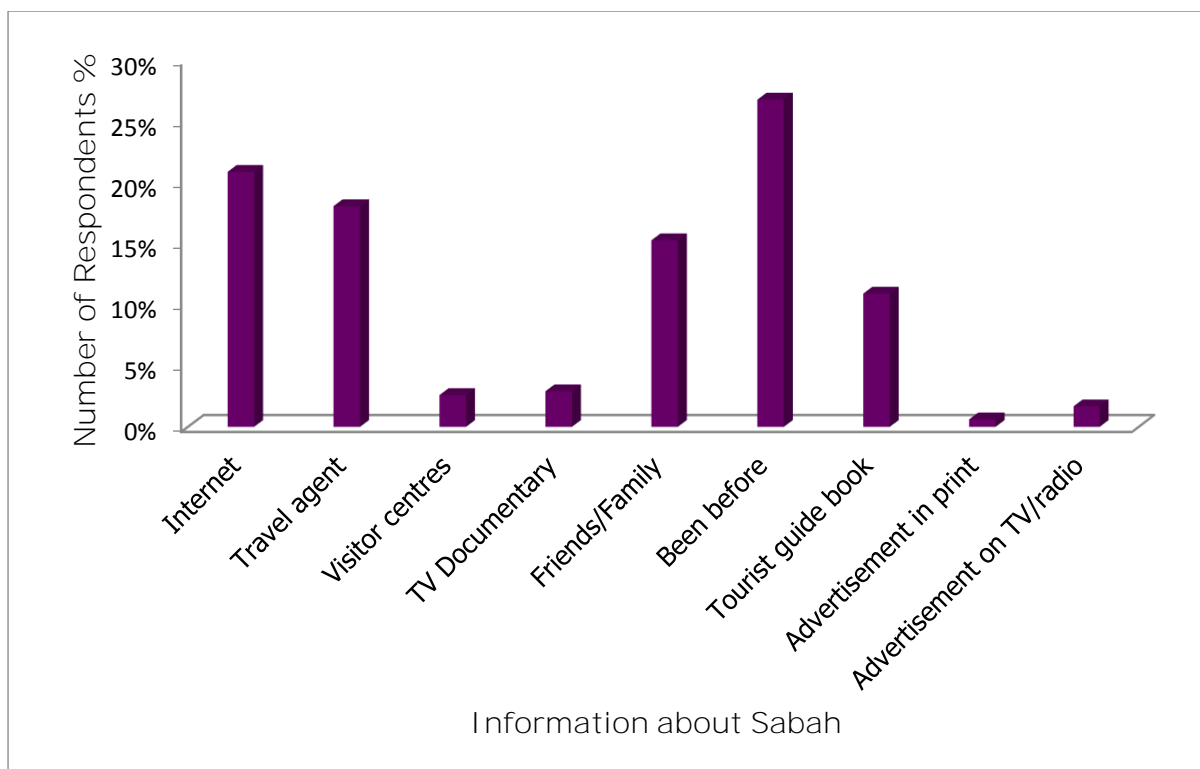
Figure 6.10: Respondents' knowledge about Sabah, Malaysia.

The tour characteristics of respondents as discussed above is provided below (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3: Tour characteristics summary of the respondents visiting Sabah, Malaysia.

TOUR CHARACTERISTIC	OUTCOME
First visit	Majority of the respondents said it was their first visit to Sabah, Malaysia
Travel arrangement	Most of the respondents are fully independent travellers
Information about Sabah	Majority who have been to Sabah say they know well about Sabah because they have been there before. However, for those who are first visitors, they say they get their information about Sabah through Internet and WoM

6.4 MOTIVATION AND EXPECTATION

6.4.1 Purpose for Visiting Sabah, Malaysia

63.8% of the study respondents consider holiday time to be that time away from home and that is why they visited Sabah, Malaysia. Although this section had eight different options, only holiday, time with friends or relatives, training and/or research and education categories show substantive reasons to visit with the following scores 63.8%, 13.8%, 6.5% , and 15.9% respectively. (Figure 6.11). Therefore, the promotion of these reasons should be done to tourists through WoM and the internet (including social media).
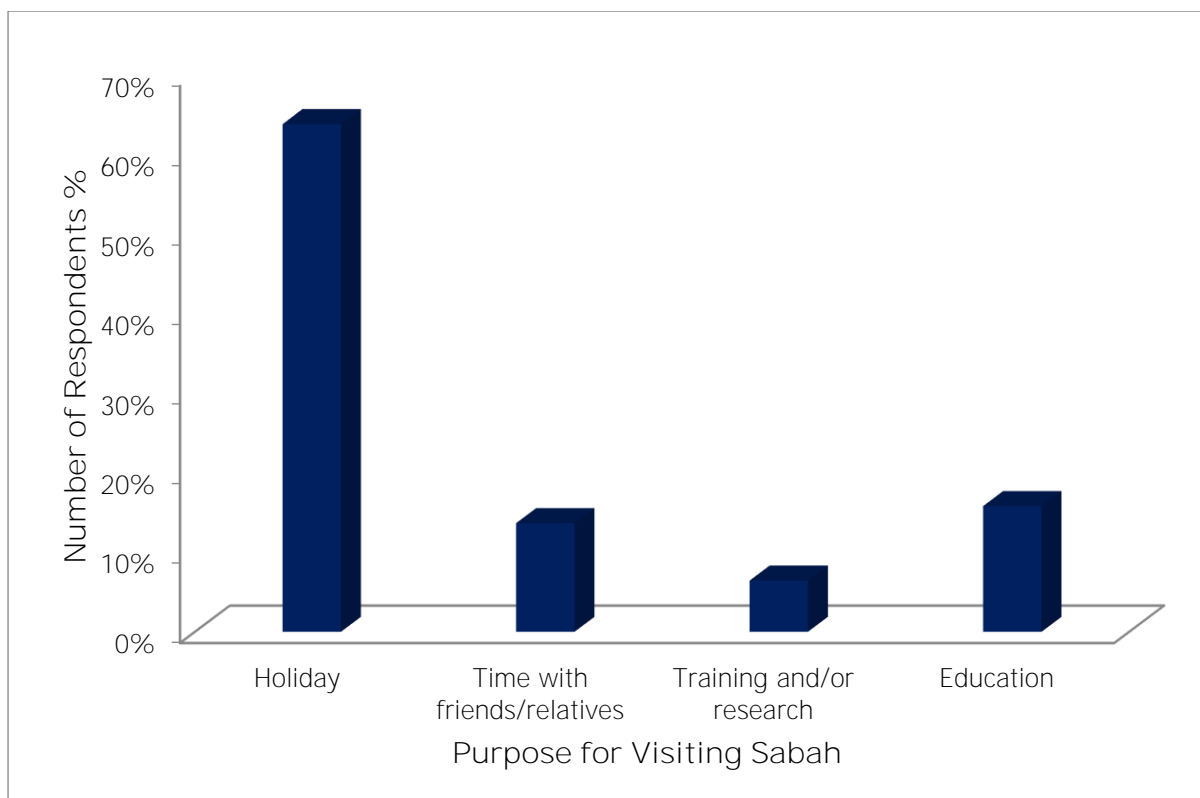
Figure 6.11:   Purpose of visiting Sabah, Malaysia among the respondents.

6.4.2   Motives to Visit

In Question 1, section C of the questionnaire the study wanted to know the most important reasons for people to visit Sabah, Malaysia. Out of the 11 different items, the respondents indicated the following to be the most important reasons: (1) visiting the marine park, (2) visiting the rainforest/nature parks, (3) viewing endangered species, (4) seeing Borneo's wildlife and (5) participating in various adventure (Table 6.4). This indicates that wildlife and adventure-based tourism activities are the biggest drivers of tourism. Therefore, these should first be targeted by locals for immediate improvement.

Table 6.4:   Median/ mean scores for motivational factors for visitation to Sabah, Malaysia.

MOTIVATIONAL ITEMS	MODE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
To see Borneo's wildlife	5	4.51	0.71
Visit the rainforest/nature parks	5	4.36	0.93
To view endangered species	5	4.30	0.82
Visit the marine park	5	4.26	1.00
Price matched budget	4	3.95	0.90
Adventure activities	5	3.77	1.06
Experience traditional culture	4	3.51	0.96
Rest and relax	4	3.35	1.03
Shopping	2	2.84	1.02

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Visit friends/relatives	2	2.37	0.67
Business/conference/meeting	2	2.02	0.64

*Based on a 1 – 5 scale, with 1 = "not important" and 5 = "very important"

6.5   WILDLIFE TOURISM BEHAVIORAL PATH MODEL

As discussed in the previous chapters and summarised in Figure 4.4, consumptive engagements (involvement) at the site enhances or retards the planned behaviour that tourists hold and these and these experiences and activities in turn deliver a refined view of the wildlife conservation and establish a loyalty level. Some influence on the overall acquired satisfaction that results from tourism across the stay around the destination is exerted by this model. This section of the study is investigated through: (1) KKIA data collection, (2) factor analysis, (3) path analysis, and a (4) total effects examination.

Five constructs (KMO sampling adequacy = 0.539, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity - χ^2=147.05, df=55, p=0.000) were delivered by factor reduction (principal components/varimax) with acceptable means and standard deviations, and with all loads exceeding 0.54. The average variance explained (AVE) of around 0.5 or better was obtained for each construct better (Hair *et al*., 2012). Thus, the constructs were appropriate for structural equation modelling (SEM) and path analysis. About 55.16% of the total variance was explained by these constructs. They were labelled as: (1) consumptive experience, (2) consumptive activity, (3) tourist loyalty, (4) conservation memories, and (5) conservation emotions. The combination of these constructs with the post event acquired satisfaction expressed by the tourist was then done in line with the various theories in the study - the theory of planned behaviour, involvement theory, and users and gratification theory (refer earlier chapters).

Table 6.5 list the above comments. The information was modelled using AMOS 23.0 - and it is shown as the path analysis solution termed the Wildlife Tourism Behaviour Path Model (Figure 6.12). A very significant relationship is shown to exist between the consumptive activities undertaken by tourists, their wildlife and environmental memories, and their consumptive experiences. As expected in unique and experiential settings, a strong correction (89%) exists between experiences and the activities undertaken. A loyalty feeling is driven by these three constructs in the tourist and will eventually deliver an overall sense of acquired satisfaction with undertaken tourism wildlife adventure.

Table 6.5: Construct and item loadings for visiting Sabah, Malaysia - for all respondents.

MEASUREMENT ITEM (all 5 point scale items)	ITEM LOAD	MEAN (σ)	STD DEV (SD)	CRONBACH ALPHA (α)	AVE
EXPECTATION OF DESTINATION CONSUMPTIVE EXPERIENCES		**3.91**	**0.83**	**0.95**	**0.86**
adventurous lifestyle (exp) due to wildlife	0.918				
well connected with the (unique) wildlife	0.930				
Good tourism facilities and infrastructure	0.908				
EXPECTATION OF DESTINATION CONSUMPTIVE ACTIVITIES		**3.83**	**0.77**	**0.92**	**0.75**
Seeing wildlife in natural environs	0.879				
Nature interpretation	0.930				
Touched wildlife	0.919				
First time with unique animal in real life	0.720				
LOYALTY ACQUIRED		**3.87**	**0.78**	**0.95**	**0.83**
Suggest to families and relatives	0.911				
Will definitely come again	0.934				
Promote in website/blog/media social	0.905				
Attached as volunteers	0.887				
TRUSTED CONSERVATION MEMORIES		**3.96**	**0.69**	**0.73**	**0.48**
Activities create (environmental) awareness	0.754				
Nature interpretation instills knowledge of wildlife	0.544				
Memorable encountered with animals	0.768				
TRUSTED CONSERVATION EMOTIONS		**3.93**	**0.67**	**0.86**	**0.61**
Emotionally care for wildlife	0.869				
Adopt a wildlife	0.801				
Join in wildlife conservation organization	0.662				
NET ACQUIRED SATISFACTION (single item)		**3.72**	**0.78**		

*All items coded on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = "lowest importance" and 5 = "highest importance".

Table 6.6 was created using path modelling in AMOS 23.0. The standardized total effects of the consumptive event experienced by the tourist as well as their net effects onto the downstream constructs are revealed in Table 6.6. These downstream constructs are tourist loyalty, conservation memories, and post event tourism satisfaction that the tourist expressed by the tourist. It is evident that there is a strong influence of the tourist's consumptive wildlife tourism engagements of experiences (26.9% and 51.6% respectively) and activities (55.1% and 45.2% respectively), on the tourist's conservation memories as well as tourist loyalty and that these engagements have a small contribution of 7.4% and 6.4% to the overall tourism satisfaction in Sabah, Malaysia. As such, wildlife tourism parks should aim at generating lasting memories and then lasting loyalty among tourists as opposed to solely focussing on

delivering high levels of acquired satisfaction. This is because other supporting experiences apart from engaging with wildlife itself (refer section 6.5.6 and Table 6.9) can provide acquired satisfaction.
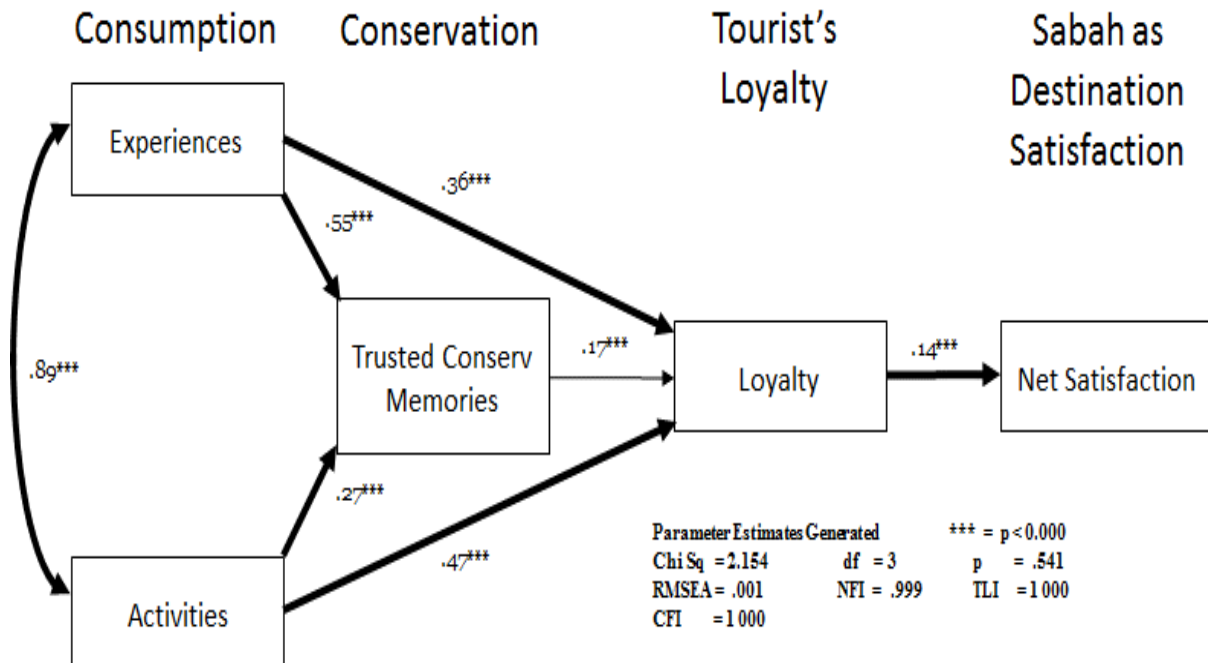
Figure 6.12:   Wildlife Tourism Behaviour Path Model.

Table 6.6:   Standardized Total Effects of Constructs onto Dependent Construct (Acquired Satisfaction) for those visiting Sabah, Malaysia (all respondents).

CONSTRUCTS	EXPERIENCES	ACTIVITIES	ENGAGED MEMORIES	LOYALTY
ENGAGED MEMORIES	0.27	0.55		
LOYALTY	0.52	0.45	0.17	
ACQUIRED SATISFACTION	**0.07**	**0.06**	**0.02**	**0.14**

6.6 EXPECTATIONS OF RESPONDENTS

6.6.1 Expectations Respondents had prior to Visiting Sabah, Malaysia

In Table 6.7, it is indicated that most tourists who visited Sabah expected to see wildlife. These included rainforest, endemic wildlife, and diversity of animals and abundance of animals. Other expectations they had is experiencing traditional culture.

Table 6.7:   Respondents' expectation prior to visiting Sabah, Malaysia.

EXPECTATIONS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Endemic species of Sabah	279	43.2%
Abundance of wildlife	135	20.9%
Diversity of wildlife	106	16.4%
Rainforest of Sabah	80	12.4%
Sabah's traditional culture	46	7.1%

6.6.2   Total Expectation Met

There was a significant variation in the expectation of respondents of visiting Sabah. 38.5% of the 646 tourists felt they had seen about Sabah a little more than they have expected, while only 1.9% feeling a lot less of what they have expected in visiting Sabah. Over 34% of the respondents indicated that Sabah met their expectation while 19.2% noted that Sabah exceeded their expectations (Figure 6.13). Thus expectations are generally not met during the tourist's stay in Sabah.
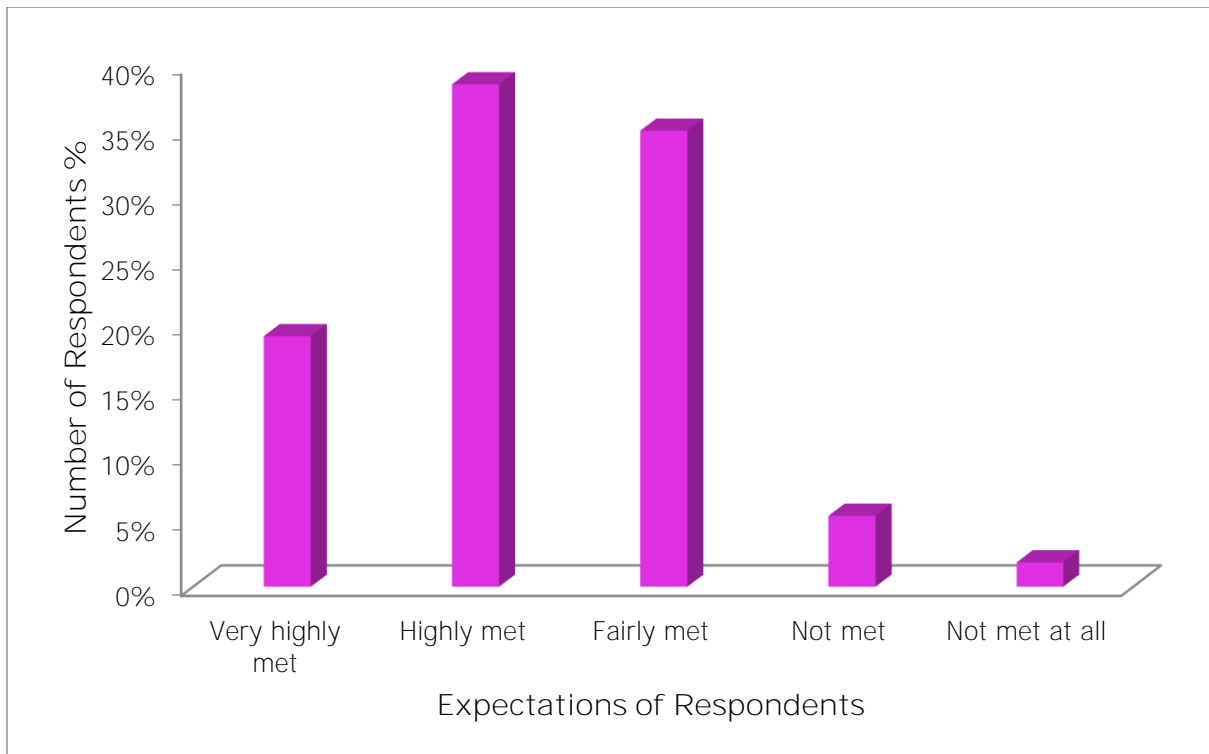
Figure 6.13:   Expectations of respondents visiting Sabah, Malaysia.

6.6.3   Wildlife-based Experiences: Park/Reserve Visited

The study respondents were also questioned on the parks that they visited during the trips in Sabah. The tourists were only required to state the park and/or reserves where they think they had experienced wildlife-based tourism only. From the analysis of the results Kinabatangan River and Danum Valley Conservation Area were the most visited with 18.9% and 16.6% respectively (see Figure 6.14). From this finding it can be concluded that high wildlife tourism activities are the most important destinations for tourists visiting Sabah through KKIA.
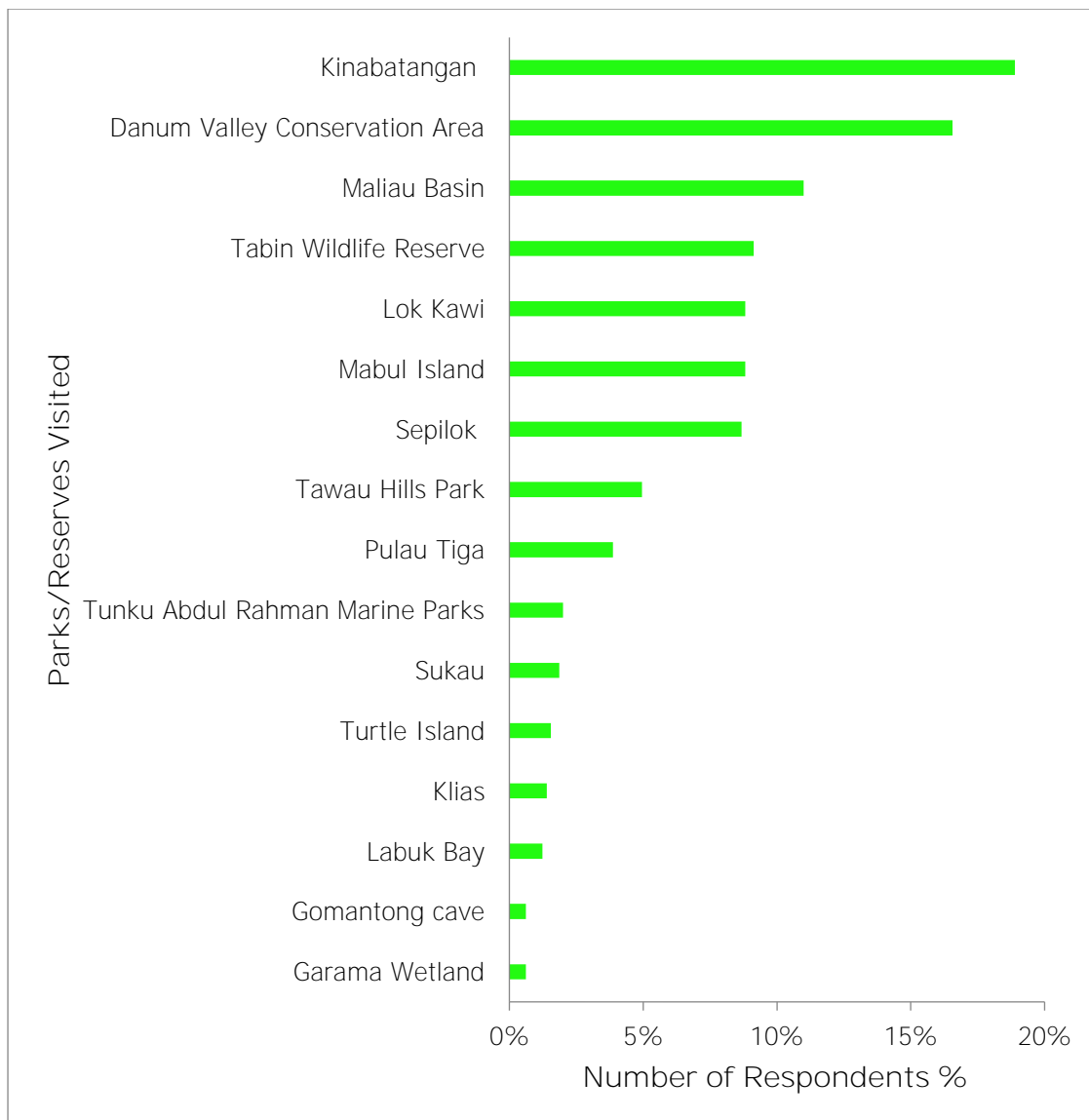
Figure 6.14: Parks/reserves visited by respondents.

6.6.4 Perceptions of the Wildlife-based Experiences

In this section, assessment of the perceptions of the respondent of their experience while on wildlife-based tours in Sabah, Malaysia is done. Responses from open-ended questions that were similar were put into categories and the percentages of the valid responses determined (Table 6.8) representing the proportion of respondents who mentioned that particular aspect. Some of the respondents stated up to four different aspects for either the positive or negative perceptions; as such, the total percentage for each group does not add up to 100% as there was some overlap.

The most positive perceptions from the respondents were as follows: the preservation and conservation of the tour sites (91.6%), scenery (87.8%), added learning (90.2%), and the awe and wonder of the sites (70.6%). These results indicates that wildlife experiences are the key

positives for tourists when visiting Sabah. Preservation and conservation of the tour sites and added learning from the sites got higher scores indicating that conservation should be promoted by local tourism destinations.

In comparison to positive perceptions, fewer negative perceptions were noted along the negative aspect question being completed by fewer respondents (n = 447). 90.2% of the 447 respondents felt that not being able to see any wildlife during their tours was the most negative aspect of their experience. Other negative perceptions were as follows: inexperience tour guides (66.4%), bad encounter with insects and leeches (67.3%), and lack of times at the various locations (78.5%). This indicates that there is need for improvement in services and destination in-situ experiences and activities in Sabah.

Table 6.8:   Perceptions of best and worst aspect of visits amongst the respondents.

PERCEPTIONS OF EXPERIENCE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS (%)
Positive perceptions (N =646)	
Preservation/conservation	91.6%
Learning	90.3%
Scenery	87.8%
Awe and wonder	70.6%
Organization	46.6%
Relaxation	35.8%
Wildlife	31.4%
Waterfalls	25.1%
Challenging	18.3%
Pristine	18.3%
Safety	18.0%
Comfortable accommodation	14.9%
Fun	13.5%
Rivers	11.6%
Negative perceptions (n = 447)	
Hardly seen any wildlife	90.2%
Lack of time	78.5%
Bad encounter with insects and leeches	67.3%
Inexperience guide	66.4%
Weather	45.9%
Language	33.1%
Tour size	25.5%
Food	15.0%
Roads	12.5%

6.6.5   Species Preferences

All animals are not liked by all tourists equally. A huge range in animal preferences amongst respondents prior to their visit to Sabah (Figure 6.15) was found. The most preferred species

are those that are endangered, and those wildlife species present in secured local environmental parks.

The study indicated that the most popular and iconic species of Sabah, Malaysia was the orang utans (*Pongo pygmaeus*). 25.9% of the 646 respondents indicated this as their most preferred species. Addtionally, despite the small population of less than 40 surviving species of Sumatran rhinoceros (*Dicerorhinus sumatrensis*) in Sabah, 16.7% of tourists still hoped to see them in the wild.
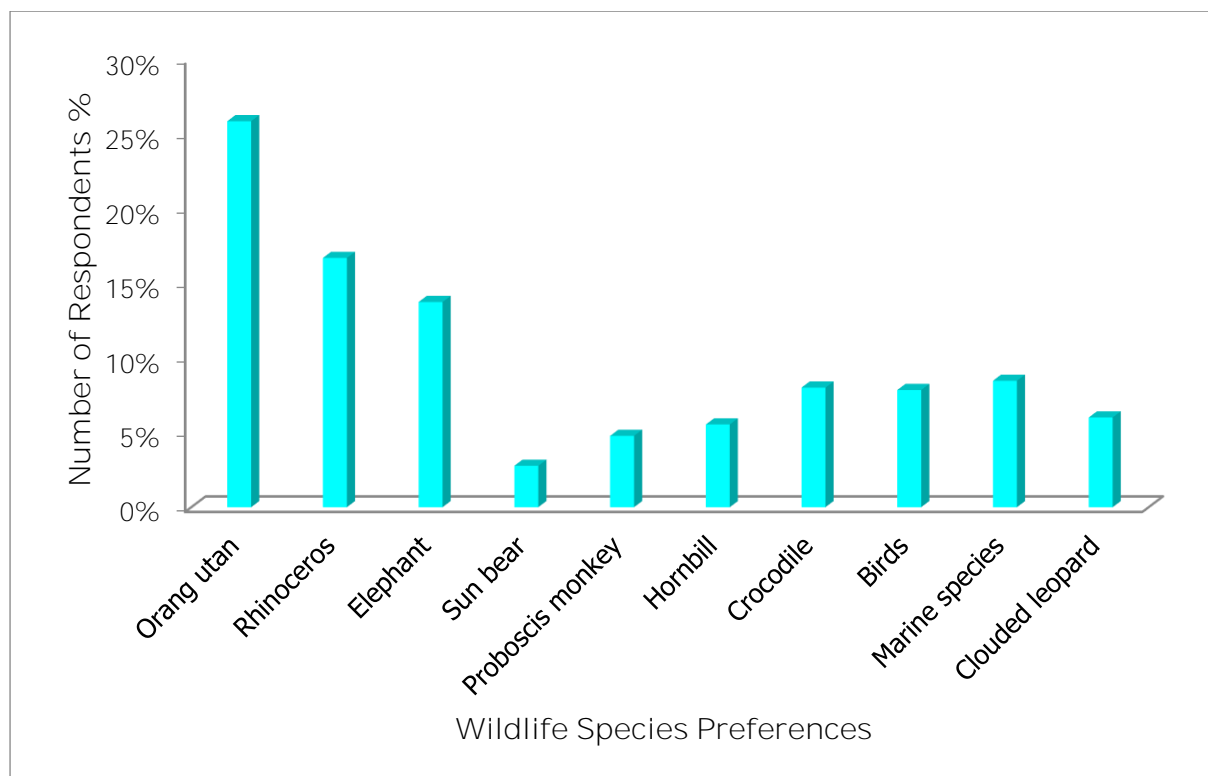
Figure 6.15:   Wildlife species preferences of respondents.

Cross tabulation of the preferences of wildlife species with respondents' gender is shown in Figure 6.16. From the analysis, it is shown that women, 14.2% (n = 92) prefer to see the orang utans compared to the other wildlife species. Similarly, 11.6% (n = 75) of men also prefer to see the orang utans in their visit to Sabah.
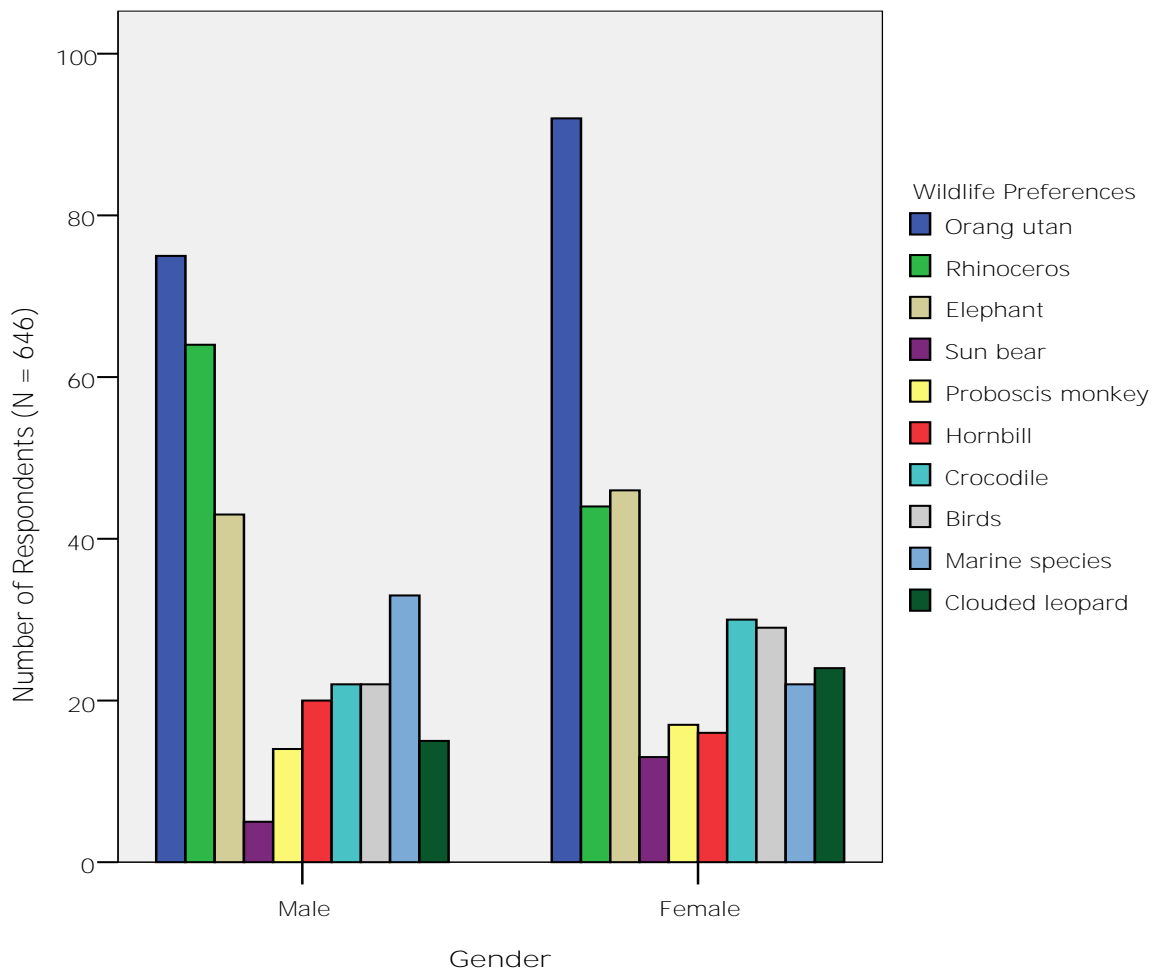
Figure 6.16:   Cross tabulation between respondents' wildlife preferences and gender.

Based on Figure 6.17 of cross tabulation between respondents' wildlife preferences and age groups, it is shown that age group of 25 – 44 years old (relatively young) are most aware and more interested to see the wildlife species - particularly endangered species.

Almost all wildlife species bars in Figure 6.16 show significant higher values compared to the rest of the age categories.

The majority of the respondents that fall under the age group of 25 – 44 years old show a passion for looking at orang utans with 17.5% (n = 113), followed by rhinoceros, 10.68% (n = 69) and elephants, 10.2% (n = 66).
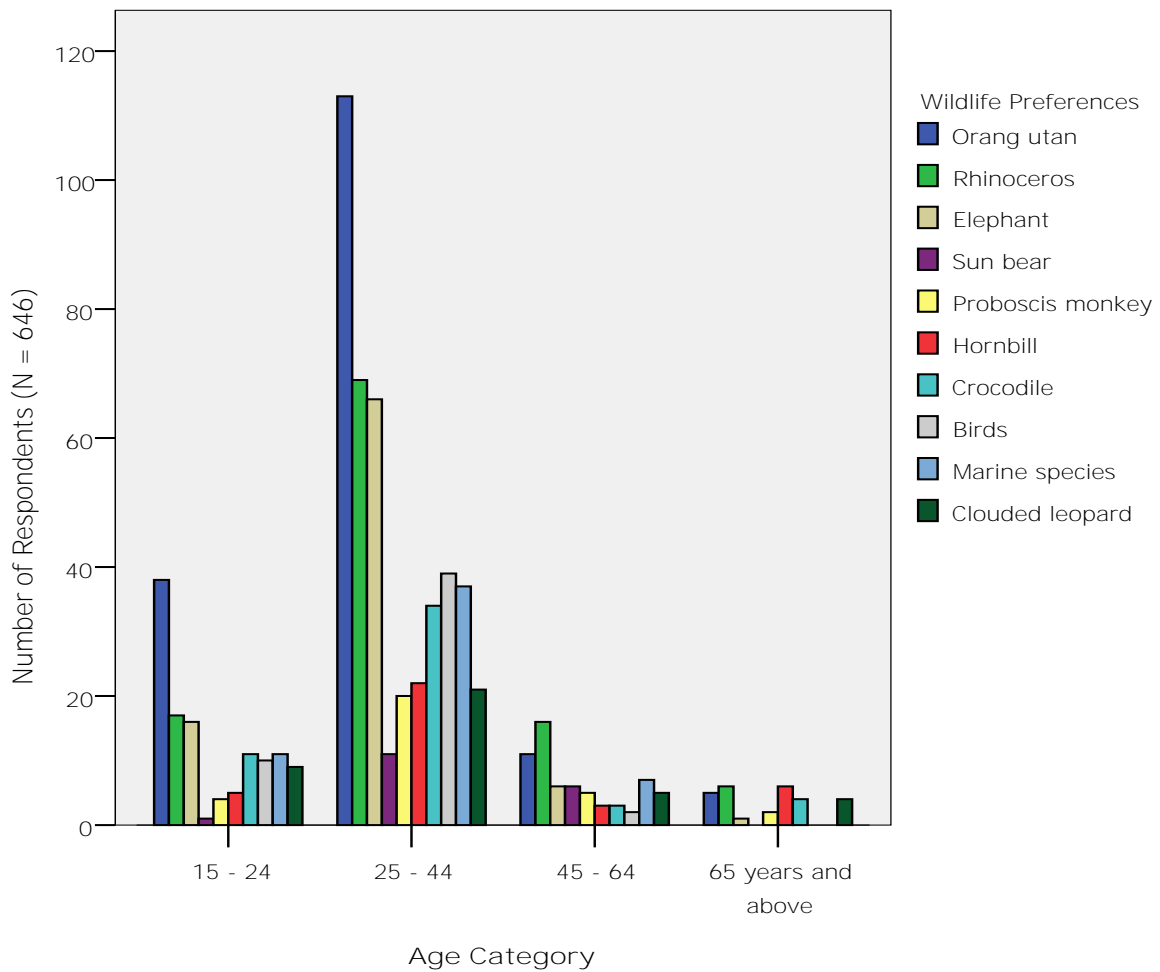
Figure 6.17: Cross tabulation between respondents' wildlife preferences and age categories.

6.6.6 Most Memorable Wildlife Encounter

The study also sought to know the most memorable animals considered by the respondent. This was found to be: elephants (15.0%), orang utans (11.9%), proboscis monkeys (8.7%) and the marine fish (8.2%). However, 5.6% of the respondents indicated that they did not have any memorable encounters with wildlife during their tours, as they were not able to see any wildlife species during their trips (see Figure 6.18). Hence, the time for viewing of wildlife species may be better selected by aligning them to feeding times.
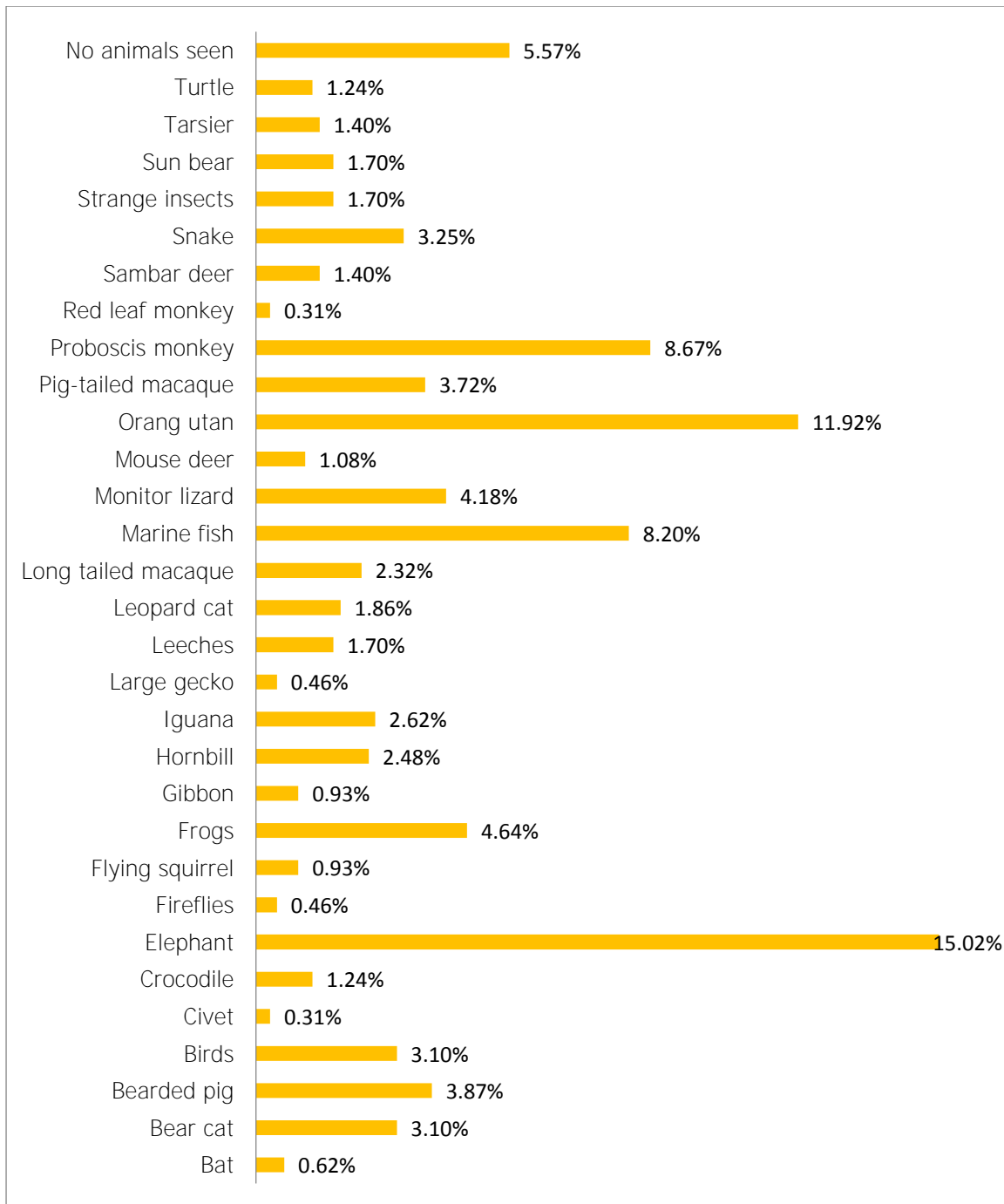
Figure 6.18:   Respondents' memorable encountered with wildlife species during their visit in Sabah's wildlife tourism sites.

6.6.7   Words Used to Describe Most Memorable Wildlife Encounters

Fairly positive attitude toward animals that tourists had memorable encounters before visiting Sabah wildlife tourism sites was held by all respondents. Different words were used by different respondents to describe their most memorable encountered with wildlife species. This included: cute (15.33%), big (9.91%), fascinating (7.28%), strong (6.35%), amazing (6.04%) and graceful species (6.04%) (Figure 6.19).
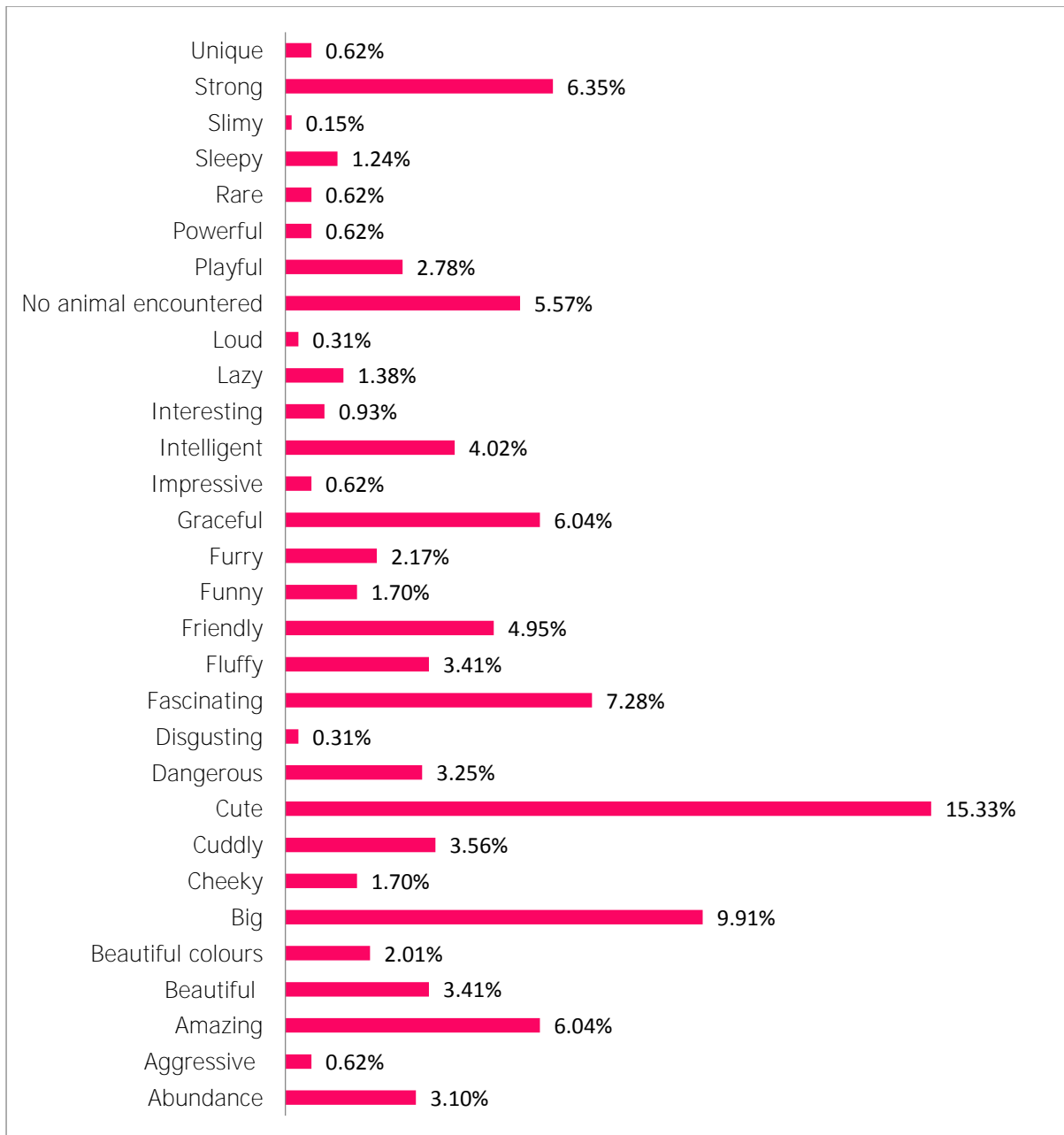
Figure 6.19: Words described respondents' most memorable encountered with wildlife species.

6.6.8 Important Aspects of Wildlife-based Tourism Experience

The most important aspects of tourist wildlife-based tourism experience that gave tourists the opportunity to experience wilderness in Sabah was also investigated. In question 6 section D, 7 different important aspects of wildlife-based tourism experience were used. Seeing the animals in the wild was the most important experience followed by see native wild animals to Sabah. Others are seeing endangered species in the wild or in zoos and seeing a volume of Sabah endemic animals at around the same time (Table 6.9).

Table 6.9.:   Respondents' important aspects in experiencing the wilderness in Sabah.

IMPORTANT ASPECTS	MODE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
See animals that are native to Sabah	5	4.37	0.79
See animals that are in the wild	5	4.04	1.20
See animals in zoo	4	3.54	0.99
See rare or endangered species	3	3.52	0.88
See many different animals at once	2	3.1	1.08
See animals from around the world	2	2.59	0.69
Learn about animals in museums	2	2.15	0.46

*Based on a 1 – 5 scale, with 1 = "not important" and 5 = "very important"

Table 6.10 shows Factor analysis with KMO (sampling adequacy) =0.731 with no removal of items and with Bartlett's Test of Sphericity significant (p = 0.000). Two factors were generated by the factor analysis of these important aspects of wilderness experience – these explained about 56.7% of the total variance. The factors are labelled as endemic and wild with endemic aspects being typical of the behaviours of tourist viewing animal species at zoos. 2.3% of the variance in the important aspects of the respondents in experiencing wilderness in Sabah is explained this factor while the factor 'wild' explains 14.4% of the variation where knowledge is acquired about wild animals in Sabah. The difference provides reasons on how tourists make decisions on the modes of viewing -with zoos being less time dependent and locations where desired species can be easily viewed. The importance of seeing animals in their natural settings and not in captivity is illustrated by the wild factor.

Table 6.10:   Factor loads for respondents' considering their experiences in Sabah.

	FACTOR 1	FACTOR 2
Questionnaire statement*	**Wild**	**Endemic**
Learn about animals in museums	0.75	
See animals that are native to Sabah	0.73	
See rare or endangered species	0.65	
See many different animals at once		0.78
See animals in zoo		0.69
See animals from around the world		0.67
See animals that are in the wild	0.42	
Number of items	4	3
Eigenvalue	2.96	1.01
% variance explained	42.32%	14.41%

*Originally coded on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 = "not important" and 5 = "very important".

6.7   WILDLIFE VISITING

Willingness to Visit Zoo and/or Wildlife Park

The survey also sought to know the willingness of the tourists to visit, a zoo and/or a wildlife park in Sabah. The study found that 69.5% of the respondents expressed willingness to go and visit, a zoo and/or a wildlife park in Sabah (Figure 6.20).
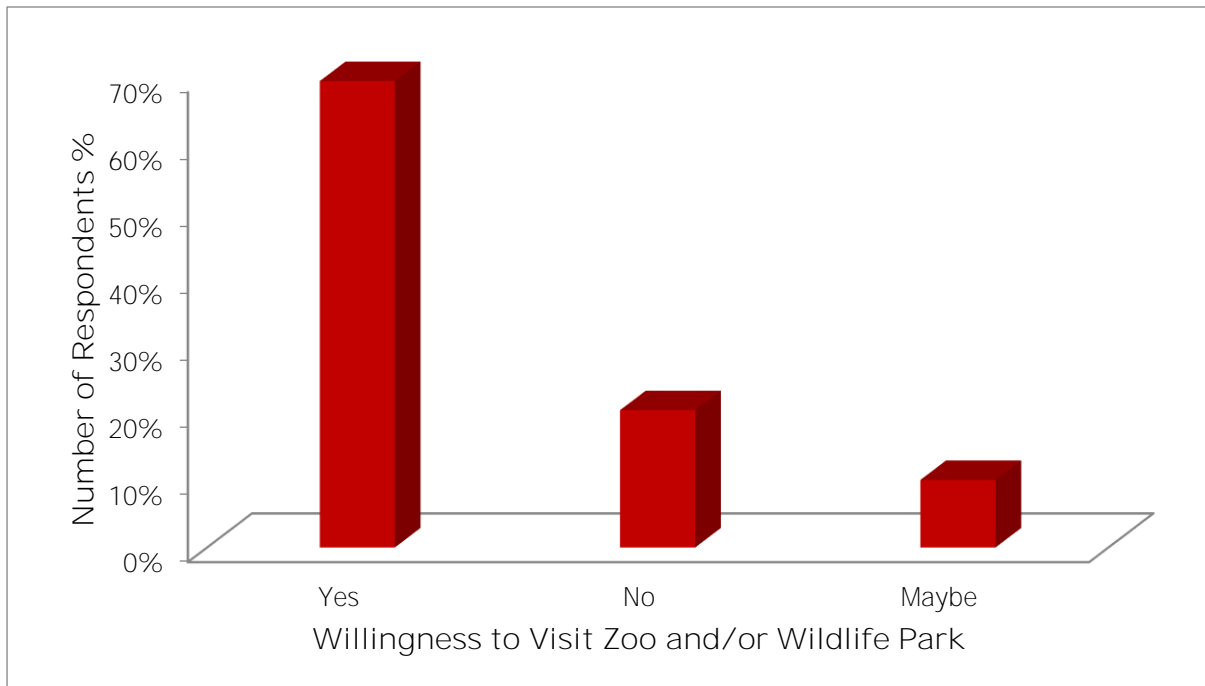
Figure 6.20:   Respondents' willingness to visit a zoo and /or wildlife park in Sabah.

Actually visited a zoo and/or Wildlife Park

As shown in Figure 6.20, 69.5% (n = 449) of the respondents expressed willingness to go and visit a zoo and/or a wildlife park in Sabah, however, only 61.2% (n = 395) of the respondents actually went and visit the zoo and/or wildlife park in Sabah as illustrated in Figure 6.21. The rest, 39.8%, of respondents are not likely to have an animal experience.
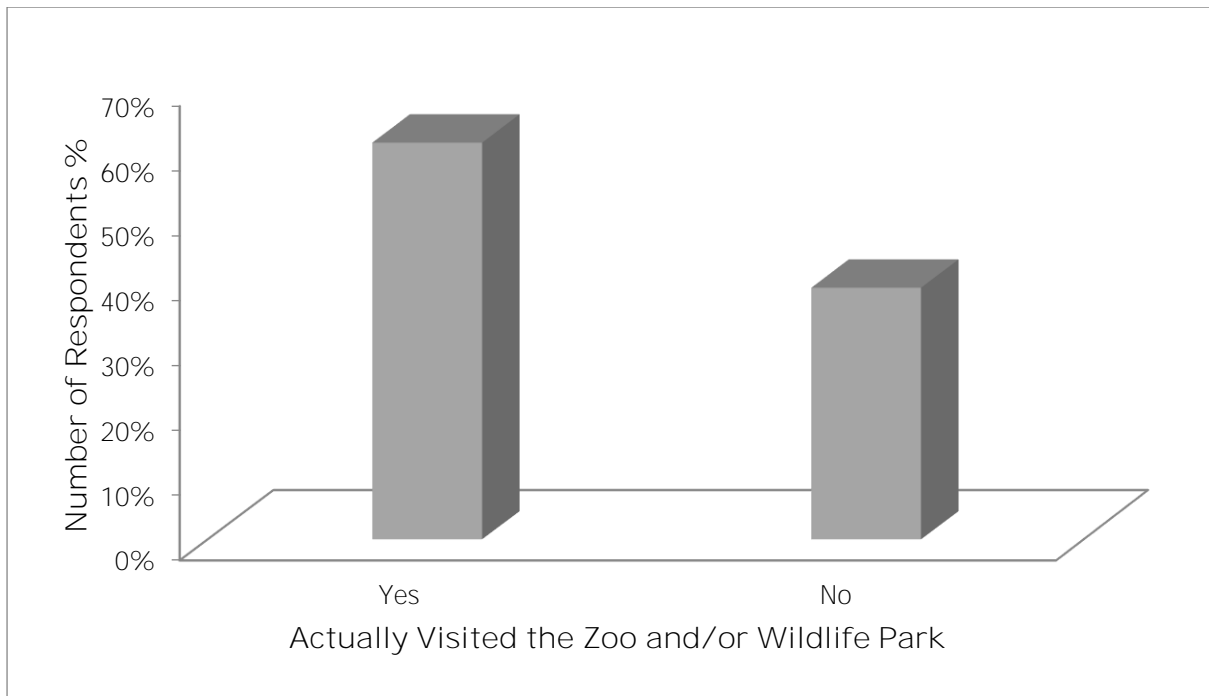
Figure 6.21:   Percentage of respondents who actually visited a zoo and/or wildlife park in Sabah.

A cross tabulation analysis of the willingness of the respondents to visit a zoo and/or Wildlife Park and the actual figure of those visited the zoo and/or wildlife park during their visit in Sabah, it was found that respondents who indicated that they had no intention of going and visiting such a facility, actually visited (40.2%) it with n = 53 from the total n = 132 (Figure 6.22). This shows that many respondents decide on whether or not to visit zoo and/or Wildlife Park once they are in Sabah. This suggest that the mind of a tourist to engage certain activities, and/or to visit certain locations, can perhaps be changed if Sabah destinations adopt astute local marketing approached.
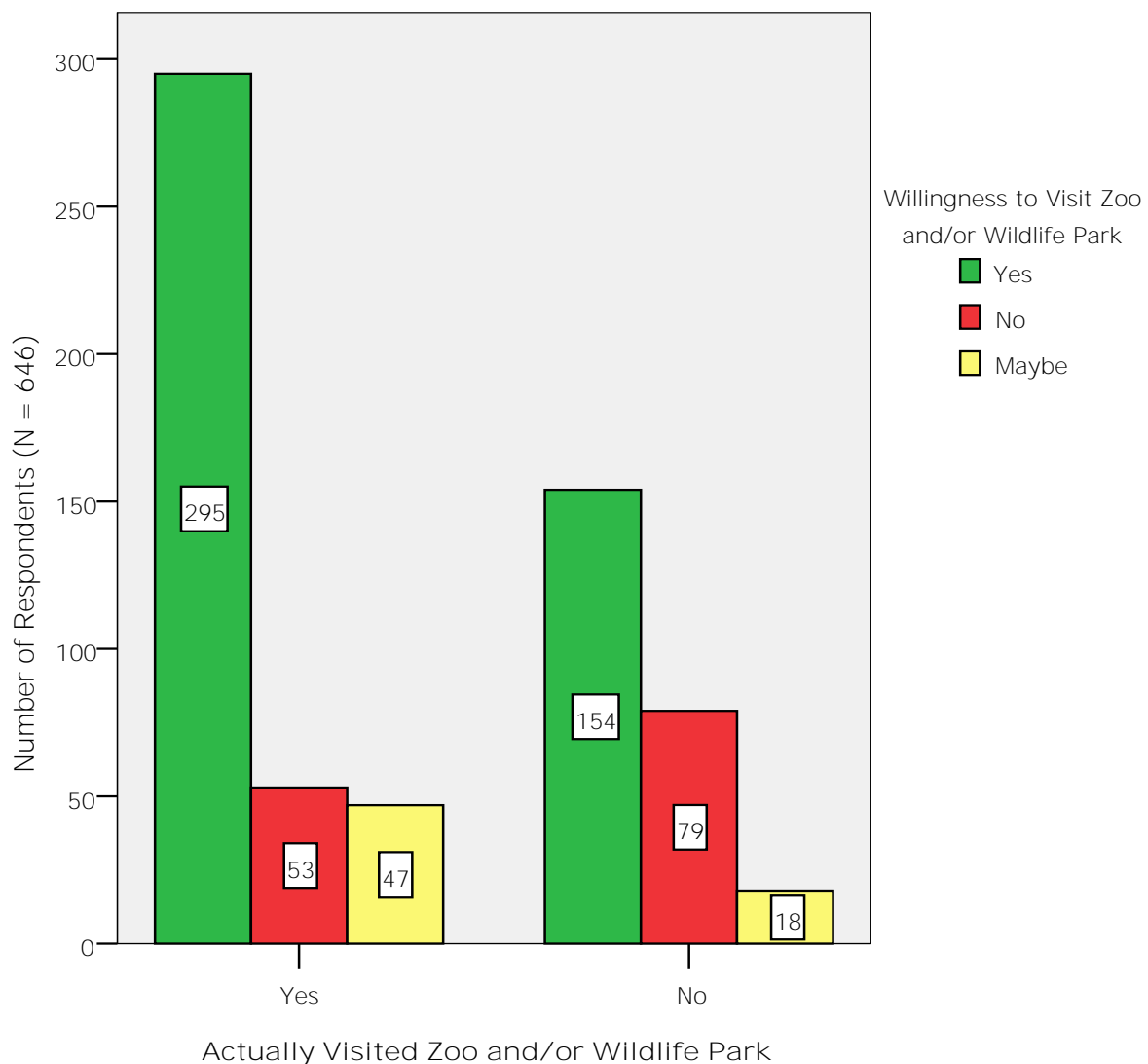
Figure 6.22: Cross tabulation between willingness to visit a zoo and/or wildlife park with actually visited the zoo and/or wildlife park in Sabah.

6.8   SATISFACTION WITH WILDLIFE-BASED TOURISM

The level of satisfaction of the tourists with wildlife tourism experiences is shown in Table 6.11 based on 13 measurements that include the following: vegetation condition, species diversity, sign-posting, facilities, information centres, staff hospitality, safety measures, species availability, accommodation condition, scenery, road condition, food and convenient business hours. The acquired satisfaction levels of the respondents are segmented based on their perceptions into wildlife service quality (WILSERV) item measures – that captures (1) reliability, (2) tangibles, (3) responsiveness, (4) assurance, (5) empathy, and (6) wild-tangibles of local and foreign visitors (Hendry & Mogindol, 2017). Tabulation is presented in figure 6.11 as satisfied or not satisfied.

The demand for interactive wildlife tourism in the world also exists in places like Sabah and therefore comes with demand for quality of service, and the study by Hendry and Mogindol's (2017) is carried out at the Sabah's Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre. Thus this study applies WILSERV. In this study, the tangible measures of wildlife indicate that visitors acquired very high satisfaction with their wildlife experience (tourist wildlife park engagements and environmental experience). Other aspects of the tourism package also contribute to visitor satisfaction and this includes the tangibles (food, accommodation, transport and related issues). Concern is also shown about security measures (assurance), as well as the reliability of service being provided.

The research path model illustrated earlier in Figure 6.12 is complimented by this finding. The existence of the low significant path strength between loyalty and acquired satisfaction is well explained. This path can be strengthened if the other measures of satisfaction acquired - such as those shown in Table 6.11 are included.

Table 6.11:   Respondents' level of satisfaction acquired (%) based on 13 measurements for their wildlife tourism experiences in Sabah.

MEASUREMENT ITEMS	SERVICE QUALITY SEGMENTS	SATISFIED	NOT SATISFIED
Vegetation condition	wildlife – tangible	96.4%	3.6%
Species availability	wildlife – tangible	95.5%	4.5%
Species diversity	wildlife – tangible	92.9%	7.1%
Scenery	wildlife – tangible	95.5%	4.5%
Accommodation condition	Tangible	95.5%	4.5%
Sign-posting	Tangible	95.8%	4.2%
Facilities	tangible	95.7%	4.3%
Road condition	tangible	96.8%	3.3%
Information centres	tangible	95.8%	4.2%
Food	tangible	95.5%	4.5%
Hospitality	reliability	96.3%	3.7%
Convenient business hrs	reliability	96.4%	3.6%
Safety measures	assurance	96.0%	4.0%

6.9   PERCEIVED VALUE-FOR-MONEY AND QUALITY-OF-SERVICE

The survey also asked the respondents to rate their value-for-money and the quality-of-service based on their visit to wildlife-based tourism sites in Sabah. Two items were rated on a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 standing for very poor, poor (2), average (3), good (4), and very good (5). Figure 6.23 presents the results.
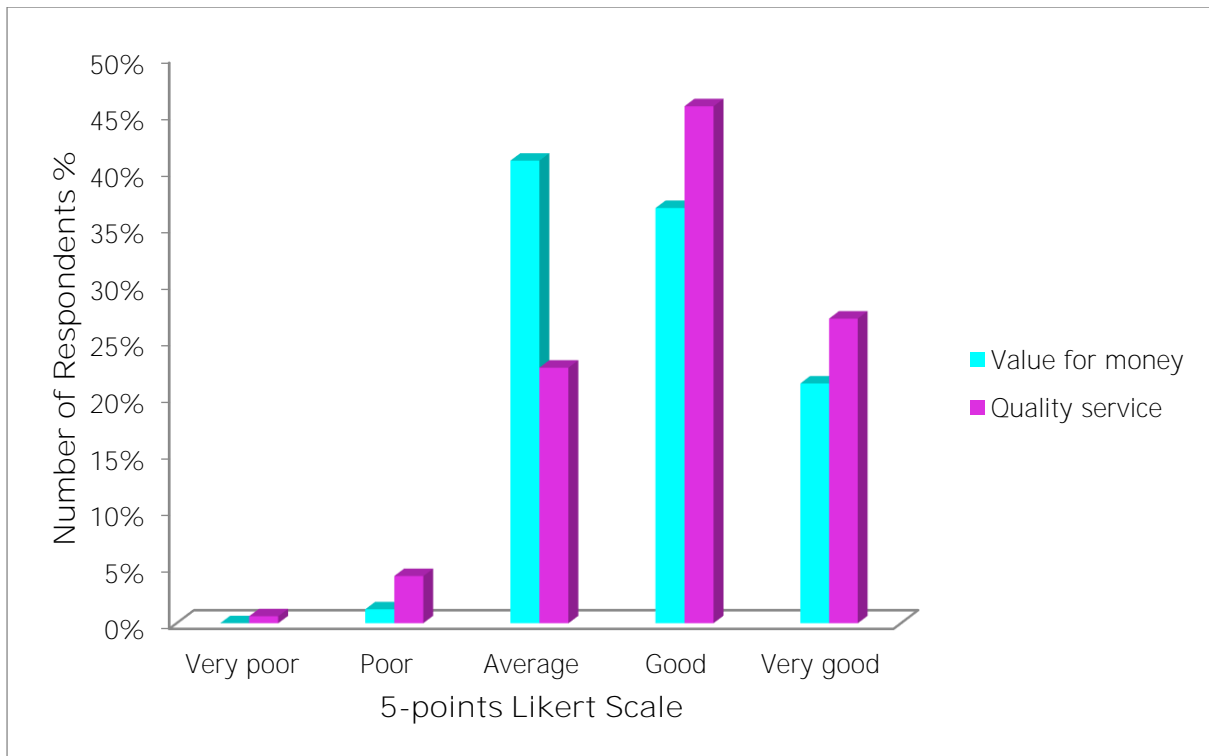
Figure 6.23:   Perceived value-for-money and perceived quality-of-service.

On average, 40.9% of the tourists provided highest rating for perceived value-for-money. A rating of 'good' totalling 45.7% was given to the perceived quality-of-service as the highest rating. This implies that if the quality-of-services is improved, then both tourist perceptions regarding the quality-of-service and the value-for-money are likely to improve.

6.10   CONSERVATION PERSPECTIVES
6.10.1 Lesson Learnt from the Wildlife-based Tours

It was reported by a majority of tourists (33.90%) that they learnt a lot regarding wildlife on their trip to wildlife-based tourism sites in Sabah particularly about the threats facing the wildlife species (Figure 6.24). Tourists mainly remembered that wildlife threats are of genuine importance and are nearly two times those based around environmental and behavioural considerations. Thus to shape recollections in the mind of the tourist, clear knowledge regarding wildlife threats in Sabah needs to be passed to tourists by the managers of the destination tourism adventures.

Figure 6.24:   Lessons learnt from the wildlife-based tours.

6.11   TOURISM AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION PERSPECTIVES: LEXIMANCER AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives are supported by the Leximancer collation bubble. The visitor's wildlife consumption is considered in research objective 1. 94.8% of the tourists had interest in wildlife as shown in Figure 6.25. While any animal would be considered, the majority of the tourist opt for the money family and particularly want to see orang utans (9.8%). other wildlife species are also in high demand - 30.0% of visitors are willing to experience adventures just to see wildlife with 15.8% seek marine oriented consumptive environments. A further 13.0% of the visitors are conservation oriented and therefore prefer to view animal conservation in-situ and in natural habitats.

In the second research objective, the relationship between the viewing of wildlife by visitors and the attributes of wildlife in Sabah were examined. Three themes from the data which are: 1) a charismatic wildlife appeal is expected (48.8%), (2) an intelligence appeal is expected (29.9%), and (3) an adventurous appeal is expected (27.9%) as illustrated in Figure 6.26. Here, visitors view wildlife and their attributes in Sabah also prefer: (1) an aesthetic valuing experience, (2) a human-like behaviour of intelligence experience, and (3) a sense of excitement and danger.
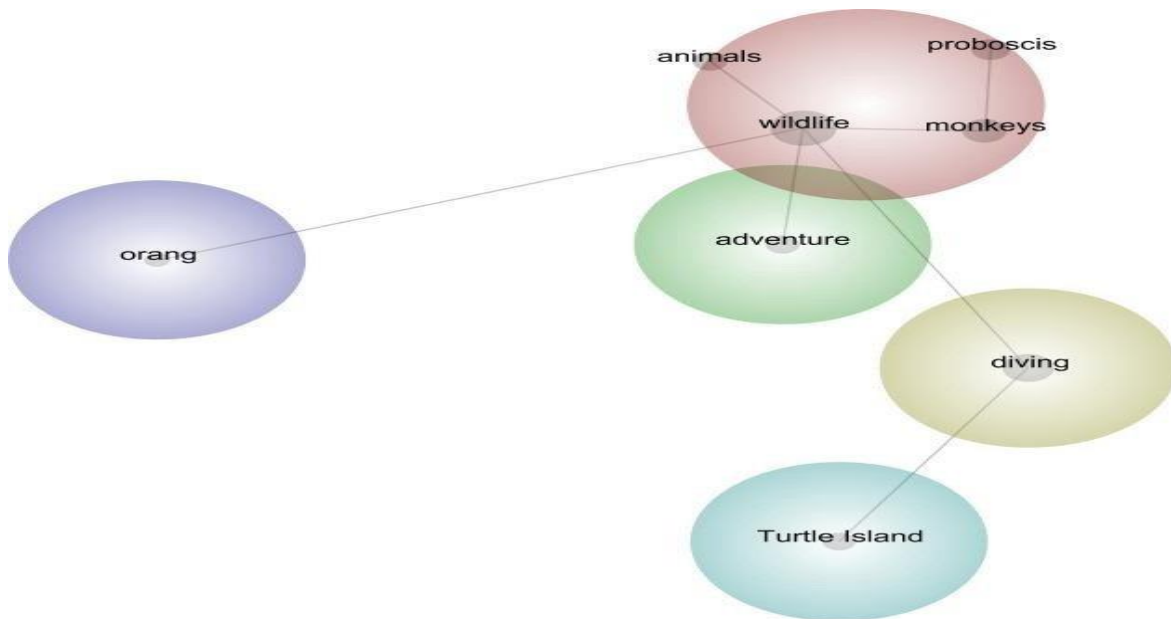
Figure 6.25:   Research objective 1: the visitor's wildlife consumption in Sabah.
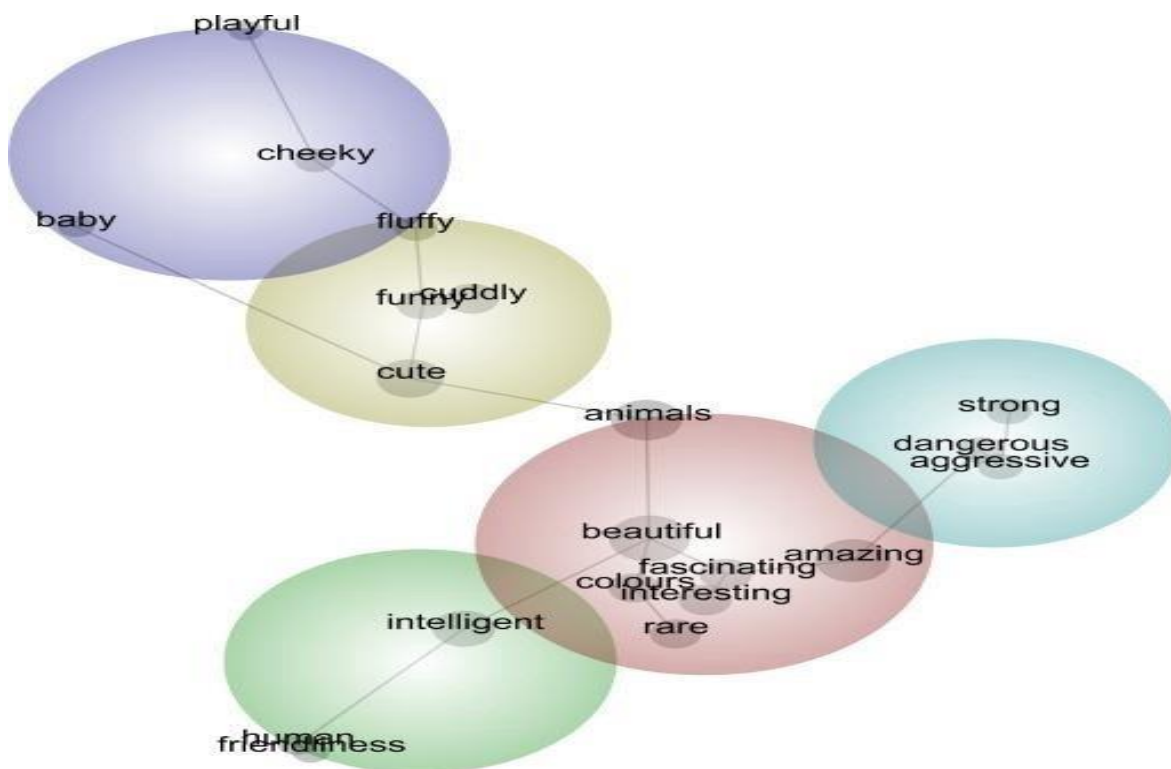
Figure 6.26:   Research objective 2: relationship of visitors' viewing wildlife & their attributes.

In the third research objective, the survey sough to determine if the experience of the visitors had increased their awareness of the need for wildlife conservation. A direct relationship between visitors who are aware of the 'value of wildlife' through the activities and experiences

they consume and these visitors' 'conservation awareness' was shown in Figure 6.12. However, there is the existence of both a direct and indirect relationship between these two consumptive valuing constructs and the loyalty of the visitor towards the wildlife destination.

After visiting and experiencing the wildlife based tourism and its activities, the value for wildlife among tourists is lifted with the tourist loyalty and the net acquired satisfaction associated with the time in Sabah being raised by a positive engagement with the wildlife destination and its local endangered species. This translates in increased awareness of the viewed species and has a possible influence on the intention-to-revisit a similar wildlife environment – however, the intention-to-revisit is beyond the scope of this study.

An indirect relationship between the destination product and the net acquired satisfaction of the visitors is shown in the path model (Wildlife Tourism Behaviour Path Model) (Figure 6.12). As such, it can be deduced that visitors having with a particular expectation about a destination and its conservation efforts can be motivated by the destination itself into a high level of awareness of wildlife conservation and loyalty, while experiencing only small changes (14%) in the level of net acquired satisfaction arising.

The identification of the potential to make use of wildlife as a model selling proposition for the Sabah tourism industry was done in research objective 4. 79.0% of tourism products are wildlife-related with 36.0%, 30.0%, and 13.0% for a wildlife tourism experience, wildlife-based adventure, and conservation-based tourism respectively. The Independent constructs are matched and validated by this as well as the first intermediate construct shown in Figure 6.12. An appealing consumptive time is built by the wildlife expectation based on experiences and activities that include: (1) charisma (48.8%), a recognition of species intelligence (29.9%), and an adventurous time (27.9%). The consumptive items of experiences and activities factors of Figure 6.12 also capture these points.

6.12   INTENTION OF RE-VISITATION
6.12.1 Future Trip to Sabah
The future intention of the respondents to visit Sabah was also surveyed and analysed using descriptive statistical analysis. 50.15% of the respondents stated they are 'likely to return'. Another 2.48% indicated that they are 'highly unlikely to return' to Sabah as illustrated in Figure 6.27 from these findings, it is evident that Sabah is appealing to respondents. Figure 6.27 illustrated the strong (83%) likelihood to return among the study respondents.
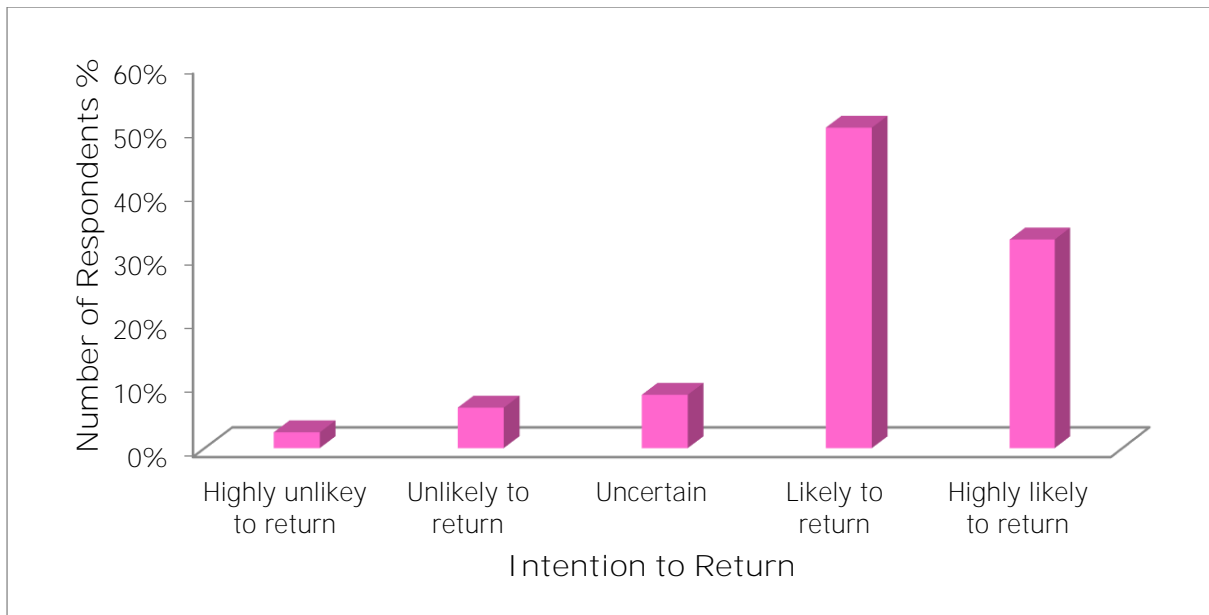
Figure 6.27: Respondents' intention to return to Sabah for their future trips.

6.12.2 Intention to Recommend Destination to Friends/Family

The survey also asked the respondents if they had the intention of recommending Sabah to their friends and/or family members (Figure 6.28). 88% of the respondents indicated that they would do so implying that Sabah is held in high regard by the KKIA respondents. It was found that 56.7% of the respondents would recommend Sabah to their friends and/or family with only 0.9% indicating that would strongly not recommend Sabah to their friends and/or family. This is shown in Figure 6.28.
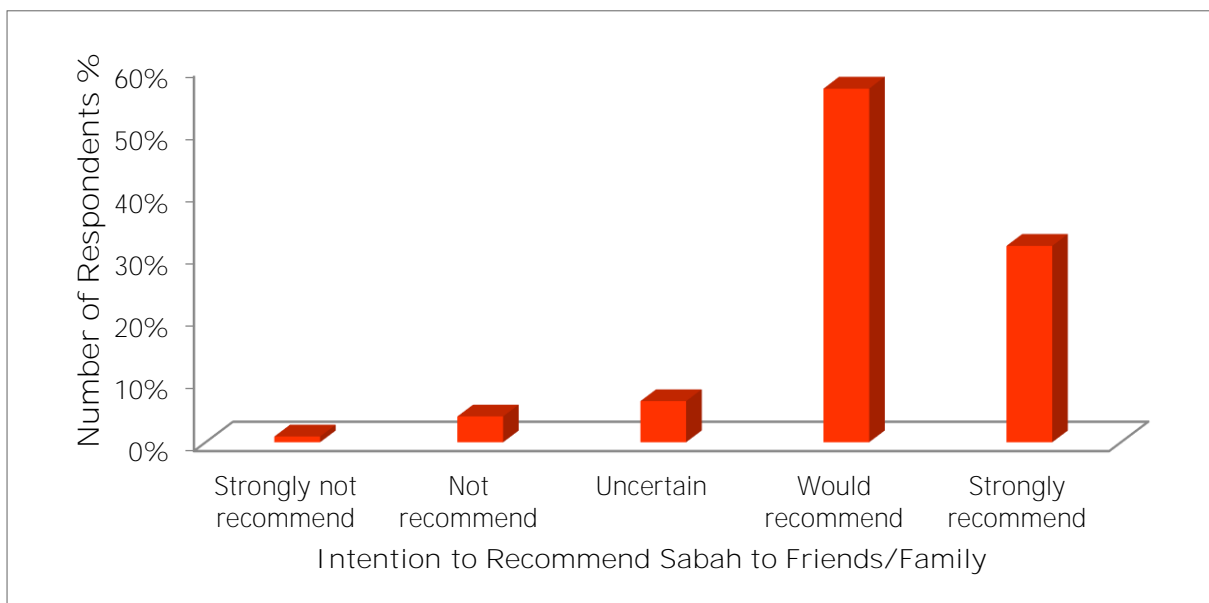
Figure 6.28:   Respondents' intention to recommend Sabah to their friends and/or family.

6.12.3 Overall Satisfaction Acquired with Wildlife-based Tourism in Sabah

The survey also sought to obtain the feedback of the study respondents about their overall satisfaction that they acquired from their wildlife-based trips in Sabah. This question was put at the very end of the questionnaire. A 5-point Likert Scale with 1 = 'very dissatisfied' and 5 = 'Very satisfied' was used. Results are presented in Figure 6.29.

Figure 6.29: Respondents' overall satisfaction acquired with the wildlife-based tours in Sabah.

The majority of the respondents from the study as illustrated in Figure 6.30 can be considered to be happy and acquired overall satisfaction with their trips in Sabah

Figure 6.30 shows that most of the respondents can be categorized as happy and overall satisfied with their wildlife-based trips in Sabah – 33.3% of the respondents were both 'satisfied' while 39.8% were 'very satisfied'. A small percentage of 2.5% indicated that were very dissatisfied with their wildlife-based trip.
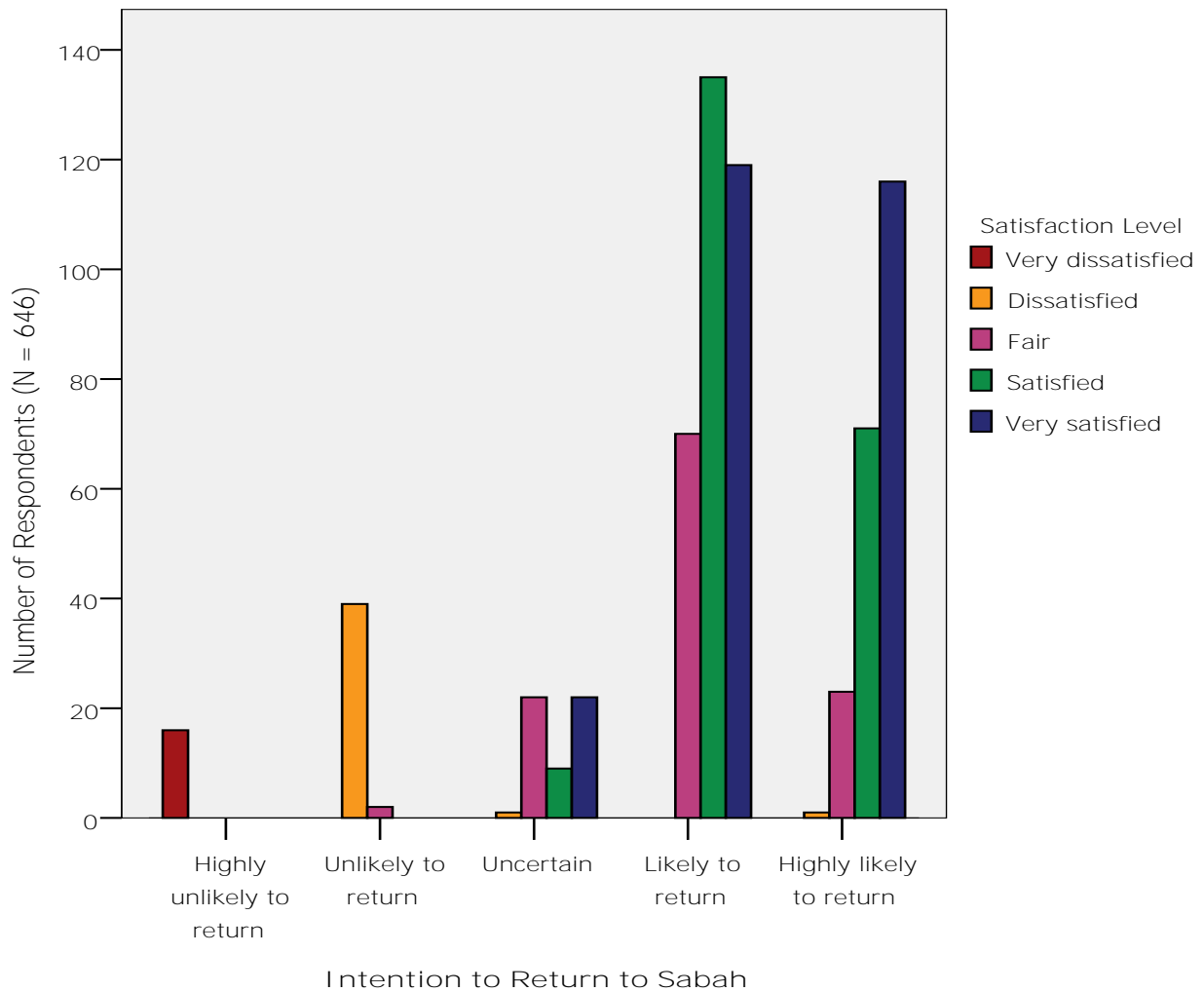
Figure 6.30:   Cross tabulation of overall satisfaction acquired level with intention to return to Sabah.

The overall satisfaction level of the respondents was then cross tabulated with intention to revisit Sabah (Figure 6.30) and it was found that respondents who indicated that they are "very dissatisfied" will definitely not and are "highly unlikely to return" to Sabah again. However, a small chance of 0.2% of returning exists for those who indicated that they were "dissatisfied".

6.13   EPILOGUE

From the study findings, it is evident that there is a reasonable spread of study respondents with the majority being well-off financially, having good education, like traveling in groups, can afford to travel and spend their monies in tourism related ventures. The primary considerations for Sabah tourists were found to be Destination transportation, accommodation, and associated service's needs. Relative to their expectations, first time visitors do not receive the total tourism experience that they expected and therefore many of them do not return. This suggests that some local attention to the overall tourism experience is needed.

The study also found that the majority of visitors have visited other destinations in the world and therefore they are experienced. Thus, they expect quality service in comparison to other destinations. A globally-competitive website presence should therefore be created and maintained by each local destination wildlife tourism operator to generate in-situ experiences and activities that enhances the tourist's WoM, and commentary and opinions across social media.

Wildlife and adventure-based tourism activities are the biggest drivers of tourism in Sabah. However, these need immediate local improvement to ensure that they generate lasting quality memories followed by lasting loyalties rather than putting all the efforts on delivering high levels of acquired satisfaction. Wildlife/Location Behaviour's path model provides this demonstration for Sabah tourists. The 'total effects' in this model illustrated that upstream constructs drive tourist's loyalty and that changes in loyalty weakly drive acquired satisfaction.

Prior to visiting Sabah, tourists usually hold wildlife related expectations. These expectations mainly focus on animal's diversity and abundance, endemic wildlife, and rainforest. Other tourists also expect to experience the traditional culture of the destination. Generally, these expectations are not met during their stay in Sabah. However, most importantly tourists consider visiting Sabah because of its wildlife tourism activities through KKIA. The wildlife experiences provided by these destinations are key positives for tourists, but attention should be paid to in-situ experiences and activities and related services.

A good number of visitors, especially those between 25 and 44 years, when in Sabah usually decide to visit a zoo and/or wildlife park. They prefer to see the orang utans, rhinoceros, and elephants in the wild in that order. However, there is need to align viewing times with action times such as feeding for visitors who stay for short periods in Sabah, zoos especially those housing endangered species are additional wildlife access points. Thus, shrewd local marketing techniques can likely build further service quality packages that have high appeal levels to visitors - ones that may generate expectations (as shown in Figure 6.12 model), and then choose to extend both their stay and wildlife tourism participatory actions.

Studies by Leximancer investigated how the wildlife consumption patterns of visitors in Sabah are heavily wildlife related and divided them into 5 in-situ groups which are: (1) orang utans (9.8%), (2) other wildlife species, (3) adventurous wildlife activities (30.0%), (4) marine environments (15.8%), and (5) conservation and natural habitats (13.0%). This highlights the correlation between the attributes of wildlife in Sabah and the viewing of wildlife by visitors – visitors were shown to have the following preferences: (1) an aesthetic valuing experience, (2)

a human-like behaviour of intelligence experience, and (3) a sense of excitement and danger. The first two research objectives are captured and validated by Leximancer study.

The experience of visitors is captured in research objective 3 and shows an increased level of awareness for the conservation n of wildlife. A significant direct and indirect path model relationship is attained from expectations-attributes and expectations-experiences towards the 'conservation awareness' of visitor and their loyalty to the wildlife destination and then indirectly to acquired satisfaction (Figure 6.12).

A model selling proposition for Sabah tourism industry based on wildlife is offered by the fourth research objective. Wildlife can be a selling proposition provided it offers the following experiences and activities; (1) charisma, (2) a recognition of a wildlife species' intelligence, and (3) an adventurous time. Figure 6.12 listing the various consumptive items captures these points. These three themes are also supported by Leximancer study (Figure 5.27) as: an adventurous time (27.9%), an observable intelligence (29.9%), and an observed charismatic wildlife appeal (48.8%). These points also indicate that Sabah wildlife is likely to continue appealing to visitors and that there is a likelihood of these visitors to recommend Sabah to their friends - as wildlife-based tourism tours are usually seen as providing some form of satisfaction.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

7.1 THESIS RESEARCH QUESTIONS COMMENTS

The first research question: (1) *what kind of wildlife-based tourism is sought by the tourists in Sabah?* provides answers on the qualities of wildlife-based tourism and its place in the field of tourism. It also looks at wildlife-based tourism as a phenomenon.

The movement into the consideration of experiences and activities is Sabah is necessitated by the contemporary situation and trends in wildlife-based tourism. This study illustrates how one can understand the experience and activity items in wildlife-based tourism, and therefore provides the answer to the second research question: (2) *what kind of elements evokes emotions and experiences in wildlife-based tourism?*

The theoretical background and empirical evaluations provides the background on which these elements and the various experiences and activities are studied. As such, they provide answers to the third research question: (3) *what kind of experiences do the presented animal encounters evoke?* The following sections capture the details that support the research questions for this study.

7.2 RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS SUMMATION

The number of respondents for this study is 646. The study participants provided their responses on a questionnaire designed using a quantitative 5 point Likert scale at the KKIA. The quantitative aspect of the study was also supported by the qualitative study cutting across 11 respondent groups. Respondents show minimal gender bias. The personal characteristics of the respondents such as age national identity distributions, solid education, and professional white-collar job status (77%) depict the profile of individuals who possess sufficient personal discretionary funds to travel. When people with this profile make a decision of travelling, they are likely to use personal funds towards their chosen tourism or wildlife tourism destination ventures. Thus, the Sabah wildlife destinations and features of these destinations such as transportation, accommodation, and associated services must be aligned to the needs of the tourists.

The spread of the profile of the study respondent home country shows that the majority of the visitors come from developed countries characterised by large disposal incomes among travellers who are very likely afford travelling around the world and spend monies on tourism-related ventures

The study used English language as the primary language. 35% of the respondents had English as their first language with 23% coming from Europe with English as a second language. 41% of the respondents were Asian with English being used in their country as an important secondary language. Hence, the use of English language in this survey is appropriate.

Not all first time visitors receive the total tourism experience/activities that meets their expectations. Thus, the reported level of the acquired respondent satisfaction is likely to be impacted by factors such as accommodation, time, transport, foods, facilities, and experience at the destination. Thus this study is interested in investigating Sabah's overall wildlife tourism destination experience, and to ponder further local improvements.

7.3 EMPIRICAL CONTRIBUTION

7.3.1 Expectations Met

Cross tabulating data indicated that visitors aged 25-44 years have the highest level of awareness and interest in viewing wildlife species especially those that are endangered especially orang utans, rhinoceros, and elephants. However, animal that generate the most memorable encounters are elephants (15.0%), orang utans (11.9%), proboscis monkeys (8.7%) and marine fish (8.2%), but there is need to realign the wildlife viewing times to the highest animal levels of activity such as feeding times, or territorial dominance claims. The most memorable features of these wildlife animals include size, strength, cuteness, behaviours and amazing characteristics (Figure 6.19).

While in Sabah, many respondents have been shown to make decisions to visit zoo and/or Wildlife Park in Sabah. This is an indication that tourist can also make last minute decision to participate in particular activities. Furthermore, there is need to clearly display the wildlife promotional materials at Sabah's inbound arrival locations to create expectations among tourists.

Although the study indicates that about 70% of tourists consider visiting zoo or wildlife parks, it is still vital for them to visit the wild so that they can see native animals. Lesser preference among the tourists to seeing native animals such as endangered species in captivity or huge volumes of different animals in one place has also been shown by the study. Hence, in-situ experiences/activities are preferred.

The popularity of Sabah Wildlife Park varies among respondents. Respondents seek: preservation/conservation tour sites (91.6%), added learning (90.2%), scenery (87.8%), and

awe/wonder (70.6%) sites. Negative aspects during visits included the following: poor tour guide experiences (66.4%), bad insect/leech encounters (67.3%), and insufficient-time at locations (78.5%). There is need to improve in-situ experiences, activities, and services with focus on key native wildlife species specifically the orang utans, rhinoceros, and elephants.

Quantitative and qualitative studies have shown that wildlife tourist's expectations are framed around Sabah's endemic wildlife, rainforest, diversity of animals and abundance of animals as well as traditional culture. A good portion (42%) indicated that their tourist expectations were fairly met with a further 39% seeing their experience as less than very-highly-met. As such, there is a lot of room for improving Sabah's wildlife tourism industry.

7.3.2 Motives

Respondents indicated that their motive for visiting wildlife tourism destinations in Sabah were to: (1) view endangered species, (2) experience a marine park, (3) see Borneo's wildlife, (4) experience a rainforest/nature park, and (5) participate in various adventures. The majority of these activities are wildlife and adventure-based and should be targeted by tourism operators for immediate improvements.

7.3.3 Wildlife Tourism: Planned Behaviour Path Model

By understanding the consumptive behaviour of a wildlife tourist at a destination, it is possible to enhance or retard this behaviour. In turn these behaviours can present the polished perspective of the wildlife conservation at the destination and then provide a loyalty level within the wildlife tourist.

Constructs related to the Theory of Planned Behaviour model these concepts behaviourally using the path model - engaging (1) Likert scale data collection (at KKIA), (2) factor reduction (SPSS/AMOS 23.0) to deliver constructs and items, (3) path (and model fit) analysis of constructs, and (4) a standardised total effects constructs examination. Figure 6.12 presents an excellent and significant behavioural path model for wildlife tourists visiting Sabah

The model maps the expected strong correlations (89%) between the consumptive activities-undertaken by the tourists and the wildlife tourists' consumptive experiences. These enlist the wildlife tourists' wildlife/environmental memories. A loyalty position within the tourist is driven by the combination of these three constructs to deliver an overall sense of acquired satisfaction within the tourists in relation to the wildlife adventure they had undertaken.

This Wildlife Tourism Behaviour Path Model follows the Leximancer qualitative findings that directly support of the research questions. It adds weight to these findings by mapping the interrelationships (β paths) between the constructs. RQ1 illustrates how tourism researchers can understand the experience and activity items in wildlife-based tourism. Within the model the constructs - experience and activity, set the model input. RQ2 shows the theoretical background and empirical evaluations together provided the background on which experiences and activities are studied. Within the model these equate to the in-situ memories intermediate model construct. RQ3 captures the details actions invoked in tourists as the output constructs of loyalty and satisfaction. The model then shows that the three RQs are significantly related and together then frame the Wildlife Tourism Behaviour Path Model. Further, this model can likely be utilized in other wildlife tourism studies.

The aim of wildlife tourism parks should be to generate lasting memories, and then lasting loyalty as suggested by the path model (and table 6.6) rather than putting all the focus on delivering high levels of acquired satisfaction because other supporting experiences that may not necessarily involve the engagement with wildlife may deliver a certain level of acquired satisfaction (refer section 6.5.6 and Table 6.9).

7.3.4   Perceived Value-for-money and Quality-of-service

The perceived value-for-money among the study respondents was considered less than very good by 79% while the quality-of-service was considered less than very good by 73% of the respondents. This indicates that there is still room for improvement for these two aspects. There should be an improved behavioural emphasis that (1) exceed the expectations of the wildlife tourists, experiences and activities, (2) grow their loyalty, and (3) further satisfy more of their needs, wants, and desires.

7.3.5   Conservation Memory Perspectives

The general threats that wildlife species face are seen by the study respondents as more important than that arising from environmental and behavioural considerations. Text-mining and concept-grouping of the content of the written responses by the study are were examined by Leximancer. Extracted information is displayed as a concept map of relational items embedded in likeness bubbles. Additionally, the relationships between these concepts is quantified by it. It is used in this research to facilitate the exploration and understanding of the comments provide by the respondents. Several of the respondent statistical analysis studies is supported by this approach.

The respondent wildlife consumption patterns in Sabah is shown by Leximancer studies in Figure 5.26 and is segmented across five wildlife-related groups: (1) orang utans, (2) other wildlife species, (3) adventurous wildlife activities, (4) marine environments, and (5) conservation and natural habitats. Additionally, the viewing of wildlife and the attributes of wildlife by tourists in Sabah shows they prefer: (1) an aesthetic valuing experience, (2) a human-like behaviour of intelligence experience, and (3) a sense of excitement and danger. The first two research objectives are captured and validated by Leximancer study.

The experience of the visitors is captured in research objective 3 – this illustrates the awareness of wildlife and the conservation of the habitat. This awareness is supported by Leximancer studies (Figures 5.26 and 6.27). Through its direct and indirect path model relationships, the path model verifies the relationship between expectations-experiences and expectations-attributes through to respondent 'conservation awareness' and into respondent loyalty towards the wildlife destination, and then indirectly (via loyalty) to acquired satisfaction.

The identification of the potential to make use of wildlife as a model selling proposition for the Sabah tourism industry was done in research objective 4. 79.0% of tourism products are wildlife-related with 36.0%, 30.0%, and 13.0% for a wildlife tourism experience, wildlife-based adventure, and conservation-based tourism respectively. The Independent constructs are matched and validated by this as well as the first intermediate construct shown in Figure 6.12. An appealing consumptive time is built by the wildlife expectation based on experiences and activities that include: (1) charisma (48.8%), a recognition of species intelligence (29.9%), and an adventurous time (27.9%). The consumptive items of experiences and activities factors of Figure 6.12 also capture these points.

7.3.6 Re-visit Loyalty

The number of first-and-second-time visitors to Sabah stood at 63% while third-and-fourth-time visitors stood at 32% and fifth-and-sixth-time visitors stood at 5% (Figure 6.8). With the second re-visit time interval decline of 50%, this trend fits a normal multi-visitation 50% exponential decay pattern with the decline continuing exponentially. This implies that some little changes took place between successive visits around the wildlife tourism of a destination. Additionally, it is an indication of the need to address the inadequacies of a destination and to reassess the offerings from the destination's wildlife tourists' perspectives. This view is further supported through a large part of the commentary points generated from fully independent travellers (FIT) (54%).

FITs manage their own travel arrangements (Figures 6.8 to 6.11) as they are experienced travellers with expectations for high-quality services across a destination. Sources of information for many FITs include on-line sources, destination operators, or various media outlets. Many FITs are on holidays away from home with short time allocation for a destination, are value-seeking, and important to the tourist.

Revisit intention is a loyalty response. Cross-tabulation of revisit intention and overall satisfaction acquired indicated that dissatisfied respondents do not intend to return to Sabah. The likelihood of returning is only shown by those who are satisfied or highly satisfied. This view was supported by the qualitative study of the respondent's revisit intention by pointing out that 33% are 'highly likely to return' to Sabah, and 17% are uncertain. Thus, there is still a genuine need for Sabah to strengthen its appeal to arriving and inquiring tourists despite it being seen currently as a place of appeal to KKIA respondents.

7.3.7 Satisfaction Acquired: Wildlife Service Quality (WILSERV)

The respondent acquired satisfaction level can be captured as 13 perception-segmented wildlife service quality (WILSERV) item measurements (Table 6.11). In all the situations, wildlife tangible measures show that visitor are highly satisfied with both their wildlife park engagements and environmental experience. However, other aspects of the tourism package also contribute to the respondent satisfaction acquired that include tangibles (such as accommodation, food, transport and related issues), security measures (assurance), and reliability of the service being provided.

The research model shown in Figure 6.12 is complimented by these WILSERV findings. They also provide an explanation of the existence of a low significant path strength between loyalty and acquired satisfaction. If the other measures of satisfaction acquired such as those provided in Table 6.11 are included, then this path can be strengthened.

Cross-tabulation indicated that only 40% acquire a very satisfying experience while 24% of respondents fail to acquire a satisfactory experience. Those who attain a wildlife tourism experience from Sabah destinations are likely to make WoM recommendations to their close friends and/or family. Thus, in-situ wildlife experiences/activities promotions may assist in raising the level of recognition of the wildlife engagement process into a more satisfying experience.

7.4   THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

The elements of the **Critical Theory** are utilised in this study *"to understand human experience as a means to change the world"* (DePoy & Gitlin, 1998). Specifically, DePoy and Gitlin (1998) and Miller and Brewer (2003) indicated that the critical theory derives knowledge about human experiences against a sustainable social change influence. The **Grounded Theory** is also employed in this study. According to DePoy and Gitlin (1998) grounded theory is a "*systematic discovery of theory from the data of social research*" for structuring and integrating quantitative and qualitative thinking perspectives. Other numerous theories are also applied across this broad Sabah wildlife tourism study.

A combination of the **Experience Theory** and **Animal Encounter Theory** is done to set the theoretical framework to make it possible to treat animal encounters as experiences. Very significant and strong experiences on wildlife tourists can be created by these animal encounters. Additionally, these encounters deliver sustainable outcomes for the wildlife tourists, the stakeholder, the animal, and the whole tourism industry.

Although the **Experience Theory** is rarely used in studies on animal-based tourism, some of the studies in Sabah consider the experience of wildlife tourist against a specific animal attraction and against the kind of experience created by the destination itself. Therefore the concentration of this study is on selected and endangered animal species in Sabah and on those that observe or study them.

Globally threatened habitats rich in biodiversity are, on the other hand, addresses by the **Biodiversity Hotspots Theory**. These habitats are facing a lot of threats to their existence. The theory looks at the animal species as visually recognizable form of biodiversity. These animal species must also be endemic given their hotspot nature. A sustainable and marketable wildlife tourism product that is 'wildlife-friendly' is supported by the **Biodiversity Hotspots Theory.**

Another theory that fits this study is the **scheme theory**. It uses cognitive information processing to measure experiences. Here, a sensitive flow pattern and data is followed by the responses that are elicited by different wildlife animal species attractions so as to understand these in-situ experiences/activities and the way they are mapped and gathered through interviews and questionnaires.

Two key forces driving most purchase-related decisions are proposed by the **Involvement Theory**. One force is that which involves time and energy that is dedicated to decision making

referred to as the attitudinal motive. The second motive is the expectation motive and defines the degree to which emotional reasoning, feelings or logic also influence the purchase-related decisions. For example, deciding to partake in a wildlife engagement. Involvement can arise as a deep intensity established through direct experiences or as a pent-up motivational commitment. It is a consumptive acquisition process that is built through the stimulation aspects of interest that is acquired when taking part in such engaging experiences and activities. By getting involved, tourists develop opinions that may affect their behaviour.

The tourist's relations, beliefs and behaviour are linked by a combination of the **Involvement Theory** with the **Theory of Planned Behaviour** as proposed by Ajzen's (1991) through their reasoned action. Here, a heightened intention (motive) arises when a tourist evaluates their perceptions as positive (attitude) and also sees other tourists perceiving similar effects (subjective norm). The tourist's motive and expectations are set by this alignment and frames tourists behaviour. This behavioural process also involves the consumption of something by the tourist. The components of value is perceived by the tourist in the activities as well as the encounters that tourists have in their destination. These are based on the tourist pre-conceived expectation. Expectations are built by these pre-involvement setting involvement motives that have an influence on the perceptions of a tourist about this destination.

In wildlife tourism, the individuals are deliberately facilitated to choose their environment by the **Users and Gratifications Theory.** This environment must meet the tourist's needs, build their knowledge about wildlife, establish loyalty and deliver an overall reflection opinion or satisfaction. This suggest that when coming to the wildlife tourism destination, tourists bring with them attitudes, norms, and their behavioural control mechanisms in place.

The **Involvement** and **Planned Behaviour** approach is adopted in this study with set behaviours moving downstream from motives and expectations towards consumption and gratification. With this theoretically-mapped approach tourists' planned behaviour of attending a wildlife tourism destination is allowed and links their in-situ consumptive experiences and activities through to a trust in the need for the conservation of the habitat, and a loyalty towards its wildlife, and finally to a satisfaction acquisition measure across the entire suite of tourism-related issues. Figure 4.3 is presented in Figure 4.3 as the study's proposed Wildlife Tourism Behaviour Framework.

The initial 'pull' constructs consumed by tourists when engaging at a wildlife destination are shown by this four stage framework. Wildlife species, behaviours, activities, and environmental attributes are offered by the destination targeting the elicitation of an aligned,

and preferential tourist response. Both physical and behavioural domains may be encompassed in these responses.

The themes of wildlife tourism are also captured by this study through its data collection items that are built against a combination of the following theoretical approaches: (1) experience theory, (2) biodiversity hotspots theory, (3) animal encounter theory, (4) scheme theory, (5) involvement theory, (6) theory of planned behaviour (integrating reasoned action), and (7) users and gratification theory.

Pine and Gilmore experience model (educational, aesthetic, entertaining and escapist experiences) is used to define the difference experience items. The four (consciousness, improvement, emotional and transformational experiences) different levels of experiences by Komppula and Boxberg are also added. LEO's triangle model (Figure 4.2) alongside Reynolds and Braithwaite's elements (authenticity, uniqueness, story, interaction, multiple senses, contrast, intensity, duration, species popularity, species status) are also incorporated to develop the understanding around the production of a positive wildlife tourism experience. The importance of the species attributes such as similarity, cuteness, cuddliness, baby releaser, aesthetics, intelligence, size, admirable qualities is also considered by this study as well as the settings of the encounter and the participation level of the tourist.

Lastly, as presented in Figure 6.12, the theory of **Involvement Theory, Theory of Planned Behaviour**, and **User Gratification Theory are** applied into the Wildlife Tourism Behaviour Path Model (for tourists visiting Sabah, Malaysia). A benchmarking pathway for the ongoing development of wildlife tourism at destination is framed using this model. The researcher consider this to be a substantive theoretical contribution of this study.

7.5 REAL WORLD CONTRIBUTION

The tourism industry in destinations in Sabah Malaysia seek an all-round comprehensive approach that is not only comprehensible but one that delivers interpretable results that are cost effective and focussed to the future. For the ongoing development of wildlife tourism at this destination, owners, industry managers, operators as well as the government can put into consideration this comprehensive study and its findings as a potential source of a benchmarking pathway. Now, the destination tourism industry in Sabah can identify its strengths and/or weaknesses and therefore seek solutions for the improvement of the appeal of wildlife tourism and raising both the loyalty and satisfaction levels of outbound wildlife tourists.

The study of the tourism destinations in Sabah indicate that outbound wildlife tourism information can be gathered through consumptive experiences and activities be utilised in the delivery of greater destination loyalty, environmental trust, and overall tour satisfaction. Researchers can make use of the Wildlife Tourism Behaviour Path Model provided in Figure 6.12 to evaluate the consumptive experience and activities enjoyed by tourists visiting wildlife sites in Sabah and make decision on whether paying attention to (1) the experience consumptive domain, or on (2) both the experience and activities consumptive domains, or on (3) a more specific one or more items within a domain approach, can offer a likely most beneficial improvement(s) pathway.

The ranking of the individual animal species indicates that the most popular animal species if the orang utans, followed by the rhinoceros, and then the elephants. The expansion of the number of wildlife tourism sites may be beneficial as well as the improvement of these sites with modern and advanced viewing and supporting facilities. This may lead to uncovering of further unidentified variables such as new reach tools such as social media's Instagram postings, special catering of less able, or older wildlife tourists. Big, endangered animals were also found to be more popular than marine or eco-tourism environments. This study suggest that funds should be channelled towards wildlife areas that are capable more returns.

The way in which associated wildlife items concept map are shown by studies by Leximancer. The linkages indicate that there should be promotion of itemised features against specific environment. There is need to weigh these perspectives against their relative importance as shown by the quantitative and numerical measurements in this study.

Exponential reduction of the number of tourists from first-and-second-time visitors is also noted in the study. The reduction is also noted to continue for third-and-fourth-time visitors to fifth-and-sixth-time visitors. This implies that Sabah wildlife destination sites are witnessing very little changes in terms of the creation of new wildlife tourism demands and quality destination changes. Promotion of these need to be done to draw back previous wildlife tourists, and to win additional wildlife tourists. Additionally, this exponential trend shows that to redress the inadequacies of the current destination as well as reconsidering all offerings at these destinations from a perspective of wildlife tourist. The commentary points generated from knowledgeable fully independent travellers provide further support for this view.

7.6   LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The first source of limitation of this study is the time. The study was carried out over a 6 month period. However, it is known that there is the variation of the tourism cycle across the year. This presents bias to some extent.

Also, the sampling frame employed at the KKIA restricts the captured information to a convenience sample which raises some form of bias. This is because the captured data does not fully include the contributions of local tourism, but captures the key ingredients and prime revenue generators as highlighted by this study.

While the study has made use of substantive data, this could be larger. Only respondents who can read and respond in English were included. The survey could have been run using other key languages such as Malay, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. The length of the survey is also considerable and this saw some of the potential respondents choosing not to complete it. For future research, a reduced but well-refined questionnaire should be used.

Also, more refined questions could be used to improve the path model provided in Figure 6.12. This could be achieved using a more extensive suite of satisfaction questions (and the factor reducing them to a final satisfaction construct) as opposed to using one key overall satisfaction question. The inclusion of ANOVA studies whilst useful is beyond the scope of this research and can be considered as possible inclusions in future studies of wildlife tourism in Malaysia or elsewhere.

Updates on the literature could also have been done but due to personal illness, and other personal factors, this has not been done. Additionally, the existing literature review, is well suited to the data captured in the study, the time fame for the study, with literature in this areas of tourism remaining scarce while offering few new perspectives. Extension of the Leximancer text mining validations could also be done, but this study provides a suitable validation.

Annual follow-up surveys should be conducted at KKIA to allow the tourism industry in Sabah to benchmark its progress towards delivering greater wildlife tourism satisfaction and towards winning a greater amount of this type of tourism to Sabah. Additionally, wildlife destinations in Sabah should align their accommodation, transportation, and associated services to the specific needs of their next inbound tourism and wildlife tourism visitors and FITs.

This study may have replication possibilities in other wildlife locations - such as Australia's Great Barrier Reef or its world heritage Daintree Rainforest environment. In Great Barrier Reef

studies key endangered species with a wildlife connotation do exist. For example habitat apex food chain species such as gropers or certain shark species can be studied. However these species are pelagic and tend to roam around in the ocean. Consequently controlled tourist environs would need to be established. A better replications option may be the engagement of Australia's World-Heritage Daintree Rainforest environment. This already draws both domestic and international tourists, and if utilized and aligned to Sabah's wildlife park approaches, its salt water crocodiles (both (1) territorial and (2) apex predators) can be used as wildlife drawcards. This rainforest environment is also home to large birds such as the cassowary, several dangerous snake species, spiders, etc. Hence there are multiple drawcards for international tourists within Australia World-Heritage Daintree Rainforest environment.

APPENDIX

WILDLIFE VIEWING PREFERENCES OF VISITORS TO PROTECTED AREAS IN SABAH, MALAYSIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ROLE OF WILDLIFE TOURISM IN CONSERVATION

Our aim is to explore the variables that constitutes a tourist's satisfaction level and examines the impact of satisfaction towards wildlife conservation

PLEASE MARK YOUR RESPONSES LIKE THIS ➔ ● (fill in the circle)   Please DO NOT tick (√)

SECTION A: Tourist's Demographic

1. **Are you**   O Male   O Female
2. **Where do you usually live?**   O Malaysia   (State)_____   O Overseas (Country)_____
3. **Please indicate the year you were born:**   19_____
4. **Please indicate the highest level of formal education that you received so far:**
   O Secondary   O Diploma   O Degree   O Postgraduate   O Other_____
5. **How would you best describe your occupation: (Please choose only one)**
   O Self-employed   O Professional   O Retail   O Office/Clerical   O Factory Worker
   O Service Industry   O Student   O Retired   O Other _____
6. **Which of these best describes your immediate travel party:**
   O Alone   O Tour Group   O Club   O Friends   O Relatives
   O Family with Children   O Couple (partner/spouse)
7. **Was this your first visit to Sabah, Malaysia?**
   O Yes   O No   If *NO*, how many times have you visited? _____
8. **How many nights in total will you be away from home this holiday? _____**
9. **What was your main type of accommodation during your visit to Sabah?**
   O Hotel   O Lodge   O Resort   O Bed & Breakfast   O Backpackers Hostel
   O Holiday Apartment/Unit   O Friends/Relatives
10. **Where did you find out about Sabah? (Select all that apply)**
    O Internet   O Travel Agent   O TV Documentary
    O Facebook   O Friends/Family   O Been Before
    O Tourist Guide Book   O Advertisements in Print   O Other_____
    O Visitor Centres   O Advertisement on TV/Radio
11. **Which of this statement best describes your interest in nature?**
    O Gazer at the scenery   O Beginner that know very little about   O Other _____
                                   wildlife but keen to learn

    O Dabbler and recognize the odd bird or   O Studier of wildlife e.g. bird watcher
    flower

SECTION B: Tourist's Expectation

1. **What motivated you to visit Sabah?**

	Not at all important	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Visit the marine park	O	O	O	O	O
Visit rainforest	O	O	O	O	O
See Borneo wildlife	O	O	O	O	O
Experience traditional culture	O	O	O	O	O
Outstanding scenery	O	O	O	O	O
Good climate	O	O	O	O	O
Price matched budget	O	O	O	O	O
Rest and relax	O	O	O	O	O
Snorkeling and diving	O	O	O	O	O
Meet new people	O	O	O	O	O
Visit the beaches	O	O	O	O	O
Visit friends and relatives	O	O	O	O	O
Shopping	O	O	O	O	O
Visit islands	O	O	O	O	O
Adventure activities	O	O	O	O	O
Business/conference/meeting	O	O	O	O	O
Visit World Heritage Area	O	O	O	O	O
Participate in nightlife	O	O	O	O	O
To learn about the nature	O	O	O	O	O
To sample the region's food	O	O	O	O	O

2. **Please indicate whether your expectation have been met:**

	Not Met At All	Not Met	Moderately Met	Highly Met	Very Highly Met
Wildlife viewing	O	O	O	O	O
Diverse wildlife	O	O	O	O	O
Enjoy nature	O	O	O	O	O
Adventure activities	O	O	O	O	O
Shopping	O	O	O	O	O
Socialize with other people	O	O	O	O	O
Traditional culture	O	O	O	O	O
Food and beverage	O	O	O	O	O

SECTION C: If you have participated any form of wildlife viewing, please answer the following question:

1. **Please name the animal that you had the most memorable encounters with:**

_____

2. **Words used to describe the most memorable wildlife included:**

	Not at all important	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Cute	O	O	O	O	O
Beautiful	O	O	O	O	O
Interesting	O	O	O	O	O
Friendly	O	O	O	O	O
Sleepy	O	O	O	O	O
Fascinating	O	O	O	O	O
Playful	O	O	O	O	O
Lazy	O	O	O	O	O
Natural	O	O	O	O	O
Big	O	O	O	O	O
Strong	O	O	O	O	O
Vibrant colors	O	O	O	O	O
Rare/unique	O	O	O	O	O
Endangered	O	O	O	O	O
Wild	O	O	O	O	O
Fierce	O	O	O	O	O
Other:_____	O	O	O	O	O

3. **Activity participated during most recent trip**

	Not at all important	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Taking pictures or filming	O	O	O	O	O
Visiting scenic landmarks	O	O	O	O	O
Participate education and awareness programme	O	O	O	O	O
Sunbathing or beach activities	O	O	O	O	O
Participating in volunteering programme	O	O	O	O	O
Outdoor activities such as climbing etc.	O	O	O	O	O
Local crafts and handiwork	O	O	O	O	O
Snorkeling and/or diving to appreciate marine life	O	O	O	O	O
Bird watching	O	O	O	O	O
Visit wildlife tourism reserve	O	O	O	O	O
Visit zoos and/or wildlife park	O	O	O	O	O
Feeding wildlife	O	O	O	O	O

4. **If you participated a wildlife viewing, please tell us how important the following are:**

	Not at all important	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Animal richness	O	O	O	O	O
Physical attributes of the animals	O	O	O	O	O
Watch animal's behavior	O	O	O	O	O
Size of the animals	O	O	O	O	O
Reliability of sightings of the animals	O	O	O	O	O
Safety	O	O	O	O	O
Linkage to local culture	O	O	O	O	O
Rarity of the animals	O	O	O	O	O
Endangered status of the species	O	O	O	O	O
Borneo popular species among tourists	O	O	O	O	O

5. **Which of the following are important to you in terms of wildlife watching experience?**

	Not at all important	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Being able to touch/handle wildlife	O	O	O	O	O
An untouched natural environment	O	O	O	O	O
Seeing wildlife behaving naturally	O	O	O	O	O
Feeding animals	O	O	O	O	O
Seeing wildlife in their natural environment	O	O	O	O	O
Close proximity with wildlife	O	O	O	O	O
Socialize with other wildlife tourists	O	O	O	O	O
Interesting information about wildlife	O	O	O	O	O
Availability of knowledgeable guide	O	O	O	O	O
Jungle tour	O	O	O	O	O
Spot lighting at night	O	O	O	O	O

SECTION D: Tourist Satisfaction on Animal Viewing

1. **Please indicate which of the following you have seen in the wild on this trip?**

Borneo pygmy elephant	OYes	ONo	ONot sure
Sumatran rhinoceros	OYes	ONo	ONot sure
Orangutans	OYes	ONo	ONot sure
Monkeys	OYes	ONo	ONot sure
Birds	OYes	ONo	ONot sure
Reptiles (snakes, crocodiles etc.)	OYes	ONo	ONot sure
Bearded pig	OYes	ONo	ONot sure
Other _____	OYes	ONo	ONot sure

2. **Please tell us how important it is to you to see the following animals?**

	Not at all important	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Banteng (Tembadau)	O	O	O	O	O
Borneo pygmy elephant	O	O	O	O	O
Sumatran rhinoceros	O	O	O	O	O
Orangutan	O	O	O	O	O
Proboscis monkey	O	O	O	O	O
Crocodile	O	O	O	O	O
Clouded leopard	O	O	O	O	O
Sun bear	O	O	O	O	O
Borneo endemic birds (e.g. Bornean Bristlehead)	O	O	O	O	O
Flat-headed cat	O	O	O	O	O
Snakes	O	O	O	O	O
Sea turtles	O	O	O	O	O
Dugong	O	O	O	O	O
Borneo gibbon	O	O	O	O	O
Other _____	O	O	O	O	O

SECTION D: If you visited to a wildlife reserve, please complete the following:

1. **Responsive**

	Very Unsatisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neutral	Fairly Satisfied	Highly Satisfied
Staff are always helpful and courteous	O	O	O	O	O
Staff are quick to react to customers' request	O	O	O	O	O
Staff are willing to take time with visitor	O	O	O	O	O
Staff are well informed to answer customer's requests	O	O	O	O	O
Visitors are made to feel welcome	O	O	O	O	O
Visitors are free to explore, there is no restriction	O	O	O	O	O
Waiting time for service at the attraction is acceptable	O	O	O	O	O
The site is opened at convenient hours	O	O	O	O	O

2. **Tangibles**

	Very Unsatisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neutral	Fairly Satisfied	Highly Satisfied
The site is well kept and restored	O	O	O	O	O
The attraction environment is attractive	O	O	O	O	O
The attraction is un-crowded and unspoiled	O	O	O	O	O
Staff are presentable and easily identified	O	O	O	O	O

3.	**Price**	**Very Unsatisfied**	**Fairly Satisfied**	**Neutral**	**Fairly Satisfied**	**Highly Satisfied**
	Level of prices for services provided on the site is acceptable	O	O	O	O	O
	There is no price discrimination at the site	O	O	O	O	O
	The site offers value for money	O	O	O	O	O
4.	**Communication**	**Very Unsatisfied**	**Fairly Satisfied**	**Neutral**	**Fairly Satisfied**	**Highly Satisfied**
	There is availability of brochures in English of the attraction	O	O	O	O	O
	The information offered is sufficiently detailed to enjoy the attraction	O	O	O	O	O
	Information about forbidden and limited behaviors at the attraction are provided	O	O	O	O	O
	Foreign language leaflets are helpful	O	O	O	O	O
5.	**Assurance**	**Very Unsatisfied**	**Fairly Satisfied**	**Neutral**	**Fairly Satisfied**	**Highly Satisfied**
	You feel safe and secure at the attraction	O	O	O	O	O
	There is sufficient places to sit and relax	O	O	O	O	O
	Attraction is easily accessible for everyone (road, transport and signage)	O	O	O	O	O
6.	**Empathy**	**Very Unsatisfied**	**Fairly Satisfied**	**Neutral**	**Fairly Satisfied**	**Highly Satisfied**
	Personal attention is provided to visitors when needed	O	O	O	O	O
	The facilities and equipment offered are at convenient location	O	O	O	O	O
	There is a good viewing and comfortable facilities available	O	O	O	O	O
	The site considers needs for elderly and disable visitors	O	O	O	O	O
7.	**Natural and wildlife resources**	**Very Unsatisfied**	**Fairly Satisfied**	**Neutral**	**Fairly Satisfied**	**Highly Satisfied**
	There are rare fauna and flora at the attraction	O	O	O	O	O
	The attraction is a tranquil rest area	O	O	O	O	O
	The site is unique and authentic	O	O	O	O	O
	It is a very knowledgeable site for visitors	O	O	O	O	O

There are large variety of species	O	O	O	O	O
It is a wilderness and unspoiled area	O	O	O	O	O

SECTION E: Tourist's Total Satisfaction on Wildlife Tourism

1. **How would you rate your total experience relative to your total expectations?**
   (Please fill the circle that matches your answer)
   OMuch worse than I expected   O Worse than I expected   OAs I expected
   OBetter than I expected   OMuch better than I expected

2. **Overall, how would you rate your perceived value for money and perceived quality of the service you received in Sabah?**

	Very Poor	*Poor*	*Average*	*Good*	*Very Good*
Value for money	O	O	O	O	O
Quality of service	O	O	O	O	O

SECTION F: Tourist's Conservation Perspectives

1. **What did you learn about wildlife in Sabah?**

	Not at all important	*Unimportant*	*Neutral*	*Important*	*Very Important*
Learn about the population status of the species	O	O	O	O	O
Learn about the wildlife's habitat	O	O	O	O	O
Learn various facts about the threats facing the wildlife	O	O	O	O	O
Learn about the appearance and behavior of a species	O	O	O	O	O
Learn about the needs to conserve the species	O	O	O	O	O

2. **Are you a member of any conservation based NGOs?**   OYes:_____   ONo

3. **Do you think it is important to be a member of a conservation group to help to conserve the animal species?**
   O Yes because _____
   O No because _____

3. **In your opinion, what can be done to help the conservation of wildlife in Sabah?**

Volunteering program	*Not at all important*	*Unimportant*	*Neutral*	*Important*	*Very Important*
Conservation road tours	O	O	O	O	O
Funding	O	O	O	O	O
Knowledge/skills transfer	O	O	O	O	O
Research	O	O	O	O	O

Breeding program	O	O	O	O	O
Tourism as tool for conservation	O	O	O	O	O
Review/strengthen existing rules	O	O	O	O	O
Increase the size of protected areas	O	O	O	O	O

4. **Are there any <u>suggestions</u> for <u>improving</u> the <u>wildlife experiences</u> available in Sabah so as to <u>ensure</u> the <u>conservation message</u> is <u>delivered</u> appropriately?**

	Not at all important	*Unimportant*	*Neutral*	*Important*	*Very Important*
Reduced the number of tourists to a site	O	O	O	O	O
Limit development and keep the site untouched/natural	O	O	O	O	O
More information about wildlife and the site	O	O	O	O	O
More activities on conservation (e.g. planting trees)	O	O	O	O	O
Updated information about the wildlife	O	O	O	O	O
Provide brochures on researches/program on wildlife	O	O	O	O	O

SECTION G: Tourist's Loyalty

1. **How <u>likely</u> is it that you would <u>return to Sabah</u>?**
   O Highly unlikely to return   O Unlikely to return   O Uncertain   O Likely to return   O Highly likely to return

2. **How strongly would you <u>recommend</u> this destination to <u>friends/family/relatives</u>?**
   O Strongly not recommend destination   O Would not recommend destination   O Uncertain   O Would recommend   O Strongly recommend

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

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