

UNDERSTANDING CONSUMER BEHAVIOURS IN GEOTOURISM: A LITERATURE REVIEW OF MALAYSIA

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Abstract

This systematic article review aims to understand the motivations, preferences, and behaviours of geotourists and their overall satisfaction and well-being. An extensive search was carried out across numerous databases, including Google Scholar, Scopus, and academic repositories, to confirm the validity and completeness of the review. This qualitative study examines the consumer perspective of geotourism in Malaysia by reviewing previous studies conducted between 2018 and 2023. Only studies, papers presented at conferences, and reports on geotourism in Malaysia, consumer behaviour, and elements affecting geotourists decisions were considered. Studies conducted in languages other than English and outside the designated timeframe were not included in the study. Findings reveal that geotourists in Malaysia seek experiential learning, cultural exchange, and a deeper connection with the natural environment as they value unique geological sites, immersive educational experiences, and responsible practices that preserve the geological heritage and promote environmental conservation. Key factors influencing consumer behaviour include satisfaction with the geopark experience, destination image, perceived value, and perceived sustainability. These findings contribute to a better understanding of consumer behaviour, informing destination management organisations and tourism stakeholders in developing strategies to enhance the geotourism experience, support local communities, and ensure the long-term sustainability of geotourism destinations in Malaysia.

Keywords: *Geotourism, Perceived value, Satisfaction, Sustainable, Conservation development*

Abstrak

Kajian artikel sistematik ini bertujuan untuk memahami motivasi, keutamaan, dan tingkah laku geopelancong serta kepuasan dan kesejahteraan keseluruhan mereka. Carian secara sistematik telah dijalankan merentas pelbagai pangkalan data, termasuk Google Scholar, Scopus dan repositori akademik, untuk mengesahkan

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kesahihan dan kesempurnaan semakin. Kajian kualitatif ini mengkaji perspektif pengguna geopelancongan di Malaysia dengan menyemak kajian terdahulu yang dijalankan antara 2018 dan 2023. Hanya kajian, kertas kerja yang dibentangkan di persidangan, dan laporan yang berkaitan dengan geopelancongan di Malaysia, tingkah laku pengguna dan elemen yang mempengaruhi keputusan geopelancongan dianalisis dengan mendalam. Kajian yang dijalankan dalam Bahasa selain bahasa Inggeris dan di luar jangka masa yang ditetapkan tidak dimasukkan dalam kajian. Hasil dapatan kajian mendedahkan bahawa geopelancong di Malaysia mencari pembelajaran pengalaman, pertukaran budaya, dan hubungan yang lebih mendalam dengan persekitaran semula jadi kerana mereka menghargai tapak geologi yang unik, pengalaman pendidikan yang mendalam, dan amalan bertanggungjawab yang memelihara warisan geologi dan menggalakkan pemuliharaan alam sekitar. Faktor utama yang mempengaruhi tingkah laku pengguna termasuk kepuasan dengan pengalaman geopark, imej destinasi, nilai yang dirasakan dan kemampunan yang dirasakan. Penemuan ini menyumbang kepada pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang tingkah laku pengguna, keperluan organisasi pengurusan destinasi dan pihak berkepentingan pelancongan dalam membangunkan strategi untuk meningkatkan pengalaman geopelancongan, menyokong komuniti tempatan, dan memastikan kemampunan jangka panjang destinasi geopelancongan di Malaysia.

Kata kunci: *Geopelancongan, Nilai persepsi, Kepuasan, Pembangunan mampan, Pemuliharaan*

Introduction

Geotourism, a specialised form of sustainable tourism, focuses on exploring and appreciating a destination's unique geological features, emphasising conservation, community involvement, and responsible development. Geotourism offers immense potential in various regions worldwide, including Malaysia, where diverse landscapes and geological wonders exist. Geotourism destinations provide visitors educational experiences, outdoor activities, and a deeper connection with the natural environment. With its rich geological heritage and geodiversity, Malaysia holds significant potential for geotourism. The country is home to remarkable geological sites, such as geoparks and natural landmarks, attracting domestic and international tourists. Geotourism offers opportunities for economic growth, local community development, and environmental conservation. It also promotes cultural exchange and education, making it an appealing choice for tourists.

The research objectives in the realm of geotourism and consumer behaviour aim to enhance the industry by optimising visitor satisfaction, effectively promoting geotourism offerings, predicting visitor trends, quantifying economic impacts, designing memorable experiences, fostering stakeholder collaboration, and promoting sustainable development. These objectives collectively strive to improve

the overall quality, sustainability, and economic viability of geotourism destinations, benefiting both tourists and local communities while preserving natural and cultural heritage. The study's findings on geotourism and consumer behaviour in Malaysia have profound implications for destination management organisations and tourism stakeholders. They offer opportunities to enhance the geotourism experience by aligning offerings with visitor preferences, fostering cultural exchange, and providing enriching educational experiences. Moreover, these insights can guide the development of sustainable practices that preserve geological heritage and support local communities, attracting environmentally conscious tourists. Leveraging this understanding of consumer behaviour provides a competitive edge by attracting niche markets and increasing economic benefits. Additionally, it encourages the creation of effective educational programs that deepen visitor engagement and promote conservation awareness. In essence, these findings empower stakeholders to optimise geotourism, fostering economic growth, cultural enrichment, and heritage preservation while ensuring the resilience of geotourism in Malaysia.

Methodology

The provided excerpt indicates that the paper begins by discussing previous research on consumer behaviour and its impact on consumer life satisfaction and well-being within the context of geotourism in Malaysia. The focus is on understanding how consumer behaviour influences decision-making, expenditure patterns, and overall satisfaction in the geotourism industry. It also aims to understand how tourists engage with and experience the geological wonders of Malaysia, with a particular emphasis on their motivations, preferences, and behaviours. The study also explores how geotourism can be leveraged for sustainable development, economic growth, and community involvement in Malaysia.

The paper specifically aims to connect consumer behaviour with geotourism in Malaysia. It utilises nine secondary data from previous studies conducted between 2018 and 2023, focusing on the Malaysian context. By understanding consumer behaviour in the geotourism context, the paper may enhance the overall understanding of consumer perspectives and their impact on the geotourism industry in Malaysian communities and contribute to environmental conservation. In conclusion, this research endeavour promises to be a holistic exploration of Malaysia's intricate relationship between consumer behaviour and geotourism. It is not merely an academic exercise but an endeavour with practical implications that can shape the geotourism landscape in the country, offering benefits to tourists, businesses, communities, and the environment alike.

Defining Geotourism from a Consumer Context

Geotourism in the consumer context represents a niche within the broader tourism industry, where tourists actively seek distinctive and educational experiences centred around geological phenomena. It emphasises experiential learning, personal engagement, and sustainable practices. Geotourists actively seek out unique geological sites and landscapes to deepen their knowledge, connect with nature, and develop a sense of place (Gössling et al., 2015). In addition to knowledge acquisition, geotourists are driven by a desire to connect with nature and develop a sense of place. They appreciate the beauty and awe-inspiring aspects of geological formations and find solace and inspiration in the natural environment. By immersing themselves in these landscapes, geotourists connect with nature and cultivate a sense of belonging and appreciation for the Earth's geological heritage.

From the consumer's perspective, comprehending the motivations, preferences, and behaviours of geotourists is fundamental in crafting these experiences to align with their expectations (Newsome et al., 2015). Geotourists are primarily driven by an innate curiosity to delve into Earth's geological history, often accompanied by solid environmental values that advocate for responsible tourism practices (Dowling, 2010). These tourists value sustainability, responsible travel, and preserving geological sites for future generations.

Geotourism destinations recognise the importance of catering to consumer needs and preferences. They strive to provide high-quality interpretive facilities, knowledgeable guides, and interactive experiences that foster an appreciation for geological features and promote environmental awareness. By offering geologically focused itineraries, guided tours, and educational initiatives, these destinations create value for consumers, contributing to the local economy and supporting sustainable development. These destinations make a niche market and attract geotourists seeking in-depth knowledge and meaningful experiences related to the Earth's geological heritage. This specialisation allows geotourism destinations to differentiate themselves from other tourism offerings and establish a competitive advantage. In summary, a thorough grasp of geotourism from the consumer perspective directs the tailoring of experiences, encourages responsible tourism, and serves as a central factor in advancing geotourism destinations (Dowling, 2013; Newsome et al., 2015).

Current Practice of Geotourism in Malaysia

The COVID-19 pandemic dealt a severe blow to Malaysia's tourism industry in 2020, prompting implementing a movement control order (MCO) and causing substantial economic losses. Tourist arrivals saw a dramatic decline early in the year as travellers were compelled to rethink their travel plans due to the global health crisis. In response, Malaysia devised a comprehensive Tourism Recovery Plan, introduced

in November 2020 as part of the broader Tourism Malaysia Strategic Plan 2020-2026. This recovery plan hinges on three pivotal strategies: restoring trust and confidence in tourism trends, reinvigorating the domestic tourism sector, and optimising the efficient utilisation of resources. A central tenet of the plan is to strike a delicate balance between developing and preserving Malaysia's natural and cultural treasures, encompassing environmental conservation, cultural heritage, and nurturing local traditions. Beyond recovery, the plan seeks to stimulate economic growth, generate employment opportunities, and foster a shift from mass tourism toward more personalised and experiential forms of travel. Malaysia's adaptive response underscores its resilience and commitment to shaping a sustainable and resilient tourism future in the face of unprecedented challenges.

The Tourism Malaysia Strategic Plan aligns with the National Tourism Plan agenda, recognising the need to transform Malaysia's tourism industry. This transformation aims to break away from the comfort zone and enhance the competitiveness of tourism destinations. It emphasises the importance of securing partnerships and increasing investment in empowering local communities, ensuring the industry's sustainability and resilience. The call for transformation arises from several challenges, including the diminishing attractiveness of existing tourism destinations, a lack of innovation leading to sameness, and issues such as low service quality and inadequate destination management. To address these challenges, the plan outlines strategies such as creating special tourism investment zones, boosting demand, and promoting sustainable and responsible tourism practices to revitalise Malaysia's tourism sector and foster long-term success.

In Malaysia, geotourism practices are firmly grounded in principles of sustainable development and environmental conservation, encompassing comprehensive environmental management plans that address waste management, energy conservation, habitat restoration, and biodiversity conservation, all to minimise negative impacts on the natural environment (Nikolovski et al., 2019). Geotourism sites prioritise education and interpretation, offering programs, guided tours, informative signage, and well-equipped visitor centres to enhance visitors' understanding of geological features, ecological processes, and cultural significance (Kamarudin et al., 2021). Sustainable infrastructure development is central, with considerations like site sensitivity, energy efficiency, and waste management carefully integrated to minimise environmental footprints (Hamzah et al., 2018). Community engagement is critical, involving inclusive decision-making, capacity-building, and economic opportunities to empower and align communities with geotourism site development (Hamzah et al., 2018). Collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, NGOs, and tourism operators, is encouraged to promote effective planning, resource allocation, and sustainable development. Governmental bodies play a vital role in crafting and enforcing policies, regulations, and guidelines to guide sustainable practices and site management

(Kamarudin et al., 2021). This holistic approach, integrating environmental management, education, sustainable infrastructure, community engagement, partnerships, and regulatory frameworks, drives the responsible growth of geotourism in Malaysia, benefiting both the natural environment and local communities.

One example of a geotourism destination in Malaysia is Langkawi Geopark. It is a prominent geological and natural heritage site located on the island of Langkawi in Malaysia. The most famous geopark in Malaysia is undoubtedly the Langkawi Geopark, as it is recognised as a UNESCO Global Geopark. This designation highlights its geological significance, cultural heritage, and commitment to sustainable tourism. In the context of geotourism, Langkawi's response to the COVID-19 pandemic through the Langkawi Economic Recovery Action Plan (PTPEL) takes on added significance. Geotourism, emphasising sustainable and responsible tourism practices, aligns with Langkawi's goals of rebranding as a safe, clean, and sustainable destination. The Door-to-Door Tourism initiative can be adapted to include geotourism experiences that prioritise safety and educate travellers about Langkawi's unique geological features and cultural significance. Safety regulations and the 'green certification' can extend to geotourism operators, ensuring that geological and environmental sites are managed responsibly. The Langkawi Great Sale can feature promotions and packages highlighting geotourism experiences, encouraging visitors to explore Langkawi's geological heritage while enjoying discounts. By integrating geotourism principles into these recovery strategies, Langkawi can recover its tourism industry and promote the responsible exploration and conservation of its geological wonders, creating a win-win situation for both tourism and the environment.

The literature review collectively highlights the complex nature of geotourism, emphasizing the utmost significance of ensuring visitor satisfaction and providing exceptional experiences within geopark destinations. These experiences are shaped by several factors, including visitor characteristics, motivations, and activities, while the quality of services and facilities, as well as the inherent beauty of these destinations, play a pivotal role in molding how visitors perceive their trips. Furthermore, the research explores the economic aspect of geotourism, delving into aspects like the willingness to contribute to conservation efforts and the importance of sustainable practices, all of which are deemed crucial for the long-term viability of geotourism locations. Effective branding and creating awareness about these destinations, supported by stakeholders and education initiatives, emerge as critical components for the success of geoparks. Understanding how visitors perceive various aspects, especially concerns like overcrowding, is vital for efficiently managing these destinations. Additionally, the literature underscores the potential benefits of tailoring activities to specific visitor segments, such as youth tourists and those seeking Muslim-friendly geotourism, by aligning offerings with their preferences. Lastly, it highlights the immense value of the geological heritage found in geopark

destinations, spanning scientific, aesthetic, recreational, and educational aspects. These values are pivotal for attracting and retaining visitors, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive approach to geotourism that harmonizes visitor experiences, sustainability, branding, collaboration among stakeholders, and the preservation of natural and cultural heritage. Continuous education and awareness initiatives are seen as essential for gaining support from both local communities and tourists in pursuing these objectives.

Finding on Consumer Perspective on Geotourism

Table 1: Summaries Finding.

Authors and Country	Topic	Component/ Keywords	Sample	Model/ Sampling Technique	Result	Conclusion / Remarks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yusuf, Kamaruddin, Karim Patrawy, and Mohamed (2021) Malaysia 	Measuring Revisit Intention of Domestic Tourists in Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark, Malaysia: A Road to Sustainable Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> satisfaction with the geopark experience perceived value perceived sustainability. tourists' motivation destination brand engagement destination trust revisit intention 	The study distributed a total of 300 questionnaires to domestic tourists in Langkawi, Malaysia. Out of these, 212 usable questionnaires were returned and used for further analysis. The sample size consists of these 212 respondents who visited Langkawi for domestic tourism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey questionnaire Quantitative method Structural equation modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) for inferential analysis. 	A significant positive relationship between these variables has been found. Specifically, tourists' motivation was found to influence destination brand engagement and destination trust, which, in turn, influenced tourists' revisit intentions. Additionally, the study highlighted the mediating roles of destination brand engagement and destination trust in the relationship between tourists' motivation and revisit intention.	This study underscores Langkawi's Geotourism potential and the need to preserve and promote its unique natural features. Domestic tourism is crucial, especially during crises like COVID-19. Improving visitor centers with informative exhibits and knowledgeable staff is essential for a quality tourist experience. Effective destination branding, trust, and engagement are key for attracting and retaining visitors. Diversified marketing strategies and safety measures are necessary to prevent overcrowding.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saffinee, 	Potential and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate 	Three main local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative 	It highlights the	Effective monitoring

<p>Jamaludin, AbdulHalim (2021)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malaysia 	<p>Challenges: Tourism Stakeholders' Perceptions Towards Muslim-Friendly Geotourism in Langkawi UGGP</p>	<p>awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapting Muslim-Friendly Geotourism (MFGT) in local product Lack of product promotion Lack of awareness Local community Economic development 	<p>committee from Kilim, Kubang Badak and Kuala Teriang, Langkawi and 30 key- informants</p>	<p>research from secondary sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thematic analysis Informal focus group discussion Researchers' participation observation 	<p>potential of Muslim Friendly Geotourism (MFGT) in Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark (LUGGp) and stresses the importance of raising awareness among tourism stakeholders. Collaboration and adaptation of MFGT in local products are key strategies. Challenges include limited product promotions and awareness, requiring effective monitoring and education. MFGT can contribute to economic development and environmental protection in geotourism destinations.</p>	<p>and education are essential to promote MFGT and cater to the needs of Muslim and non-Muslim tourists while contributing to economic development and environmental protection in geotourism destinations.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Koshy, Shuib, Ramachan Mohammd -Afandi (2019) Malaysia 	<p>Economic Valuation Using Travel Cost Method (TCM) In Kilim Karst Geforest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Sustainable Tourism Economic Valuation Travel Cost Analysis 	<p>The study involved a sample of 300 international tourists, specifically targeting the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposive sampling method The survey of international tourists 	<p>Higher travel costs were associated with reduced visits to KKGp, emphasizing the role of affordability in park</p>	<p>The study highlights the importance of assessing the economic value of geoforest parks like KKGp in Langkawi to justify their</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ahmad, Jusoh, Ah 	<p>Park, Langkawi, Malaysia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Surplus • International Tourist Demand • Satisfaction Measurement 	<p>heads of families (fathers) as respondents. However, if the father was unavailable, the mother or the oldest person in the family was selected to participate in the study.</p>	<p>utilised a questionnaire to collect data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • utilized the Individual Travel Cost Model (ITCM) and Poisson regression analysis to analyze the data, focusing on travel cost variables, satisfaction measurement, and time spent in the park. 	<p>accessibility. Visitor satisfaction positively correlated with visitation, indicating that improving the visitor experience can boost park management and sustainability. Economic valuation, using travel cost adjustment, yielded greater value than consumer surplus adjustment, emphasizing the importance of considering travel costs. Additionally, employing visitor satisfaction as a metric resulted in higher economic values than using time spent, highlighting the significance of subjective experiences in determining geoforest park economic worth.</p>	<p>conservation. It reveals that higher travel costs reduce visitor numbers, emphasizing the need for sustainable tourism practices. Economic valuation based on visitor satisfaction yields greater value, underscoring the significance of providing a quality experience.</p>	<p>Pantai Cenang offers international tourists</p> <p>Revealed that the majority of visitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative and <p>200 of international</p> <p>Beach tourism in Langkawi</p> <p>Managing Beach</p>
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<p>Choy, Tahir (2020)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Malaysia 	<p>Tourism in Langkawi Geopark: From the International Tourists' Perspectives</p>	<p>Geopark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International-oriented experiences ● Local authentic experiences ● Construct of experience economy ● Tourist satisfaction ● Escapism ● Tourist profile 	<p>tourist</p>	<p>qualitative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Secondary and primary data collection ● Face to face interview of international tourists ● Principal factor analysis was employed to extract 17 constructs of beach tourism experience 	<p>were single, educated professionals who sought beach experiences. These tourists engaged in a range of activities such as sunbathing, swimming, and outdoor games during their stay. Beach services, particularly accommodations, restaurants, and recreation, received positive feedback for their quality. These findings emphasize the importance of offering engaging and memorable experiences to tourists while maintaining high standards of service in beach destinations like Pantai Cenang.</p>	<p>active and engaging beach experiences, aligned with the principles of the experience economy. Tourists seek escapism and entertainment, valuing the beach's physical attributes and recreational opportunities. To enhance beach tourism, management should focus on safety, cleanliness, and communication. Understanding consumer behavior and their quest for unique experiences is vital for geotourism destinations seeking to thrive in a competitive tourism landscape.</p>	<p>Kilim Geopark, must prioritize consumer behavior factors in visitor management to address crowding</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rasoolimanesh, Jaafar, Marzuki and Abdullah 	<p>Examining the effects of personal factors and travel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Perceived crowding ● Personal factors ● Tourist Demographics 	<p>182 tourists visiting Kilim Geopark</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quantitative method ● self-administered 	<p>Tourists' perceptions of crowding at Kilim Geopark were significantly</p>		

<p>(2018)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Malaysia 	<p>characteristics on tourists' perceived crowding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Destination Familiarity Motivations Travel Characteristics Satisfaction Destination Management 	<p>questionnaire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to assess relationships between various factors and tourists' perceived crowding. 	<p>influenced by age, education level, and income, with younger tourists perceiving more crowding, while higher education and income were associated with greater sensitivity to crowding. Additionally, travel motivations and characteristics, including the amount of money spent and hours spent at the destination, played a significant role in shaping tourists' perceptions of crowding. However, factors such as nationality, gender, and destination familiarity did not have a significant impact on how tourists perceived crowding. These findings underscore the importance of considering visitor demographics, motivations, and behaviors in</p>	<p>effectively. Recognizing the impact of personal attributes and travel behaviors on perceived crowding is crucial for destination success. This study underscores the significance of consumer behavior theories in geotourism, emphasizing the need to align strategies with tourists' motivations and preferences to ensure satisfaction and sustainable geotourism growth.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mohd Nizam and Ahmad (2020) ● Malaysia 	<p>Demand of Youth Tourists For Ipoh As A National Geopark Tourism Destination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Behaviour ● Youth tourists ● Experience ● Demand ● Stakeholders ● Promotion 	<p>275 youth tourists visiting two geopark areas: Gunung Lang Recreation Park and Kledang Saiong Eco-Forest Park in Ipoh.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quantitative ● Purposive sampling ● conceptual framework that considered six component of youth tourist behavior and four elements related to the use and experience of Ipoh as a geopark destination 	<p>managing and promoting sustainable geotourism experiences.</p>	<p>Revealed that youth tourists in the geopark areas, particularly Gunung Lang Recreation Park, expressed overall satisfaction with the available services and facilities. These tourists, primarily students with bachelor's degrees, displayed a preference for activities promoting physical well-being, ecological exploration, and hedonistic experiences. To further enhance geotourism, the study emphasized the necessity of improving and maintaining other geopark locations to meet visitor expectations. Additionally, it</p>	<p>It highlights the potential of geotourism and the importance of catering to the needs and interests of youth tourists. Ipoh's status as a National Geopark holds promise as an attractive destination for youth tourists. To capitalize on this potential, efforts should focus on improving and promoting geopark locations to suit the preferences of active and adventurous youth travelers. By doing so, Ipoh can become a preferred destination for geotourism, contributing to the growth of the tourism sector and the overall local economy.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dani, Mojiol and Fatt (2023) • Malaysia 	<p>Willingness to Pay for Conservation: A Study in Serinsim Substation, Kinabalu Geopark, Sabah</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to Pay <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stated Preference Method • Contingent Valuation Method • Demographic Variables • Admission Fee • Sustainability • Resource Conservation 	<p>Out of the total 161 domestic adult visitors aged 18 years and above who had visited the park, only 150 questionnaires were considered usable for analysis. The remaining 11 questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete responses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative , reviewing of the literature study on previous study • Quantitative, survey questionnaire • Multiple linear regression analysis was employed to assess the relationship between willingness to pay (WTP) and demographic variables 	<p>recommended an extensive promotional campaign across various media platforms to attract tourists, particularly adventurous youth seeking extreme activities.</p>	<p>This research highlights the importance of assessing visitors' inclination to contribute financially to conservation efforts in natural tourism settings, using Serinsim Substation within Kinabalu Geopark as an example. A significant portion of survey participants demonstrated a readiness to pay increased entrance fees to aid conservation, indicating their commitment to sustainability. Notably, factors like age and visit frequency played a role in influencing this</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mohd Yusof, Ismail, Ahmada (2019) • Malaysia 	<p>Branding Langkawi Island As A Geopark Destination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination brand • Sustainable development • Stakeholders • Global branding • Brand awareness • Local community 	<p>35 stakeholders from various groups, including senior officers of a destination management organisation (DMO), tourism operators, local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and community leaders.</p>	<p>(gender, age, income level, education level, occupation, and visit frequency)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The model aimed to predict the willingness of visitors to pay based on these variables. 	<p>the frequency of park visits in shaping visitor behavior and financial support for conservation initiatives.</p>	<p>willingness. Raising admission fees could potentially serve as a sustainable income source for preserving park resources, aligning with geotourism ideals and offering insights into eco-conscious consumer behavior.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent educational efforts by the brand authority have led to stakeholder confusion. To promote sustainable tourism, it's crucial to raise awareness and educate stakeholders about Geopark benefits. This study underscores the vital role of branding in geotourism and its impact on consumer behavior. Effective branding can shape perceptions and drive 	<p>Both government organizations and the local community showed strong support for the Langkawi Geopark brand. However, a significant issue was the inconsistent efforts made by the brand authority to educate the community about the Geopark brand, leading to confusion and a lack of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field interviews • Qualitative • semi-structured interviews 	<p>Both government organizations and the local community showed strong support for the Langkawi Geopark brand. However, a significant issue was the inconsistent efforts made by the brand authority to educate the community about the Geopark brand, leading to confusion and a lack of</p>	<p>Both government organizations and the local community showed strong support for the Langkawi Geopark brand. However, a significant issue was the inconsistent efforts made by the brand authority to educate the community about the Geopark brand, leading to confusion and a lack of</p>	<p>Both government organizations and the local community showed strong support for the Langkawi Geopark brand. However, a significant issue was the inconsistent efforts made by the brand authority to educate the community about the Geopark brand, leading to confusion and a lack of</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sulaiman, Lee, Sulaiman and Muhammad Jamil (2020) • Malaysia 	<p>Geotourism Potential of Lata Terubong (Lata Turbo), Jeli, Kelantan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geotourism potential • Possible activities • Improvement • Aesthetical and Recreational values 	<p>89 respondents, including UMK students from the Jeli district and local residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geoheritage values evaluated through a quantitative assessment • Online survey via Google Form for qualitative 	<p>Lata Terubong is rich in geoheritage values, offering scientific insights, aesthetic beauty, recreational opportunities, and educational potential. The survey affirmed that its stunning waterfall stands out as the primary draw, with picnicking being the favored activity. To fully tap into its geotourism potential, addressing infrastructure and facility enhancements, as recommended by respondents, is crucial.</p>	<p>geotourism success, underscoring the importance of engaging and educating the local community for sustainable tourism practices.</p>	<p>Lata Terubong exhibits significant geotourism potential but faces promotional and infrastructural challenges. To succeed as a geotourism destination, it should leverage its unique geological features and accessibility while addressing existing shortcomings. The study highlights the importance of assessing visitor preferences and promoting geoheritage values to enhance consumer behavior and visitor experiences, ultimately fostering geotourism growth in the area.</p>
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Discussion

Geotourism in Malaysia is a multifaceted endeavor that hinges on several key factors. Consumer behavior is at the forefront, with geotourists seeking unique geological experiences, cultural connections, and a deep appreciation for the environment. Their decisions are influenced by factors like satisfaction, destination image, perceived value, and sustainability, making it imperative for destination management organizations to cater to these expectations.

Sustainability and responsible tourism are integral components of geotourism in Malaysia. Geotourists inherently value the preservation of geological sites and environmental conservation. Geotourism destinations in the country have embraced sustainability practices, encompassing waste management, energy conservation, habitat restoration, and community engagement. Collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including government bodies, local communities, NGOs, and tourism operators, is essential for sustainable planning and development.

Furthermore, geotourism has proven adaptable, even in the face of external challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic. It aligns well with the broader goals of rebranding destinations as safe, clean, and sustainable. Initiatives such as the Langkawi Economic Recovery Action Plan illustrate how geotourism can be seamlessly integrated into recovery strategies, not only revitalizing the tourism industry but also promoting responsible exploration and the preservation of geological wonders.

Recommendation

It is recommended to create a dedicated website for geotourism mapping in Malaysia, which would showcase destinations like Langkawi Geopark and Sabah Geopark, as well as other geotourism spots throughout the country. This website would serve as a comprehensive platform, offering geotourists detailed information about different geotourism sites, geological features, trails, and points of interest in Malaysia. Geotourists would have the opportunity to explore the unique karst landscapes and geodiversity found in Langkawi Geopark or experience the breath-taking Mount Kinabalu and its diverse ecosystems in Sabah Geopark. The website should provide interactive maps, user-friendly search options, and filters to personalise the exploration based on individual preferences. Additionally, it should offer up-to-date details on accessibility, facilities, and services, and include captivating multimedia elements like high-quality images, videos, and interactive 360-degree views. By collaborating with geotourism experts and local communities, the website can ensure the accuracy and authenticity of the information provided. This dedicated geotourism mapping website would effectively promote Malaysia's diversity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the intricate relationship between geotourism and consumer behavior in Malaysia underscores the pivotal role of understanding and catering to tourists' motivations, preferences, and expectations. Geotourists in Malaysia are drawn to experiential learning, cultural immersion, and a profound connection with the natural environment, valuing the preservation of unique geological sites and responsible tourism practices. Key factors influencing their behavior encompass satisfaction, destination image, perceived value, and sustainability.

Sustainability lies at the heart of Malaysia's geotourism practices, with a strong commitment to environmental conservation, community engagement, and responsible development. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated geotourism's adaptability, aligning seamlessly with the broader goals of rebranding destinations as safe, clean, and sustainable.

These insights empower destination management organizations and tourism stakeholders to optimize the geotourism experience, fostering economic growth, cultural enrichment, and heritage preservation. By aligning offerings with consumer expectations and promoting responsible exploration, Malaysia can ensure the long-term sustainability of its geotourism destinations, simultaneously benefiting tourists, local communities, and the environment.

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