Visitor Revisit Intention and Perceived Values towards Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park, Sabah

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ABSTRACT

Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park (TARMP) in Sabah, Malaysia is made up of five beautiful islands worthy of attention from domestic and international tourists owing to the richness of natural resources that the visitors could not resist. As a result, the perceived hedonic and utilitarian values will eventually influence the intention of the visitors to revisit this destination in the future. Many studies have been conducted to understand visitor revisit intention in relation to hedonic and utilitarian values at shopping malls, restaurants, or hotels; however, further studies are yet to be conducted in the context of tourist destinations, especially Marine Park. Hence, this study aims to examine the perceived hedonic and utilitarian values of visitors and their revisit intention to Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park. A set of 146 questionnaires was distributed to the domestic tourists using a convenience sampling technique and the results showed that that the hedonic and utilitarian values are among the factors of motivation that attract the visitors to revisit TARMP. This study contributes to new perspectives of visitor revisit intention, especially in the context of tourism. This study also offers practical implications for the tourism board to plan the marketing strategies to attract more visitors to TARMP in the future.

Keywords: Perceived Value, Revisit Intention, TARMP, Domestic Tourist

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the main contributors to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Malaysia. According to the New Straits Times (2019), the tourism sector in Malaysia contributes RM84.1 billion to the national economy in 2018, which had increased by 2.4% compared to the previous year of 2017. As a matter of fact, many tourism destinations depend on repeat visitations from the visitors to maintain their businesses (Anwar & Sohail, 2004). Malaysia also relies on repeat visitors so the total GDP can further be increased; thus, it is important to maintain and improve the tourism products in order to attract and increase repeat visitors in Malaysia. A repeat visit is like lifeblood for a tourism business in terms of economic value for a particular destination (Baniya et al., 2017), and many tourist destinations are depending on these regular and frequent visitors (Darnell & Johnson, 2001; Jayaraman et al., 2010).

Sabah is a state in Malaysia, which is located on the northern portion of Borneo Island and it is known as one of the most visited places in Malaysia. Sabah receives tourists both domestically and internationally, and most of the tourists spend their holidays visiting pristine nature parks that Sabah primarily offers as a major tourism product. Moreover, the exceptional natural resources in Sabah have made Sabah one of the popular destinations in Malaysia (Geraldine, 2018). Evidently, statistics of tourist arrivals in Sabah from January 2019 to June 2020 have shown a steady increment, where the domestic arrivals to Sabah were recorded approximately at 1.5 million (increased 2.8%) and the international arrivals were recorded at 2.5 million with a 10.2% increase compared to the previous year of 2018. Thus, the record of the total arrivals in the year 2019 to mid-2020 was 3,879,413, where 13% of the total arrivals includes the repeated visitors (Sabah Tourism Board, 2019) who revisited the familiar tourist destinations that they fond of from the previous visit.

Briefly, Sabah consists of 9 parks listed in The Board of Trustees of The Sabah Parks, which overall fall into two categories: terrestrial parks and marine parks (Fat et al., 2020). The terrestrial parks include Kinabalu Park, Crocker Range Park, and Tawau Hills Park, while the marine parks include Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park, Pulau Tiga Park, Turtle Islands Park, Tun Sekaran Marine Park, Sipadan Island Park, and Tun Mustapha Park. According to Somaskanthan and Rosmalina (2016), the total tourist arrival to the park has increased about 400% from the year 1997 to 2010.

Every visitor may have different perception values towards a tourist destination; hence, the hedonic and utilitarian values have constantly played a fundamental role in determining tourist behaviour towards the tourism product (Voss et al., 2008). An individual who visits a destination is attached to the hedonic values and/or utilitarian values by which the perceived hedonic and utilitarian values in the particular

destination will eventually influence the satisfaction of the visitors as well as their revisit intention in the future. Subsequently, many studies have been carried out on tourist or visitor revisit intention in relation to the hedonic and utilitarian values at shopping malls, restaurants, or hotels; however, studies are yet to be conducted at a tourist destination such as Marine Park. Therefore, this study intends to determine the domestic visitors' perceived values of hedonic and utilitarian as well as their revisit intention to Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park Kota Kinabalu Sabah, Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Perceived Values

Perceived value refers to the worth or the value of any goods or services provided by the consumers, who are generally influenced by the emotional attractiveness of the goods or services in order for them to evaluate the advantages they presume to receive. According to Zeithaml (1988), perceived value can be described as an overall evaluation made by the consumers of a product or service on the basis of what they perceive to receive and what they actually receive. Value, as defined by Babin et al. (1994), is the perception of a consumer regarding the subjective worth of certain activities or objects so far as net gains and consumption costs are concerned. Consumer perceived value is viewed as being 'value-in-use' since the consumer is directly present when the value of experience is co-created. As such, this involves thoughts and activities or anything capable of acquisition, usage, or disposal in ways that provide relevant benefits when the customer purchases goods or services. In addition, a value is associated with relativism and it is also naturally comparative such that the value of perceived experience addresses the continuous changes in personal needs and individual needs. In this regard, consumers decide according to several dimensions of value that potentially vary depending on their personal needs and conditions (Omar et al., 2020). Making a trip for pleasure to a variety of destinations offers different qualities or values to consumers whether physical, emotional, spiritual, or intellectual. Thus, as asserted by Holbrook (2006), tourists are likely to hold different values of experience as per the situation, context, available resources, and their expectations. In essence, the emotional value represents the capacity of the product to excite emotional states, making it essential for the experiential environment since it primarily influences satisfaction assessments.

Hedonic and Utilitarian Values

According to Babin et al. (1994), a hedonic value is defined as "*the value a customer receives from a festive merry feeling and enjoyable activities*". By definition, hedonic entails how the tourists enjoy *services based on the fantasy and thoughts of the tourists* (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park, in particular, offers enjoyable leisure activities with a pleasing sense of recreation to its

visitors. As stated by Vuuren and Slabbert (2011), the determinants that drive tourists to travel to a destination are family time, fun, entertainment, and special activities. Besides, hedonic is denoted by three Fs of fantasies, fun, and feelings (Merriam-Webster, 2003). For instance, as demonstrated by Kim (2015), hedonic values in the airline sector include not only entertainment but also emotional engagement for the passengers such as luxury layout, flight efficiency, and facilities that satisfy and captivate the passengers. In fact, any destination across the globe offers goods and/or services that the tourists should deem affording satisfaction or pleasure. As such, if a particular destination benefits the tourists with positive experiences, their entire visit would, therefore, be deemed enjoyable and this increases their revisit intention (Nik Hashim et al., 2020; Farkic et al.,2020). Additionally, the appraisal of interest during the visit can impact the tourists' decision to revisit or suggest the destination to others (Bigne et al., 2005). Therefore, hedonic values are the key to influencing tourists' emotional strength to revisit tourist destinations.

Utilitarian value refers to a value acquired by a customer on the basis of rational consumption and task-oriented behaviour (IGI Global, 2018). Utilitarian and hedonic values are often associated with the motivation of tourists towards their destination visits. In this regard, Schwartz et al. (2010) noted that task-oriented and rational tourists are often driven by utilitarian values, which are represented accurately by the elements of functional quality and value-for-money as opposed to hedonic values that include emotional, social, and epistemic elements. Although tourism companies are mutually dependent, most of the companies provide their customers with both values of hedonic and utilitarian. For instance, a utilitarian value can be reflected by conscious pursuance of expected outcomes through a stay at a hotel that offers minimum amenities and services for a lower price. Utilitarian values can likewise be demonstrated by acquiring products and/or services deemed satisfactory to the actual desire based on the extent to which the desire satisfies the experience offers by a destination. Briefly, the products and/or services provided generate such a desire through utilitarian values. Besides, according to Sagala and Sumiyana (2020), utilitarian values are further attainable through information or knowledge acquisition in relation to potential purchases. For instance, the destination's uniqueness, convenience, accessibility, and environment are among the utilitarian values that have a significant influence on the satisfaction of visitors and their revisit intention. This leads to hedonic values perceived by the tourists, such as pleasure and enjoyment. Hence, strong utilitarian values would not only influence revisit intention due to the enjoyment offered by the destination but also its environment such that a higher utilitarian motivation increases tourist revisit intention. Thus, a destination's uniqueness significantly enhances the tourists' destination preference so far as their strong hedonic or utilitarian revisit intention is concerned

Revisit Intention

The industry of tourism and hospitality is centered upon tourist experience. According to Polczynski (2010), tourist destinations are driven to offer a tourism experience that is worth remembering so as to enhance competitive gains and increased recognition. As such, tourists tend to visit or revisit a destination by seeking additional information and recollecting past experiences, either good or bad. In general, tourist revisit intention is influenced by the factors of safety, perceived risk, and satisfaction (Polczynski, 2010). As a matter of fact, safety is ranked second in Maslow's hierarchy of needs; hence, safety mainly influences tourist revisit intention because it is most prioritized by tourists during their travel to a certain destination. When safety rewards outweigh any potential rewards brought by high insecurity, the desire for something familiar through repeated tourism becomes increasingly intense. This might be due to the response to the desire for protection and assurance by visitors in relation to contemporary uncertainty and unpredictability. Apart from that, tourists find joy in a particular destination either for utilitarian grounds or aesthetic grounds such as remembrance, nostalgia, or simply a sense of belonging. While some tourists may want to swap their home familiarity for the experience of the environment offered by a destination, the feeling of happiness in the particular destination stimulates the tourists' needs and wants to revisit because they want to experience such familiarity of a holiday destination again. This implies that positive satisfaction highly influences tourist revisit intention. Furthermore, studies have also been conducted on perceived risks among repeat visitors in a familiar destination and how they handled such risks. In essence, the perceptions of tourists regarding a destination to visit for their leisure time are the key to determining whether the destination would succeed or fail in the long run. In this regard, while low-risk destinations are capable of influencing revisits as well as increasing employment and contemporary infrastructure, high-risk destinations with negative word-of-mouth, unsystematic events, and even bad weather may, on the other hand, result in tourists' negative perceptions that they would eventually choose other destinations to visit instead.

Domestic Tourists

A tourist plays a vital part in the success of a destination. A high number of tourists' arrival in a certain destination shows how good the place is as a tourist destination. Tourists can be differentiated by their length of stay, mode of transport, distance travelled, and the purpose of the trip. Domestic tourists are those who travel within the country and may not need a passport or conversion of currency (Chand, 2014). Domestic tourism has a greater scope in countries of large dimensions such as India compared to smaller countries. From a geographical point of view, domestic tourism consists of a local excursion, regional trip, and national travel. Domestic tourists usually travel with motives such as for holiday purposes, business tourism, and

visiting relatives and friends. However, visiting relatives and friends do not put high pressure on the provision of tourist facilities at the destination. Holiday purpose is the most anticipated and popular among domestic tourists. In general, tourists travel because they want to experience great leisure after hectic days, good weather for sightseeing, recreation, and other activities that can help them feel happy and relaxed.

METHODOLOGY

This study applied a quantitative research approach whereby about 146 questionnaires were distributed to the domestic tourists who visited the Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. The data collection process was conducted during the park's operating hours from Monday to Sunday (8.30 am – 4.30 pm) at Jesselton Point, Kota Kinabalu. Convenience sampling was applied in this study and the data were analysed using IBM SPSS version 25. As for the instrumentation, the questionnaire consists of three parts: the respondents' demographic profile, questions on perceived values of hedonic and utilitarian, and questions on revisit intention. The items for the questionnaires were adapted from the previous studies and modified based on the research context. The independent variables for hedonic and utilitarian values each with 5 items were adapted from Kim (2015) and Ladhari et al. (2017), respectively. Meanwhile, the dependent variable of revisit intention with 5 items was adapted from different studies (Darnell & Johnson, 2001; Nik Hashim et al., 2019; Omar et al, 2020). Additionally, a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was developed for all of the questionnaire items.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Demographic Profile

Based on Table 1, the highest number of respondents are students with a total of 60 out of 146 respondents, followed by government employees, and private employees. The findings also indicated that the majority of them are first-timers (54.8%, 80 respondents) at Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park. The highest age range of the respondents who visited the place is 20 to 29 years old, whereas the highest monthly income of the respondents is within the range of RM1,000 and below. This can be explained by the fact that the students might not have a stable job yet. Meanwhile, leisure was chosen as the main purpose of the respondents' visit to Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park with a total of 85 respondents. Since most of the respondents are students, it is possible that they visited Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park for sightseeing and to seek relaxation from the tense of studying. In fact, this place is suitable for those who are looking for relaxation and a temporary escape from their busy life; thus, leisure was chosen as their main purpose of visit. The findings also revealed that there were more female visitors than male visitors to TARMP.

Table 1: Respondents' Profile

Item	n	%
Tunku Abdul Rahman Park - Times of visit:		
First time	80	54.8
Second time	24	16.4
Third time	11	7.5
More than three times	31	21.2
Main purpose of visit:		
Leisure	85	58.2
Activities	33	22.6
Trekking	11	7.5
Others	17	11.6
Gender:		
Male	54	37.0
Female	92	63.0
Age (years old):		
19 years old and below	6	4.1
20-29 years old	104	71.2
30-39 years old	24	16.4
40-49 years old	12	8.2
State:		
Sabah	120	82.2
Sarawak	14	82.2
Selangor	4	2.7
Wilayah Persekutuan	3	2.1
Pahang	2	1.4
Negeri Sembilan	1	0.7
Johor	1	0.7
Kelantan	1	0.7
Education:		
High school	15	10.3
Diploma	55	37.7
Degree	73	50.0
Others	3	2.1
Occupation:		
Student	60	41.1
Government Employee	21	21.2
Private Sector Employee	17	11.6
Self-Employed	12	8.2
Professional	11	7.5
Business Owner	11	7.5
Others	4	2.7
Monthly income:		
RM1,000 and below	72	49.3
RM1,001 – RM2,000	18	12.3
RM2,001 – RM3,000	22	15.1
RM3,001 – RM4,000	12	8.2

RM4,001 – RM5,000		9	6.2
RM5,001 and above		13	8.9
	N	146	100

Hedonic Values, Utilitarian Values, and Revisit Intention.
Table 2 shows the outcome of the study relative to hedonic values, utilitarian values, and revisit intention among the visitors of Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park Kota Kinabalu Sabah, Malaysia. The mean score for the hedonic values ranges from 3.70 to 4.25; thus, most of the respondents agreed that Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park has its hedonic values and the majority of the tourists or visitors had a good time at Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park. As presented in Table 1, most of the respondents visited Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park for leisure purposes. Therefore, owing to the leisure activities and pleasurable experiences offered by Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park, it is believed that the visitors enjoyed and had a good time during their visit. However, the lowest mean score (3.70) indicated that the respondents did not relatively agree that visiting Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park will increase their social status. Based on the results, it is also believed that visiting Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park does not make the lifestyle of the visitors better than others.

On the other hand, the results showed that the visitors were satisfied and agreed with several utilitarian values available at Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park as indicated by the mean value that ranges from 3.36 to 4.17. Based on Table 2, the majority of the visitors had also obtained utilitarian values from Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park. They were satisfied with the water sports activities, natural resources, transportation, packages offered, and the staff. Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park also offers more water sport activities such as parasailing, banana boat, snorkelling, and diving; thus, each firm or company needs to differentiate their products to provide a variety of choices that satisfy a wide range of demands from their customers or visitors (Williams, 2019). However, compared to the other items for utilitarian, the lowest mean for utilitarian is 3.36 whereby some of the visitors were not satisfied with the staff. This shows that some of the staff might lack customer service skills.

As for the variable of revisit intention, the mean score ranges from 3.68 to 4.22, which indicates that the visitors are willing to revisit Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park after their visit. Based on their experience at Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park, the majority of the respondents are willing to recommend this location as a holiday destination choice to their family and friends. As a matter of fact, people normally suggest a particular place to others if they are happy and satisfied with the place; thus, it is believed that the natural resources, tourism activities, and the facilities offered by Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park have made the visitors feel satisfied that they

recommend Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park to their family and friends. However, the lowest mean score for revisit intention is 3.68 whereby some of the respondents did not agree that they are loyal to Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park as a holiday destination choice. Therefore, based on this result, it can be deduced that some of the respondents did not achieve their level of satisfaction towards Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park as it did not develop their loyalty to this particular destination.

Table 2: Perceived Values of Hedonic, Utilitarian, and Revisit Intention.

Variable	Item	Level of Agreement	Mean	SD
Hedonic				
	Relaxing atmosphere.	Agreed	4.16	0.87
	I have a good time at Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park.	Strongly Agreed	4.25	0.77
	Visiting Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park increases my social status.	Agreed	3.70	0.97
	The activities are thrilling and exciting.	Agreed	4.09	0.87
	Delightful scenery.	Agreed	4.16	0.85
Utilitarian				
	The staffs are very helpful and welcoming.	Neutral	3.36	0.86
	The package offered is affordable.	Agreed	3.70	0.85
	There are many water sport activities.	Agreed	4.17	0.79
	Rich in natural resources.	Agreed	4.09	0.85
	Transportation is very convenient and comfortable.	Agreed	3.80	0.89
Revisit Intention	I am willing to return to Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park in the future.	Agreed	4.10	0.97
	I am willing to recommend Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park to my family and friend as a holiday destination.	Strongly Agreed	4.22	0.86
	I always return to the same destination I previously visited in Sabah.	Agreed	3.74	1.08
	I am very loyal to Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park as a holiday destination choice.	Agreed	3.68	0.988
	I have a wonderful image of Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park as a holiday destination.	Agreed	4.10	0.794

Note:
a) N=146;
b) Likert Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neutral; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree

CONCLUSION

Tourist revisit intention is one of the important elements in the tourism industry. Visitor experience and satisfaction is a major determinant of their intention to revisit a destination, and such experience and satisfaction are related to the values of hedonic and utilitarian. Hedonic is the value of excitement experienced by visitors in the destination while utilitarian values are more oriented towards how the environment gives satisfaction to visitors. As such, revisit intention is influenced by the hedonic

and utilitarian values perceived by visitors. This shows that both of these values play a vital part in determining the revisit intention of visitors to a destination, especially to Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park. The higher the hedonic and utilitarian values, the higher the possibility of the visitors to revisit the destination. As shown in this study, there is a significant relationship between hedonic values and revisit intention as well as utilitarian values with revisit intention. Most of the respondents are also willing to return to Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park because they enjoyed the excitement and satisfaction when visiting the place. This proves that the visitors perceived the hedonic and utilitarian values relative to revisit intention. The previous studies involving different study sites have shown that hedonic and utilitarian dimensions are significant for revisit intention. Revisit intention is important for the tourism industry, especially in terms of marketing because it helps the tourism agencies understand the determinants that drive the tourists to revisit a destination. This will also help the tourism organizations to save advertising costs or avoid any unnecessary costs.

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