

THE ROLE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF TO GUIDE IN INFLUENCING
TOURIST BEHAVIOUR

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I dedicate this thesis to all my beloved ones.....

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ABSTRACT

Research about the problems that occur in the interpretation spectrum has a lot been done, but still less study of the relationship between interpretation techniques and tourists experience needs while selecting the destination as a holiday destination. This study was conducted to understand the extent to which the role of interpretation (tour guide) in educating the tourists about conservation awareness. Pahang National Park becomes the study area because it is one of the areas that have a best nature tour guide in Malaysia. Quantitative and qualitative techniques are used because it is able to understand the relationship between the role of interpretation and tourists, more depth. This study will measure the quality of tour guides whether they are eligible to provide information or education on conservation to the tourists. Furthermore, this study will also determine whether the tourists do not really want to be educated about conservation or the quality of tour guides do not achieve the quality of required level. The findings show international and domestic tourists actually really want to be educated about conservation when they visit the National Park, but the quality of tour guides still do not reach the level needed. Factors cause the poor quality of guides that found in this study be seen will help in planning the development of the tourism industry in providing effective technical interpretation (tour guides) to tourists in the future.

Keywords: Conservation Awareness, Interpretation, Tourist Behaviour, Education towards Tourist

ABSTRAK

Kajian mengenai masalah yang berlaku berkaitan dengan interpretasi telah banyak dilakukan, namun begitu masih kurang kajian yang dijalankan berkenaan hubungan antara teknik interpretasi dan kehendak sebenar pelancong semasa memilih destinasi tersebut sebagai destinasi percutian. Kajian ini dijalankan bagi memahami sejauh mana peranan interpretasi (pemandu pelancong) dalam memberi pendidikan kepada pelancong mengenai kesedaran terhadap konservasi. Taman Negara Pahang menjadi kawasan kajian kerana ia merupakan salah satu kawasan yang mempunyai pemandu pelancong alam semulajadi yang terbaik di Malaysia. Teknik kuantitatif dan juga kualitatif digunakan kerana ia dapat memahami hubungan antara peranan interpretasi dan pelancong dengan lebih mendalam. Kajian ini akan mengukur kualiti pemandu pelancong samaada mereka layak untuk memberi maklumat atau pendidikan berasaskan konservasi kepada pelancong. Selanjutnya, kajian ini juga akan menentukan samaada pelancong sebenarnya tidak mahu diberi pendidikan mengenai konservasi ataupun kualiti pemandu pelancong tidak mencapai tahap kualiti yang diperlukan. Penemuan kajian menunjukkan sebenarnya pelancong antarabangsa mahupun domestic sebenarnya mahu diberikan pendidikan mengenai konservasi semasa mereka melawat Taman Negara tetapi kualiti pemandu pelancong tidak mencapai tahap yang sepatutnya. Faktor-faktor kelemahan kualiti pemandu pelancong yang ditemui didalam kajian ini dilihat akan dapat membantu perancangan pembangunan industri pelancongan negara dalam menyediakan teknik interpretasi (pemandu pelancong) yang berkesan kepada pelancong pada masa akan datang.

Kata Kunci: Pendedahan konservasi, Interpretasi, pendidikan terhadap pelancong

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

According to the history, tourist guiding has become one of the oldest human activities. Guides have already been existed two and a half millennia ago, but since the beginning of modern mass tourism guiding has become an important factor in the tourism industry. Today, it is difficult to see activities done without organized tour guide services, both tour manager / tour leader (who accompanied the group during the trip) and a tour guide (who welcomed the group at the destination). However, this activity has received considerable attention in academic literature recently. Research interests coincide with growing concern about sustainability. Guide is now beginning to be seen as an effective medium to deliver important environmental messages to visitors and tourists. This naturally caused a more comprehensive analysis of other roles they may play in contemporary tourism and emphasized the need for monitoring guiding standards (Rabotić, 2009b).

By analysing the studies published on the subject, Zhang and Chow (2004) have noted down no less than 16 particular roles ascribed to guides, whereas Black and Weiler (2005) have noticed insisting on the fact that guides are of vital importance both for tourism and tourist experience, Black (in: Pastorelli, 2003) has identified the following roles: information provider, social facilitator, cultural host, motivator of conservation values, interpreter of the natural and cultural environment, people mover. She also mentions “other roles and responsibilities of tourist guides“: teacher or instructor, safety officer, ambassador for one's country, public relations representative or company representative, entertainer, problem solver and counsellor

1.1 STUDY BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Tour guide can be considered as interpretation and resource centre for tourists to get knowledge of the tourism areas visited. To ensure that more sustainable tourism area, it is also a responsibility for a tourist guide to deliver information in the form of an environmental awareness, particularly in the area of eco-tourism. There are various ways and means for this tour guide in presenting information, including in form of joke and casualty, or in form towards more academically. Although there are many different ways in doing interpretations, their goal are still the same which to provide information and education that could increase knowledge and awareness of the tourists that visited the tourism areas especially ecotourism site.

However, the experience proves that most guides are not in a condition to or do not attempt to adapt their standard tours to clients' characteristics and needs: such as guides are very hardly focused on customers, their needs, motivation, wishes, preferences, cultural background, educational level – all being the key factors of individual tourist experiences. Generally, tourists do not belong to a homogenous group of people: even a “typical“tour group consists of individuals with different expectations, roles and behaviour (Rabotić, 2009a). Because of this, there are some studies that show the information communicated by the tour guide did not arrive or bring awareness to tourist especially mass tourist. In addition, some argument emerge which whether the quality of guide in delivering interpretation is ineffective or actually tourists themselves do not want to be educated. Generally, guides still “represent a largely underrated, undervalued and underutilized human resource despite the widely acknowledged benefits and significant roles they assume in the tourism system“ (Dioko; Unakul, 2005).

At the end of this study, researcher will investigate whether the quality of guiding needed for conservation awareness is already there or actually quality of guiding does not match with tourist on-site experience. This research will be in the form of both quantitative and qualitative study in understanding which are the correct methods and techniques of an effective interpretation and whether in fact the tour guides roles it is no longer needed by tourists.

1.2 STUDY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of interpretation as well as to investigate whether a tourist guide services are still needed by tourists in conveying information in a selected area of ecotourism. In general, the objectives of this study are as follows:

- a. To identify the quality of guiding needed for conservation awareness.
- b. To examine whether the quality of guiding match with tourist on-site experience.
- c. To determine either management influence the relationship between quality of guiding and tourist experience.

1.3 SCOPE OF STUDY

This study will be in form of both quantitative and qualitative study in understanding the relationship between quality of guiding and tourist on-site experience towards conservation and sustainability awareness. Often factor such as boring, straight-forward and too academic guiding method is the reason given by tourist on why the information given is not enough to make them aware of conservation and sustainability. However, some researches that look into external factors show that tourist now days not interested to be educates although the guide is one of the best in their expertise. Single case study approach is use in this research because it is appropriate to achieve the objectives of this study. The case study will be one of the best ecotourism sites in Malaysia with the best nature tour guide.

1.4 STUDY FRAMEWORK

In order to achieve the research objective and research scope, this research will be conducted through suitable study framework to keep the aims set to be accomplished.

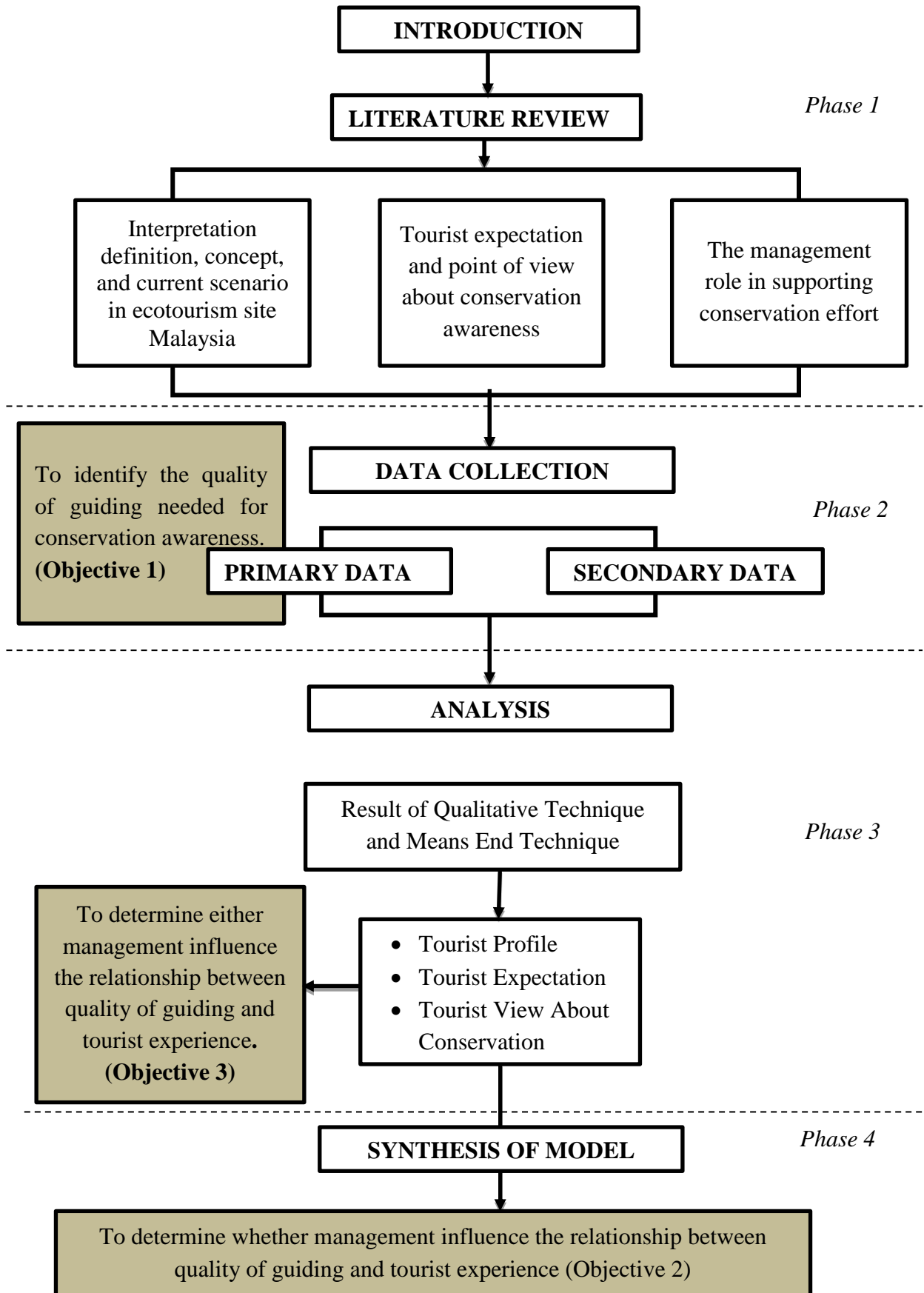


Figure 1.1: Study Framework

1.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

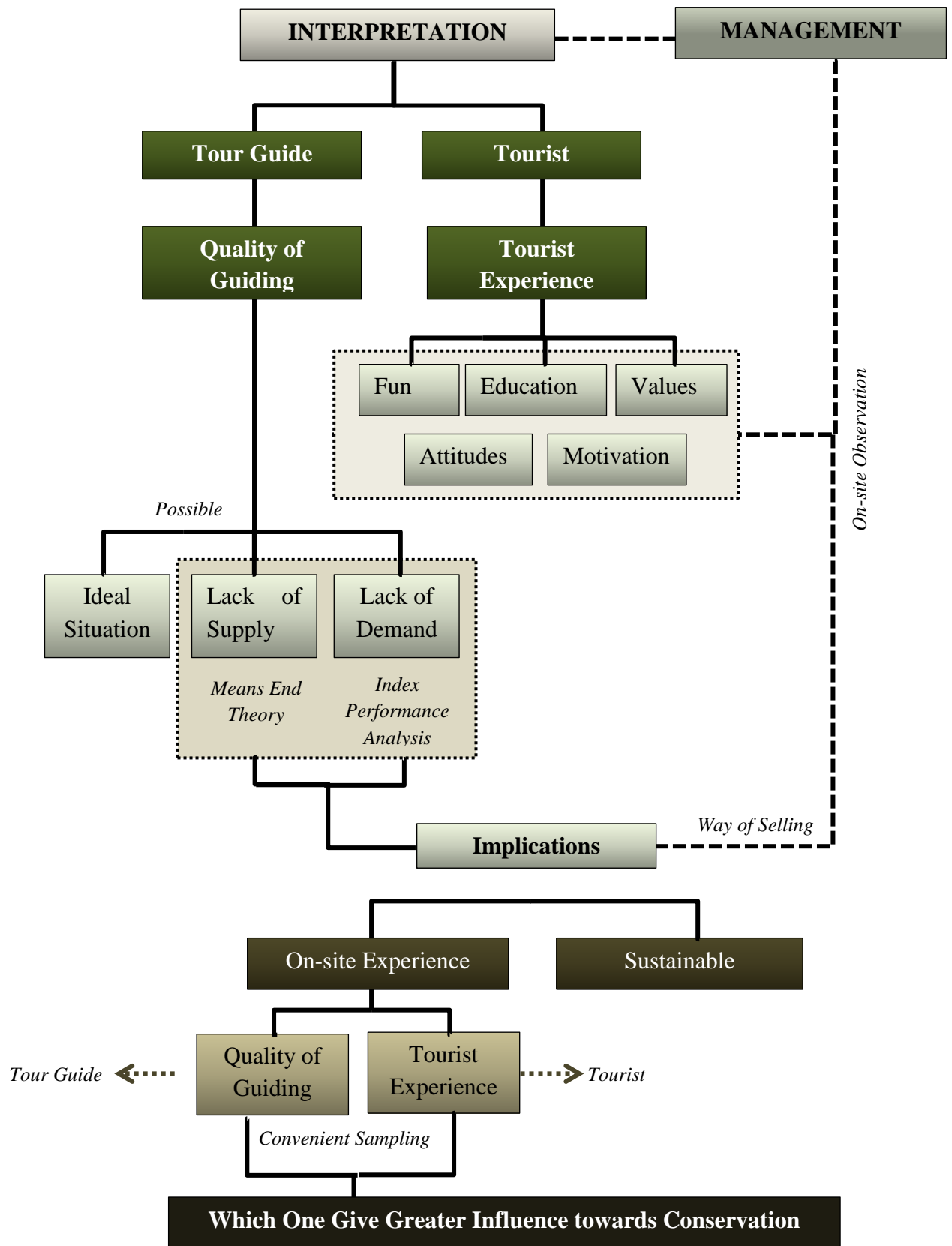


Figure 1.2: Conceptual Framework of the Research

Source: Fieldwork, 2012

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