

SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEW ON TOURIST PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION  
AT TANJUNG PIAI JOHOR NATIONAL PARK

MOHD SHAFIQ BIN ABDULLAH

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

SOCIAL MEDIA REVIEW ON TOURIST PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION  
AT TANJUNG PIAI JOHOR NATIONAL PARK

MOHD SHAFIQ BIN ABDULLAH

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## DEDICATION

*In the name of Allah, the Most Benevolent and Most Merciful*

*Dedicated to:*

*My Love*

*AMANIE HUSNA BINTI MOHD AZLEE*

*My Beloved Family*

*Allahyarham En. Abdullah Bin Abd Manaf, Allahyarhamah Pn. Sa'adiyah Binti Sulong, Suhaila Binti Abdullah, Zuraidah Binti Abdullah, Faridah Binti Abdullah, Zarina Binti Abdullah*

*And also to my in-law family*

*En. Mohd Azlee Bin Mohd Salleh, Pn. Hasnah Binti Omar, Asmahan Binti Mohd Azlee, Aidie Salman Bin Mohd Azlee, Aina Natrah Binti Mohd Azlee,*

*My lovely Supervisor*

*Dr. Norhazliza Bt Abd. Halim.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

Protected Area such as National Park has become the popular ecotourism destination for the tourist to explore the beauty of nature. As the demand arise, nature as the attraction of the ecotourism destination could face a disturbance in their ecosystem. It is prominent to maintaining the sustainability of the nature by evaluating the Ecological Value on the site. This study which happen to be at Tanjung Piai Johor National Park therefore will evaluate the tourist perspective and satisfaction upon the Ecological Value in the ecotourism destination. This study was conducted by observing review posting through Facebook about their journey to TPNP that been done during year 2021. The result showed 210 reviews posting been collected during the time period. The data were analyzed using SPSS with descriptive analysis to knew their perspective and satisfaction at TPNP. This study has been conducted in order to see if there is a different of perception towards the national park and what are the level of satisfaction after their journey to the destination. Mostly collected data was from repeated visitor who love to experiencing forest ecology and want to back to mother nature and enjoy the beautiful scenery of TPNP. The most activities were sightseeing, conservation walk and wildlife watching. The posting at the social media for example Facebook can be the guideline in order to determine the tourist perception and their satisfaction towards the preferable destination. This study is significantly can help the Destination Management Organization (DMO) - Johor National Park Corporation (JNPC) in auditing their performance to preserving and conserving the nature beside than improving manage the nature asset as the tourist attraction.

## ABSTRAK

Kawasan Terlindung seperti Taman Negara telah menjadi destinasi ekopelancongan yang popular untuk pelancong meneroka keindahan alam semula jadi. Apabila permintaan itu timbul, destinasi ekopelancongan boleh menghadapi gangguan dalam ekosistem mereka. Ia adalah untuk mengekalkan kelestarian alam semula jadi dengan menilai Nilai Ekologi di tapak. Kajian yang berlaku di Taman Negara Tanjung Piai Johor ini akan menilai perspektif dan kepuasan pelancong terhadap Nilai Ekologi di destinasi ekopelancongan. Kajian ini dijalankan dengan memerhatikan siaran ulasan melalui Facebook mengenai perjalanan mereka ke TPNP yang telah dilakukan pada tahun 2021. Hasil kajian menunjukkan 210 ulasan telah dikumpulkan dalam tempoh masa tersebut. Data dianalisis menggunakan SPSS dengan analisis deskriptif untuk mengetahui perspektif dan kepuasan mereka di TPNP. Kajian ini dijalankan adalah untuk melihat sama ada terdapat perbezaan persepsi terhadap taman negara dan apakah tahap kepuasan mereka selepas perjalanan ke destinasi tersebut. Data yang dikumpul kebanyakannya adalah daripada pengunjung berulang yang suka meneroka ekologi hutan dan ingin kembali kepada alam semula jadi serta ingin menikmati keindahan TPNP. Kebanyakan aktiviti yang dilakukan adalah bersiar-siar, laluan pemuliharaan dan menonton hidupan liar. Penyiaran di media sosial sebagai contoh Facebook boleh menjadi garis panduan untuk menentukan persepsi pelancong dan kepuasan mereka terhadap destinasi pilihan. Kajian ini secara signifikan dapat membantu Pertubuhan Pengurusan Destinasi (DMO) - Perbadanan Taman Negara Johor (JNPC) dalam mengaudit prestasi mereka untuk memelihara dan memulihara alam semula jadi selain daripada menambah baik pengurusan aset alam semula jadi sebagai tarikan pelancong.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|          |   |  |
|----------|---|--|
| IUCN     | - | International Union for Conservation of Nature     |
| CMCO     | - | Conditional Movement Control Order                 |
| COVID-19 | - | Coronavirus Disease 2019                           |
| DOSM     | - | Department of Statistic Malaysia                   |
| EMCO     | - | Enhanced Movement Control Order                    |
| IBA      | - | Important Bird Area                                |
| MCMC     | - | Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission |
| MCO      | - | Movement Control Order                             |
| MOH      | - | Ministry of Health                                 |
| TPNP     | - | Tanjung Piai National Park                         |
| RMCO     | - | Recovery Movement Control Order                    |
| RM       | - | Ringgit Malaysia                                   |
| SOP      | - | Standard Operating Procedure                       |
| WWF      | - | World Wildlife Fund                                |
| UNWTO    | - | World Tourism Organization (United Nations)        |
| NYT      | - | New York Times                                     |
| PTNJ     | - | Perbadanan Taman Negara Johor                      |

## LIST OF SYMBOLS

|    |   |                    |
|----|---|--------------------|
| %  | - | Per cent           |
| +  | - | Plus               |
| #  | - | Hashtag            |
| >  | - | More than          |
| ha | - | Hectare            |
| N  |   | North              |
| E  |   | East               |
| km |   | Kilometer          |
| sd |   | Standard Deviation |

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter is to explain the introduction of this study. It is containing the background of study, problem statement, research question, aim & objective, conceptual framework, research flowchart, research limitation, research significant and expected outcome for this study.

### 1.1 Background of Study

Tourism is an important area for every country's economic development. The UNWTO describes tourism as a social, cultural, and economic phenomena that includes individuals travelling to countries or places outside of their usual surroundings for personal or business/occupational purposes. Through the creation of employment and businesses, export profits, and infrastructure development, tourism has become a vital engine of socioeconomic improvement in a growing number of places across the world (UNWTO, 2015). However, the successful of tourism industry was related with tourist perception and satisfaction.

Malaysia is blessing with diversity in flora and fauna. According to Department of Forestry in Malaysia, currently, at Peninsular of Malaysia, had about 5.76ha of forest area including includes 2500 species of trees, 200 species of mammals, 600 species of birds, 110 species of snakes, 80 species of lizards and thousands of insects (Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia,

2020). Beside than being a conservation area for the species, Malaysia forest also has become an important place for a carbon sink. With such an attractive natural resource, tourist either from international or domestic, interested in exploring our beautiful landscape of nature.

Then, ecotourism become one of the cluster to be promote in Tourism Malaysia. With such a demand, Malaysia open up the potential area to be an ecotourism destination for the tourist. Tourist will enjoy such an interesting nature experience, but, is our nature enjoy being used and explore by the tourist?

Consumer satisfaction is important for the future well being of the tourism and hospitality organizations as well as the sustainable destination managements. National tourism organizations and other destination management organizations have undergone many issues and problems while promoting the available products and services for different target markets. Therefore, tourism and hospitality organizations needs to pay more attention in this regard.

Consumer satisfaction defined by the researchers is based on the relationship between the consumer's pre-purchase expectations and post purchase evaluations (Engel et al., 1990; Handy, 1977). Motivation first arouses the need of the tourists then directs the individuals to search the necessary products and services for the need gratification.

As a result, the individuals make travels in destinations in order to consume diverse goods and service. If the tourists can meet their exact needs during the holiday consumption in the destination, the tourist will be satisfied; otherwise, they will be dissatisfied. When the holiday experiences exceed the tourists' expectations, they will be delighted (Gnanapala, 2012).

Satisfaction helps to create, develop, and maintain a favorable publicity and goodwill about a tourist destination or a resort. Satisfaction is a measure of how products and services supplied by a destination meet or surpass the customer expectations.

Also, the customer satisfaction is considered as an important performance indicator of a successful business operation. In a competitive tourism business, customer satisfaction is seen as the main differentiation and increasingly becomes the key element of business strategy (Kotler et al., 2010).

Tourists travel to fulfil their dreams also considered as to have a psychological relief from the motivators that aroused the travel needs. Motivation and satisfaction are closely interrelated like two sides of a coin and tourists determine the travel decisions based on their expectations. If the tourists can meet the travel expectations during the stay in the destination, they will be satisfied. On the other hand, if they cannot meet the travel expectations, the tourists will be dissatisfied.

The institutions and companies responsible for the development and promotion of domestic destination need to determine the factors influencing tourists' destination choices. It is recognize that destination is not only a tourism product, offering an integrated experience to customers, but it is a perceptual concept, which is interpreted subjectively by the consumers and is dependent on a wide range of factors (Buhalis, 2000).

Social, cultural, personal and psychological factors, the number of tourists' attractions, available amenities, price, human resources and various types of tourism destinations are examples of the elements which can be considered in decision-making.



The IUCN defines Ecotourism as: "Environmentally responsible visiting of relatively unspoilt natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features - both past and present), that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations". (Hector Ceballos-Lascurain, Tourism, Ecotourism and Protected Areas, IUCN, 1996).

Malaysia has formulated the National Ecotourism Plan 2016-2025 to maximize the potential of ecotourism and ensure sustainability development. This plan embodies the spirit of the theme, uplifting communities, opportunities, and economies. The National Ecotourism Plan 2016-2025 is a roadmap for conservation of ecotourism sites in the country through 19 strategies and 86 action plans. It is geared toward developing the ecotourism sector in order to further increase the tourism industry's contribution to the economy.

Under the National Ecotourism Plan 2016-2025, there are 6 clusters in Johor State identified for further development to maximize its potential through several strategies. The strategies include upgrading and development of ecotourism infrastructure, product development, capacity building, and implementation of sustainable tourism development best practices as well as marketing and promotion. Out of 6 clusters, the cluster number 22 was the cluster of RAMSAR Site - Gunung Pulai - Sg. Johor. The RAMSAR Site in Johor including Tanjung Piai, Kukup Island and Sungai Pulai.

Tanjung Piai is under the jurisdiction of Johor National Park Corporation. It is located at 01°16'N 103°31'E, with a land area of 526 hectares (Figure 1.1). The site consists of coastal mangroves and inter-tidal mudflats located at the southernmost tip of continental Asia, especially important for protection from sea-water intrusion and coastal erosion. It forms the only mangrove corridor that connects another Ramsar sites which are Pulau Kukup and the Sungai Pulai wetlands. The mangrove forests of Tanjung Piai is dominated by mangrove trees

such as *Rhizophora apiculata* and *Bruguiera cylindrical*. It is one of the most important Ramsar site and Important Bird Area (IBA) in Malaysia. However, this site is receiving a major threat from shipping traffic in Malacca Straits which led to several impacts such as coastal erosion and pollution.



Figure 1.1: Tanjung Piai Johor National Park Location.

Social media analysis is the process of collecting the valuable data from social media channels (Facebook, Youtube, Instagram and etc) and drawing actional conclusion. Social media is a platform used not only by ordinary users but also by entrepreneurs who are interested in increasing the visibility of their business in the market.

Social media in Malaysia has provided many benefits from a marketing perspective. This is because there is an increase in the number of social media users in Malaysia and it is proven that social media marketing is the best method in attracting more Malaysian social media customers (MCMC, 2020) and the Figure 1.2 showed the hours of internet user spend each day.

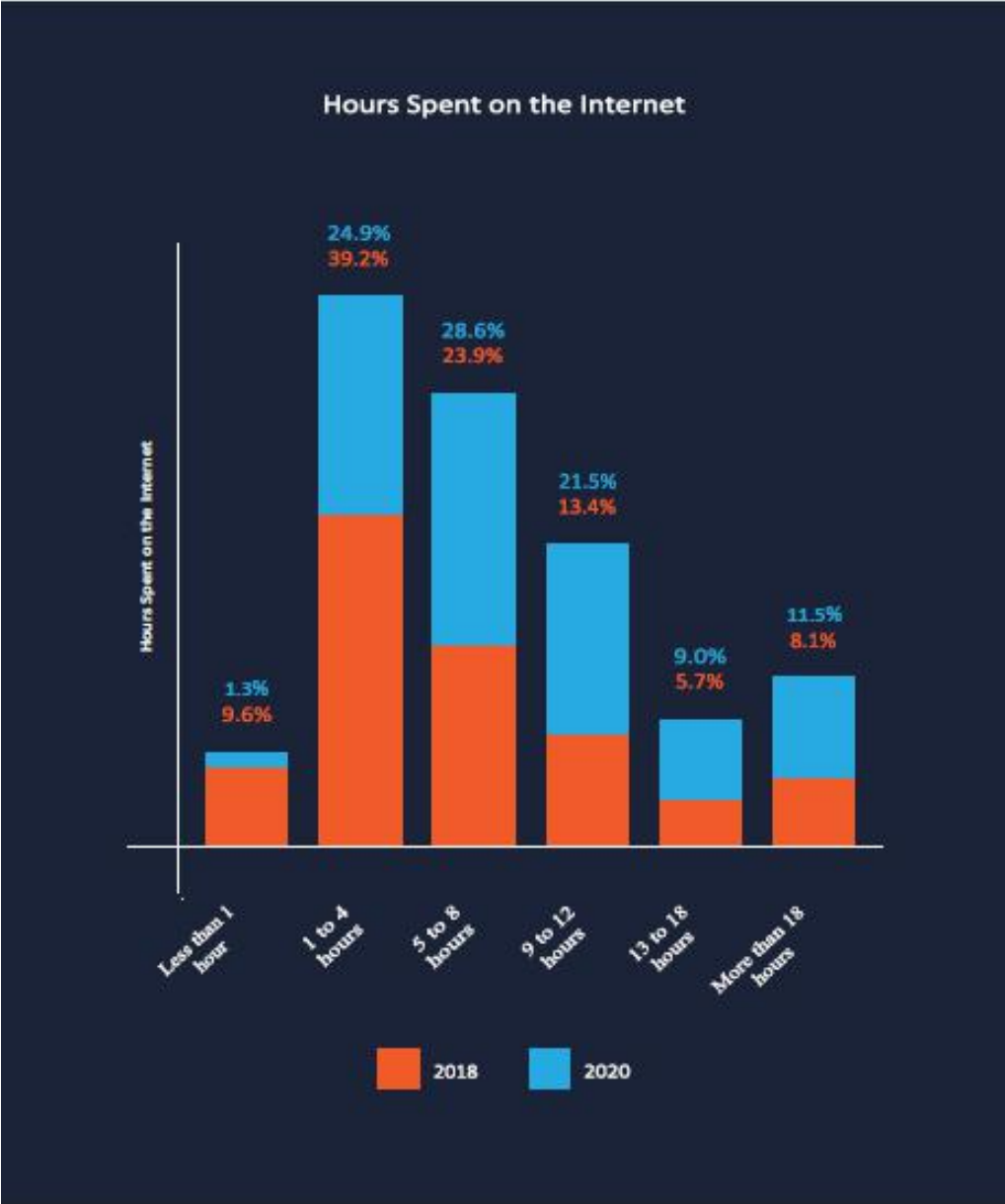


Figure 1.2: Hours spent on the internet

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the Malaysian economy. Numerous sectors including the entertainment, retail, hospitality, and tourism sectors were affected by various lockdown and social distancing restrictions in response to outbreaks of COVID-19 throughout 2020 and 2021.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

Ecotourism has become an option for those who is nature lover and claim themselves as an eco-tourist. With the demand of ecotourism destination on the line, it will become a mass tourism if there is no plan to control it. Therefore, it is important to assess the value of ecology in the ecotourism destination so the demand will not surplus the supply and the natural resources can be sustaining for the enjoyment of future generation.

Sustainable tourism studies rarely look beyond the destination area like the ecotourism area, and there is limit of recognition of the ecological value in the tourism activities (Simpson, 2019). The sustainable tourism studies always prefer on the destination related with tourist for example the studies on carrying capacity, tourist satisfaction, activities, amenities and facilities.

Rarely the sustainable studies focus on the destination and the nature resources itself (Wade and Eagles, 2003). The assessment for the natural resources is very important because it help to predict the health of our nature as the core attraction in the ecotourism activities. If there is miscalculation, it will lead to misprediction the nature life expectancy, and we may lose our value in Malaysia tourism.

The dependency of ecotourism destination and their activities was the natural resources. If the amount of usage for the natural resources is beyond the nature acceptable, it could destroy not only the beauty but also the variety. Therefore, there is a need to measure the ecological value in order to estimate the life expectancy of the ecotourism destination so that a better planning and more sustainable can be propose.

The lack of assessment on social media review at Tanjung Piai johor National Park's ecotourism site in the context of tourist perspective. Significantly, social

media currently become the main sources in promoting the brands to enhance their visibility. And also become the platform of the people to share their opinion.

Tanjung Piai Johor National Park widely known as a destination that used ecotourism activity as their attraction. It is a popular searching destination among the tourist that have an intention to visiting the destination that had the unique nature. Social media can be the platform in determine the tourist expectation and also their on-site perception and satisfaction of the tourist towards the ecotourism destination. Hence, the assessment on the social media review perhaps will be able to monitor the tourist perception and satisfaction towards the Tanjung Piai Johor National Park as an ecotourism destination.

This is because social media has become a required tools in restructure the tourism industry since it is able to create an impact especially in marketing and promoting strategies (Xiang et al, 2008).

### **1.3 Research Question**

The following research questions are proposed in this study to encompass the tourist perspective towards the Tanjung Piai Johor National Park's.

1. What are the tourist perception of Tanjung Piai Johor National Park's ecotourism site?
2. What are the tourist satisfaction level at the Tanjung Piai Johor National Park's ecotourism site?
3. How much sharing experience from the tourist of Tanjung Piai Johor National Park's ecotourism site?

### **1.4 Research Aim and Objective**

The research is aimed to quantify the social media review at Tanjung Piai Johor National Park's in the context of tourist perception and satisfaction. In order to achieve this aim, the objectives proposed are:

1. To quantify the tourist perception at Tanjung Piai Johor National Park's through social media posting.
2. To determine the satisfaction level of tourist at Tanjung Piai Johor National Park's through social media review.
3. To analyze the tourist social media reaction.

## 1.5 Conceptual Framework

Based on the research aim and objective, a conceptual framework was developed to understanding the overall concept of research.

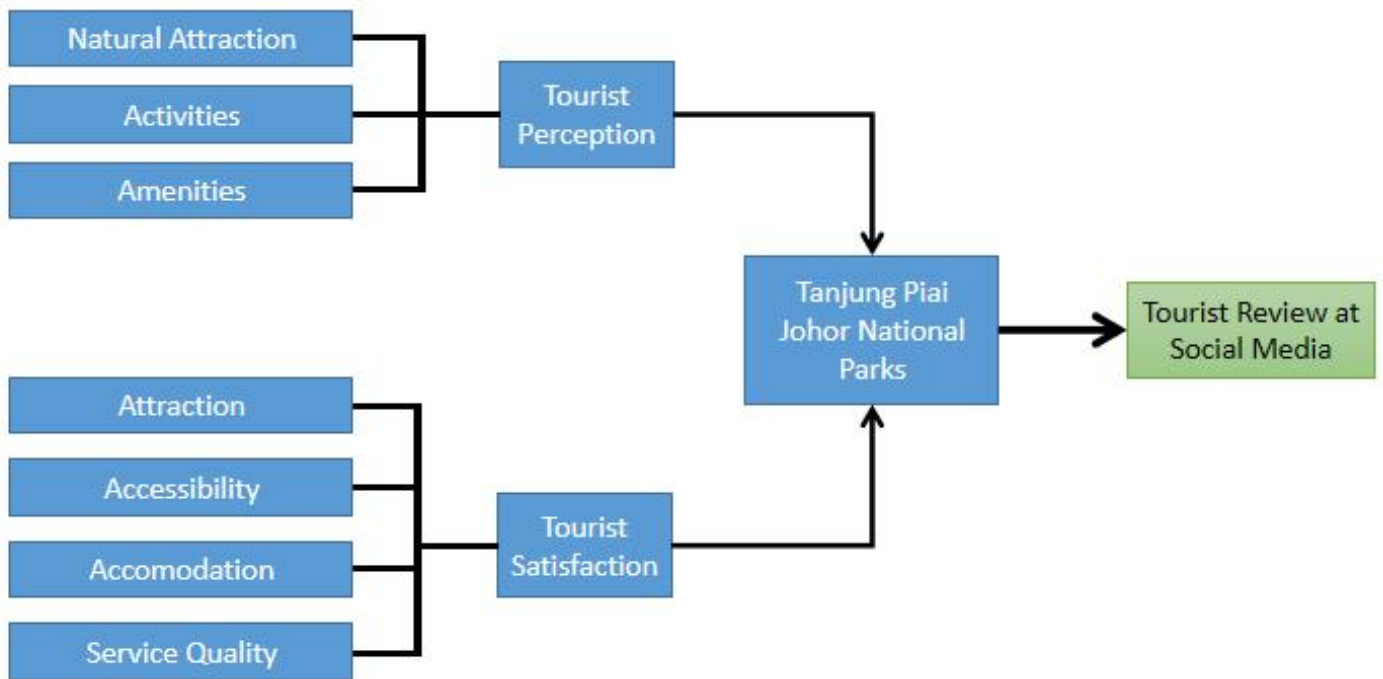


Figure 1.3: Conceptual Framework

The Figure 1.3 shown the impact of tourist perception and satisfaction on destination is statistically significant. The variable of tourist perception and variable of satisfaction have significant influence on Facebook posting that can be towards to destination loyalty.

The tourism industry needs to learn about tourist perception and satisfaction in order to predict the sustainability of their businesses. Based on several studies suggesting tourist perception and satisfaction in determining tourist destinations is influenced by several things.

### 1.6 Research Flowchart

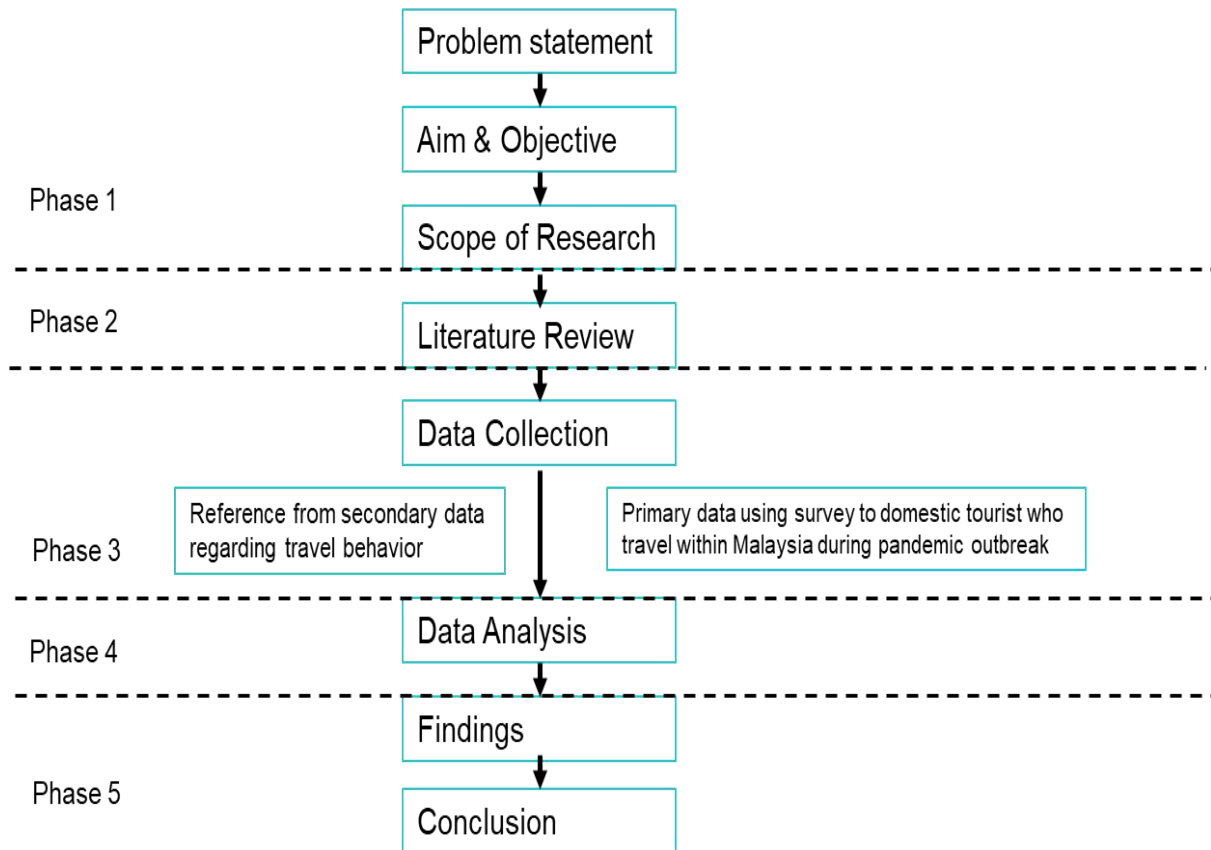


Figure 1.4: The flow chart of research

This study will have five phase which are phase 1, phase 2, phase 3, phase 4 and phase 5 based on figure 1.4.



## **1.7 Research Limitation**

Each research has their own limitation as resources and timing are limited. The limitation of this research is:

1. The study focuses on the tourist who visited the national park only with the tagging Tanjung Piai Johor National park's.
2. The target respondent is limited to the after visit time which only focus on who finished their visit to the Tanjung Piai Johor National Park's.
3. The data collection was based on Malaysian Facebook sharing their visit to the Tanjung Piai Johor National Park's.

## 1.8 Research Significant

Through the quantification of the tourist perception and satisfaction to the national park, this study contributes to the research in the following ways:

1. Social media offers self-reported consumer comments that are free from biases presented in traditional market research methods, and offers new, real-time, and accurate ways to understand consumer behavior (Li et al., 2018; Xiang et al., 2015). Moreover, there is a high penetration rate of users from different backgrounds in social media, providing a diversity of thoughts from different groups of consumers, which are particularly conducive to tourism innovations. The collective information from social media often represented objective thoughts with the prevailing advantage of undergoing research without disturbing the consumer behavior of the social group (Babbie, 2005; Hausmann, et al., 2018).
2. The study contributes to the literature of tourism on tourist perception and satisfaction towards the national parks in Johor. The perceptiveness of tourists varies depending on their background and motivation to travel. So this research which focuses on the social media review will help to give an information on the Tanjung Piai Johor National Parks tourists and their perspective.
3. The tour operator which is Johor National Park's Corporation can identify the tourist perception and satisfaction towards the ecotourism destination. The tour operator can develop new strategies to target the potential tourists to visit their valuable ecotourism destination.

## **1.9 Expected Outcome**

From the study, some expected outcomes have been anticipated to shed some light on the travel behaviour pattern of Malaysian:

1. Understanding the tourist perception and their satisfaction level for Tanjung Piai Johor National Park's
2. Determining what are the reaction on the tourist posting regarding Tanjung Piai Johor National Park's.

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