THE EFFECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ON REVISIT INTENTION AMONG EUROPEAN TOURISTS TO MALAYSIA

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by

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AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CMB	Common Method Bias
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
MAS	Malaysian Airlines
S-O-R	Stimulus-Organism-Response
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Scientists
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
TIB	Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour
ALOS	Average Length of Stay
UNWTO	United Nation World Tourism Organization
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council
WTO	World Tourism Organization
MYR	Malaysia Ringgit
VFR	Visit Family and Friends
N. A	Non Available
F & B	Food and Beverage
EUR	Euro Currency

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KESAN KUALITI ALAM SEKITAR TERHADAP NIAT UNTUK MELAWAT SEMULA DALAM KALANGAN PELANCONG-PELANCONG EROPAH KE MALAYSIA

ABSTRAK

Pelancongan adalah industri yang pesat menjana pendapatan di Malaysia. Satu pendekatan yang berlainan dalam di destinasi pelancongan ialah pengalaman pelancong sendiri diyakinkan sebagai modal jualan. Pendekatan ini diaplikasikan di kesemua destinatinasi terkanal di dunia. Pengendali pelancongan yang mempunyai matlamat beroperasi dengan kos promosi yang kecil bijak dalam mengambil pendekatan untuk mengwujudkan niat dalam kalangan pelangcong untuk melawat semula. Kesan kualiti alam sekitar adalah faktor utama dalam usaha ini mahupun mengesyorkan destinasi tersebut kepada individu lain. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji hubungan faktor kualiti alam sekitar ke atas niat pelancong melawat sesebuah destinasi semula. Kajian tinjauan pendapat ini dijalankan di lapangan terbang terpilih dan di lokasi pelancong yang terkenal di timur dan barat Malaysia. Sampel seramai 482 pelancong Eropah diperolehi menggunakan pendekatan pensampelan bertujuan. Data kajian dianalisis menggunakan perisian Pakej Statistik untuk Sains Sosial (SPSS) secara keseluruhan. Seluruh model kajian disahkan menggunakan 'PROSSES SPPS' yang merupakan alat pengiraan serba boleh untuk mengkaji pemboleh ubah pengantaraan dalam kajian. Penemuan kajian mendapati bahawa faktor kualiti alam sekitar iaitu semulajadi, sosial dan buatan manusia mempunyai pengaruh hubungan yang tersendiri mengenai niat untuk melawat semula Malaysia dalam kalangan pelancong-pelancong Eropah. Hasil kajian menunjukkan faktor alam

sekitar dan buatan manusia tidak mempunyai kesan positif terhadap niat untuk melawat semula kecuali faktor sosial. Menariknya, dengan bantuan pengalaman pelancong sebagai pengantara kajian, hubungan ini menjadi positif. Selain itu, imej keseluruhan destinasi yang dikaji sebagai 'antecedent' dalam rangka penyelidikan. Imej holistik mempengaruhi kesan kualiti alam sekitar secara positif terhadap kesemua faktor persekitaran.

THE EFFECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ON REVISIT INTENTION AMONG EUROPEAN TOURISTS TO MALAYSIA

ABSTRACT

Tourism is a sunrise industry in Malaysia. The extraordinary approach to a tourist destination, the tourist experience itself convertible as the selling point. This applies to the entire remarkable destination around the globe because of its image. Every highbrow tourism provider has the essential objective to bring back tourist to the destination with the less promotional activity which incurs budget. The environmental quality factors are the key attributes in attracting tourists to revisit or to recommend the destination to others. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between environmental quality factors toward intended to revisit intention. A self-administered survey was carried out at the selected airport and in the selected prominent tourist location in the east and west Malaysia. A sample of 482 European tourists was obtained using the purposive sampling approach. The data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. The whole model was confirmed using SPPS PROCESS, a versatile computational tool for observing the mediating variable in the study. Major findings of this study complement the S-O-R theory. European tourists gathered information about Malaysia from internet sources predominantly. The key reasons for European tourists to visit Malaysia are reservation of heritage and historic monuments, less language barrier, the beauty of natural scenery and landscape and numerous activities for tourists. The finding shows, environmental factor nature and man-made does not support the relationship on revisit intention but social factor does. Interestingly, with the help of the mediator (tourist experience) the relationship turns out to be positive.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter is about to provide an outline to this research and contains of ten sections. The research starts with introducing the topic and delineates the background of the research topic. The introduction and study background section highlights the grounds of apprehension regards to the topic. The following sections explicate the determinations of the study, which covers the study questions, objectives, significance, scope, operational definition and the organization of the remaining chapters. To end, this chapter has been summarized.

1.1 Introduction

Tourism as sun-rise industry is a multi-sector activity that involves inputs for social, cultural and environmental natures and creates employment directly and indirectly together with economic growth in other correlated industries. Previous studies have proven and confirmed that destination image plays a huge effect on (Song, Dwyer, Li, & Cao, 2012; Tugcu, 2014; Webster & Ivanov, 2014). Apart of that, tourism as well creates triggering competition among countries that are involved in the tourism industry (Dwyer, Edwards, Mistilis, Roman, Scott, 2009; Molina, Jamilena, & García, 2013).

There are a few significant implications and motivations for undertaking this study. Primarily, in Malaysia, the tourism industry contributes an extremely important role in its economic growth through revenue receipt via international tourist arrivals. The role of non-economic issues of the contributing factor of tourism

revisit intention is studied in a smaller amount acknowledged in the past. As a consequence, this research attempt is distinctive to the investigation of the contributing factors of intended revisit intention to Malaysia. The study is conducted in a timely manner by distinguishing the character of the environmental quality factors for the first time.

Subsequently, current research has the benefit of emerging a mediating effect between revisiting intention and environmental quality factors by tourist experience. It has become much more imperative in the absence of a study which is based on a revisit intention study and specific source continent. Previous similar studies by Habibi and Khaled (2009), Kusni, Kadir, and Nayan (2013) and Salleh et al. (2008) focused on travelers on or after ASEAN nation's visits to Malaysia. In current research, investigation on tourism behavior intention from countries, specifically from the Europe continent is taken into account. The fourth motivation in conducting this research is due to fact that Malaysia is and will always be one of the highest tourist destinations in the Asia Pacific region with a unique and evolving tourism industry. Therefore, the antecedent of environmental factors which is a holistic image of Malaysia among European tourists is crucial to be identified to retain the market, which used to be strong one in Malaysia in the past.

This research, examines factors that stimulate European tourists to travel to Malaysia, and the extent to which these intentions influence their experience to revisit Malaysia. Thus, this study plays a role to present a whole approach of understanding a holistic image of Malaysia and thus also to explore the theoretical and empirical evidence on the causal relationships amid environment quality, tourist's experience, and revisit purpose. Subsequently, this study is also expected to

contribute to the existing body of knowledge by highlighting the factors that motivate tourists' visits to Malaysia. Additionally, it will also explore the extent to which tourists' preference on environmental quality influence revisit intention. Finally, the study estimates the influence of tourist experience during the travel on repeat visits.

1.2 Background of the Study

In this segment the explanation includes of the area of the study, which set the context of the problem. This section addresses the study problem. This will lead up to the research question and to elucidate the aim of the study.

1.2.1 The Importance of International Tourism Market

International tourism is rapidly growing into one of the largest and most vital economic sectors of the global economy, driving huge flows of people, commodities, and capital. Tourism has been, and continues to be an important foreign exchange source to many countries in South East Asia, and Malaysia is no exception. According to the UNWTO's report, international tourist arrivals worldwide has grown approximately 6% from January till April of 2017 compared to the same period in 2016, with business confidence recorded its maximum levels in a decade (Figure 1.1).
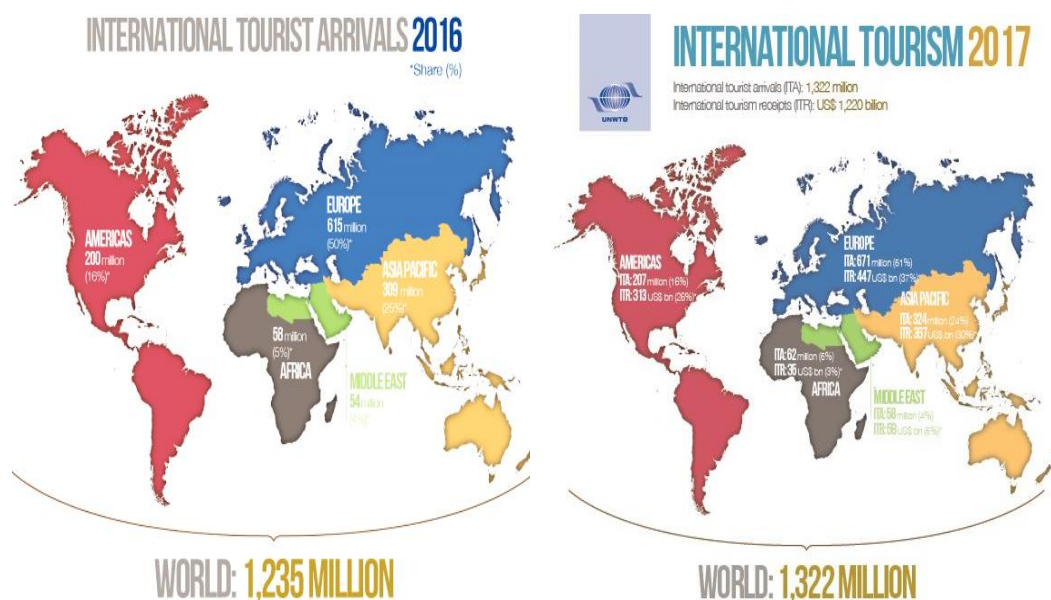
Figure 1.1: Comparison of International Tourism by Continent in 2016 and 2017 (Source: World Tourism Organization – UNWTO – July, 2017)

In Asia and the Pacific, international arrivals were up 6% through April with sound results across all the four sub-regions. South Asia has results an increase of 14%, which led the growth. Followed by Oceania with 7% growth and countries in South-East Asia recorded growth of 6% and countries in North-East Asia too has grown 5% increase of international tourists' arrival. This robust growth indicates the potential for Malaysia for the coming years of tourism increased responsibility to ensure tourism can contribute to sustainability in all its three pillars – economic, social and environmental. Growth in for international tourism, especially for the European market is a promising and indicates tourism authorities' accountability to be able to protect the destination in a sustainable way. Therefore, two pillars of the growth, contributing pillar taken into the study to analysis further in studying the relationship as predictor of the main subject of the research which is revisit intention of tourist to Malaysia. Particularly, European, tourist market taken into study because of the potential of the sustaining role predicted for Malaysia (Tourism Malaysia, 2015).

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Tourism has been and continues to be an important foreign exchange earner to many countries in South East Asia. This is mainly due to the increasing number of European tourists in general to South East Asia particularly in the case of Malaysia. The UNWTO's panels of tourism experts are confidence that the index reflected a robust progression momentum based on evaluations and prospects based on a quarterly survey conducted by worldwide experts in the industry since 2003. Leading experts appraised that tourism performance in the first four months of 2017 reflected the highest score in 12 years. This growth clearly exceeded their previous positive expectations from the start of the period. A strongest response to the survey arises from Europe, in line with the rebound in arrivals.

*2016			*2017		
CHINA		261 US$ billion	CHINA		258 US$ Billion (+5%)
USA		122 US$ billion	USA		135 US$ Billion (+9%)
GERMANY		81 US$ billion	GERMANY		84 US$ Billion (+3%)
UK		64 US$ billion	UK		63 US$ Billion (+3%)
FRANCE		41 US$ billion	FRANCE		41 US$ Billion (+1%)
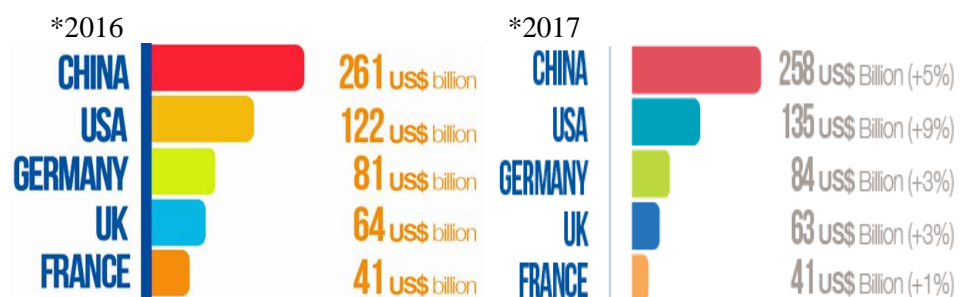
Figure 1.2: Comparison of Top Five Tourism Spender in 2016 and 2017
(Source: World Tourism Organization – UNWTO – April, 2017*/April 2018)

Experts have proven that a strong assurance was detected from the month of May 2017 till August 2017 period, as the most optimistic in a decade. This was also caused by optimistic expectations by European tourists (Figure 1.2). The May to August, 2017 time frame comprises the high tourism season in most of the world's major tourism destinations and resource markets. The Figure 1.2, shows among the top five world top spender for tourism industry three highest spenders are from

European countries. Referring to Figure 1.2, the quality of European tourist exceeds the quantity of tourist from other continent like Asia from China specifically based on arrival to Malaysia. This comparison was made with the argument the reason for European tourist to visit and activities undertaken differ from major travel market of Malaysia from Asia such China, South Korea, India and Japan (Tourism Malaysia, March 2018).

Tourism directs many foreign exchanges to Malaysia, and it also helps to Malaysia, they travel and spend money within the country. They pay government taxes and charges while they stay in hotels and when they go to for shopping, thereby increasing the taxes and charges revenue of Malaysia. Besides that, tourism creates a lot of job opportunities, once the economy grows, thanks to the trickle-down effect of tourism. The industries depending both directly or indirectly in tourism sectors such as hotel, restaurant, theme park and travel agencies will definitely result in hiring of more workforces to fulfill their demands that arises.

Tourism is a more seasonal industry, because there are peak season and shoulder season periods in a year. During the peak period approach, numerous touristy areas will hire more employees or wants their employees to work overtime and thus increasing their earnings and pays. Tourists who love nature enthusiast to visit the countryside or rustic attraction or destination in the places they travel (Scheper et al., 2013). As more and more and more tourists visit these destinations, they economy of these places will experience growth and become prosperous as the local community earn money whilst satisfying the elements that tourist request. The increase of a local community's income results directly in the improvement in their living standard. Revisit intention of a tourist even recommending the destination to others will play a role in for this growth in any tourism destination that attract tourist.

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Tourism not only can bring a lot of foreign exchange, it also can bring a lot of investment in Malaysia. There are many international hotel chains that have come to invest in Malaysia. Besides, investors in other tourism related industry, such as theme parks, health spa and branded private hospitals will also be attracted to invest in Malaysia. Thereby bring about an overall increase in Malaysia's investment. As well, once countless tourists and foreign stakeholders visit Malaysia consequently the process of evaluating the infrastructure and amenities available for them will take place. As a result, with the good will of the authorities motivated to drive to make progress and improve the current facilities. This action will benefit both the tourists and of course the local communities at large. The European investor from Multinational Corporation do interest in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects in rural areas in countries in Asia especially. According to Yap (2013), Contrary to European countries, practice CSR activities targeted at protecting the environment are not a priority in Malaysia as the environmental needs are secondary compared to the economic benefit of businesses. The potential of international tourists, especially European tourists, in revisiting Malaysia has clearly pointed to the importance of this aspect. This clearly indicates that this study conducted in a timely manner to guide academician and industry player in attracting European Tourists to revisit Malaysia.

1.2.2   The Importance of Intended Revisit Intention (IRIE)

 Kim & Han (2010), mentioned that the mentioned that an individual's readiness or willingness is the among contributing factor a tourist decides to revisit a tourism destination, on condition that the most accurate prediction of a decision to revisit is to purchase of a vacation package to the same destination. According to Cole and

Scott (2004), it's the desire to visit, in a specific timeframe, a prior destination for a second time. As Um, Chon, and Ro (2006) claimed that, "Revisit intention has been regarded as an extension of satisfaction rather than an initiator of the revisit decision making process". Numerous researchers have focused on factors that contribute to revisit intention (Alegre & Garau, 2011; Baloglu, 2000; Chen & Tsai, 2007), as it is better to attract visitors to come back than to look for new visitors (Umet et al., 2006). Adding to these, Petrick, Morais and Norman (2001), resolved that an intention to revisit a destination is influenced by the tourist's level of satisfaction, the perceived value, and past behavior.

By the same token, there is proof that the need for diversity and another course of action. Tourists who seek novelty, tend not to revisit a destination (Assaker & Hallak, 2013; Assaker, Vinzi, & O'Connor, 2011; Barroso, Martin-Armario & Ruiz, 2007; Bigne, Sanchez & Andreu, 2009). The relationship between destination images and intention to revisit is the scope of the present study from the perspective of antecedent which interconnected with the environmental factor. The existing literature put forward that cognitive and affective images have a positive, direct effect on tourists' intentions to revisit a destination (Bigne, Sanchez, & Sanz, 2009; Chew & Jahari, 2014; Kim & Yoon, 2003), as positive perceptions of destinations drive purchase decisions (Woodside & Lysonski, 1989).

There are quite a number of practical reasons for studying tourists' revisit intention. Since a customer's repeated purchase and brand loyalty are closely linked to his or her satisfaction through an initial purchase, the concept of tourist's satisfaction is of significance because of its influence in repeated purchase and word of mouth recommendation to others (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Fornell, 1992; Halstead & Page, 1992). Customer satisfaction is identified to be a significant determinant of

repeat sales and customer loyalty (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Liljander & Strandvik, 1995) and the satisfaction is influenced by destination attachment (Veasna et al., 2013). Ultimately, the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of a tourist will have a momentous impact on their following behavior (Kotler, Haider, & Rein, 1994) which highly relates to their experience during the visit.

A tourist who is satisfied have advanced propensity to select the same destination all over again. Then, the tourist's is willing to share their experience and knowledge about the destination with others for good reasons. This action is known as positive word of mouth be0havior (Bahar & Kozak, 2007). Likewise, tourists who have enjoyed better than expected experiences are more likely to return in the future (Ross, 1993). Kozak and Rimmington (2000) have concluded that the level of overall satisfaction with holiday experiences have the greatest influence on the intention to revisit the same destination. Opperman (1998) highlighted that there is an essential to for advancement in examining the revisit intention of a tourist on their satisfaction level. Repeat visitation is a cost-effective and desirable market segment for destination marketing organizations (Tan, 2016). Therefore, there is a seriousness to look at the experience pertain by European tourists who visit Malaysia with their environmental quality factors influence to revisit.

1.2.3   Revisit intention in Malaysia Scenario

Tourism has been acknowledged as one of the 12 National Key Economic Areas (NKEA) driving the nation's economic growth in reference to Malaysia's Economic Transformation Program (ETP). Coincidentally, a vast number of tourism development projects are being executed in order to achieve an estimated of 36 million tourist arrivals and a forecast of RM168 billion in tourism receipts by the

year 2020. Among the tourism initiatives commenced last year, where the physical transformation of the Bukit Bintang and Kuala Lumpur City Centre to improve the shopping experience, opening of several new tourist attractions including Asia's first Legoland, as well as hosting of several businesses and international events. To further capitalize on Malaysia's consistent tourism growth, as well as the expected surge of tourists arrival in the Asia Pacific region for the next few years, Malaysia has embarked on an active and intensive publicity campaign, which culminated via Visit Malaysia Year 2014 (VMY 2014) where in return it contributed with 27.44 million tourists and receipt of MYR 72 billion to this nation back (Tourism Malaysia, 2015).

Referring to Table 1.1 below, in Malaysia, compared to the year 2015, a hike of 4.0% has been recorded in 2016 with the arrival of international touring. Malaysia received 26.8 billion tourists in comparison to 25.7 billion for the year 2015. This influx lead to an increase of 18.8% of tourist receipts, contributing RM82.1 billion of the country's revenue in 2016 compared to RM69.1 million in 2015. This means each international tourist spends an average of RM3, 068.20 in Malaysia. A positive growth was detected in shopping as an increase of 20.3% was detected with the total expenditure recorded in RM26 billion in the year 2016 compared to RM21.6 billion in the year 2015 based on the total receipts. Statistics shown the length of stay for each international tourist increased on average of 0.4% or about 5.9 nights (Tourism Malaysia, 2016). Anyhow, it has to notice that the decrease of length of stay has occurred consecutively from year 2012, 2013 and 2014 respectively 7 nights, 6.8 nights and 6.6 nights.

Table: 1.1

Key Indicators of Malaysia Tourism 2012 - 2017

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Tourist Arrivals	25,032,708	25,715,460	27,437,315	25,721,251	26,757,392	25,948,459
Tourist Receipts	RM60.6 billion	RM 65.4 billion	RM 72.0 billion	RM 69.0 billion	RM 82.0 billion	RM 82.2 billion
Average Per Capita Expenditure	RM 2,419.10	RM 2,544.90	RM 2,624.10	RM 2869.60	RM 3,068.20	RM 3166.50
Average Per Diem	RM 345.60	RM 374.30	RM 397.60	RM	RM 520.00	RM 555.50
Total Number Of Hotels	2,724	3,094	4,072	4799	4961	n/a
Total Number Of Rooms	195,445	209, 527	262,021	304,721	321,972	n/a
Average Occupancy Rate	62.40%	62.60%	63.60%	67.1%	66.1%	66.1%
Average Length of Stay	7.0 nights	6.8 nights	6.6 nights	5.8 nights	5.9 nights	5.7 nights

(Source: Tourism Malaysia, 2018)

Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia, of late, organized a photography and short video competition via social media with the sub-theme #MyCuisine commencing from 1st January 2017 to 28th February 2017. Besides, campaigns such VISIT ASEAN@50 has been launched in Singapore during the meeting of the ASEAN Tourism Forum. This campaign which officially started on 18th January will prolong in anticipation of year end.

Hence, this step taken in order to attract more international tourists to visit ASEAN countries as collaborative move. In order to benefit the stakeholders for instance travel agencies, fifty special travel experiences, interchanging from two to 26 nights, have been formed by prominent tour operators and cruise lines in Southeast Asia to induce tourists to visit Southeast be it for the repeat visitation or more interesting even for the very first time also. To name few sample trips, inclusive of the eight days and seven nights tour to Bagan, Inle, Pattaya and Bangkok; a 13 days and 12 nights cruise from Singapore to Yangon; a six days and

five nights tour from Bali to Kuala Lumpur and the Genting Highlands; a four days and three nights tour from Brunei to Miri in Sarawak; a 12 days and 11 nights Coastal Paths tour from Myanmar to Thailand; and a 12 days and 11 nights Wellness and Nature trip to Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Ipoh, Penang and Langkawi. As a stakeholder, airline group, such as Air Asia assured to collaborate together in this promotional campaign throughout the period. All these dynamic endeavours by the tourism promotional board and stakeholders are vision the objective to achieve the 31 million in tourists' receipts of 114 billion. The mission prolongs to achieve further the target of 36 million of tourist arrival with MYR168 billion by the year 2020 (New Strait Times, March 2017).

1.2.4   The importance of Image

The establishments of destination image, deliberated by Gunn's (1972) staging the theory of the destination image are proceeding through three stages. An organic image is shaped grounded on non-commercial evidence bases at the first stage. Next, the image is advanced induced by profit-making sources (known as the second stage theoretically). Lastly, the image is modified by actual visit involvements (known as third stage theoretically).

Research according to Nadeau et al., (2008) and Elliot et al., (2011) on destination image have over all attentive consigned to the induced stage of image formation. Limited studies in the tourism literature have examined the organic stage of image formation by investigating country of origin effect. Hence, the present study will inspect the consequence of tourist experience between environmental quality factors and revisit intention. It is anticipated that this research will as a result

construct on the conception of international tourist experience of the tourism literature body.

1.2.5   The importance of Environment Quality

Malaysia's competitiveness in the industry is mainly due to its hospitality as tourists acknowledge Malaysian hospitality is somehow encouraging compared to other Asian countries as Malaysia is better and excellent than other countries for long-haul travel. Malaysia is way better in terms of its natural environment. These aspects have to be monitored by the authorities' concern to make sure they are maintained and upgraded from time to time because they are good selling point for Malaysia.

Tourism offers means and opportunities for a continued, rejuvenation or enhancement of traditions and a way of life. Culture is rarely static, and linking tourism and cultural survival may bring long term benefits as well as changes and challenges for a community to address. The possibility of socio-cultural costs and benefits of tourism to a vulnerable culture are rarely quantified. Wild et al., (2010), revealed tourism projects need to include a program to monitor economic and cultural assistances so that vulnerable cultures can access and manage the impacts of tourism in their host communities. Besides that, most commentators believe that investing in cultural heritage the most noteworthy, and profitable investment in the tourism sector, is an intangible benefit. Interest in unique cultures by tourists may result in contrary impacts and severe commotion to the communities.

The term man-made or tourism-created elements are the secondary destination structures consist of expansions specifically popularized for travelers. The developments are inclusive of amenities, lodgings, food and beverage, transport, entertainment, activities and event celebration are some examples of these man-made

features. Bahar & Kozak (2007), curtained that the dual central elements, environmental and tourism-produced of supply. This made an all-encompassing influence to the attractiveness of destinations. One more discrepancy of principal tourism source represents to man-made fascinations. Selected researchers, take account attractions that are constructed and created with distinct intention (Vanhove, 2005). To name few of these are theme parks, events, spas, in the category of principal attractions that perform the same part as environmental capitals in fascinating tourists (Planina 1966). In this case, purpose built man-made attractions partially been unsuccessful to encounter the standards of non-reproducibility. Environmental resources have effects on the tourism and observed them as primary tourism supply. Planina (1997), further protracted through introducing cultural element on the Mariotti (1938) thoughtfulness of natural surroundings tourism attractions. This author further pointed that the primary tourism attractions be made up of ordinary properties and never man-made with cultural belongings since precedent which is man-made but non-reproducible (Kaspar 1991; Tisdell 1991). The principal source of tourism is natural and cultural. Therefore, all the three elements, nature, culture and man-made taken into this study as environmental qualities factors.

1.2.6   The importance of Tourist Experience

Experience is the consociate or mastery of an event or subject gained through taking part in or acquaintance to it. Various studies that were conducted have reflected a different outcome on experience quality. According to Otto and Ritchie's (1996), experience quality scale is composed of four dimensions (hedonic, peace of mind, involvement, and recognition). Further, the constructs was analyzed by Kao, Huang, and Wu (2008) with four measurements which are immersion, surprise, participation,

and fun. The feature of experience is collected of five measurements, which are physical surroundings, service providers, other customers, customer's companions, and the customers themselves (Chang & Horng, 2010). Additionally, Kang and Gretzel (2012) studied tourist experience in three dimensions (learning, enjoyment, and escape). Oppermann, (1997), Uysal and McDonald, (1989) additional found that the repeat visitors always stay longer in single destination. This statement supported by Gokovali, Bahar and Kozak (2007), tourists are more inclined to stay longer in an international destination if an experience on international tourism increases. Therefore this study investigate the role of European Tourists between environment quality and their intention to revisit Malaysia will meet the purpose the increase the revenue to Malaysia tourism and increase the length of international tourists here is timely conducted.

1.3   Problem Statements

The need to conduct a research only could be stimulated by highlighting the issue and problem that arise which need to be addressed on well-timed method and manner. For that, Badaruddin, (2009) argued Malaysia faces a stiff competition from a number of neighboring countries in the region which consume resemblances as such of natural capitals, excursions, facilities, amenities, culture, ethnicities and generosity. Malaysia is blessed with abundant countryside beautiful landscape and outlandish forest and beaches. However, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2002), Amran (2004) and Mintell (2011), the major problem that Malaysia is facing in tourism industry is its image. Malaysian destination managers have a problem in selecting an ideal image to brand the country (Abdul & Lebai, 2010). According to Othman et al., (2014), Malaysia is known as a country rich in

historical, cultural and natural resources, further endeavors should be made to strengthen its competences. In particular, Malaysia's unique culture should be utilized as a vehicle to augment the future Malaysian tourism brand. It is required to nurture Malaysian culture strategically in conjunction with tourism. Malaysian advertising tag line "Malaysia Truly Asia" has created an identity with which customers can associate, and provide the experiences while holidaying in Malaysia on the other hand additional national tourism perspective branding need for Malaysia among international tourists especially Europeans (Tourism Malaysia, January 2018).

Countries that registered a decrease in tourist arrivals for the long-haul European market included Italy dropped 5.9%, Sweden decreased 6.7%, Germany reduced 8.5%), United Kingdom decreased 10%, Russia decreased 10.6%, France reduced 10.9% and the Netherlands reduced 13.7%. The decrease of tourist arrivals from Germany (Figure 1.3) was a direct impact due to the termination of services by Malaysia Airlines to Frankfurt beginning May 2015. It led to a reduction in seat capacity from 3,378 to 1,547 seats per week.

Furthermore the comparison of European tourists' arrival to Malaysia for the year 2014 and 2015 confirming that there are European Tourists are in the two extremes by countries. The drop of tourist from European countries continued as travel advisories over the security issue in the East Coast, Malaysia remain disseminated in the media. Incidents to note are the armed attacks on the headquarters of Charlie Hebdo in January, 2015 and the city of Paris on 13th November, 2015 (refer Figure 1.3) impacted tourist arrivals from European countries to Muslim countries (Tourism Malaysia, 2016).

	UK	Germany	Nertherland	Italy	Spain	Sweden	Ireland	Denmark	Belgium
2014	231022	79698	44974	24626	15056	24088	14082	14869	10359
2015	201814	72941	38765	23030	14649	20234	11476	13106	8859
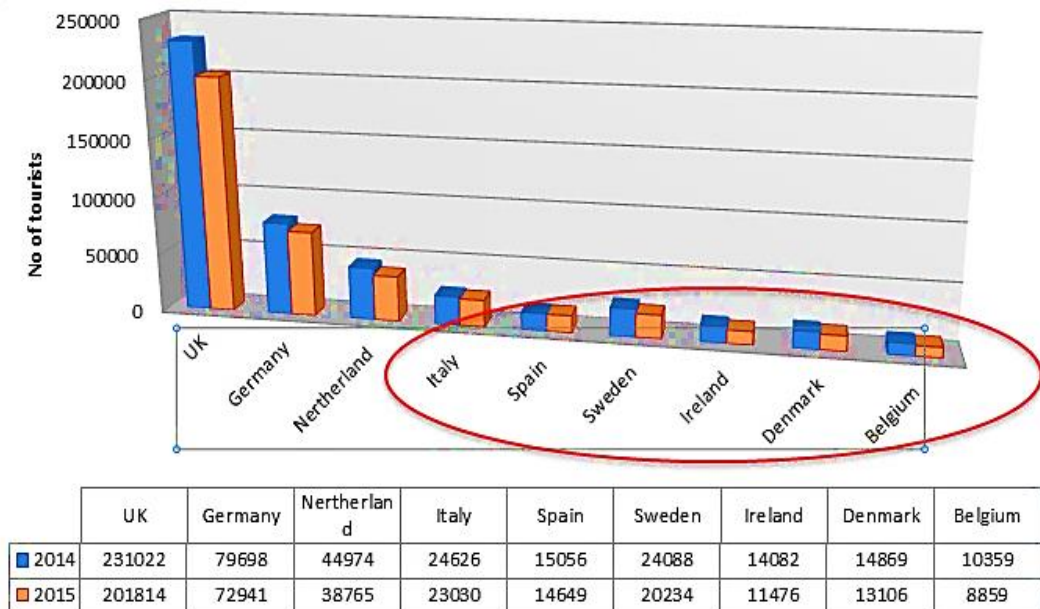
Figure 1.3: Comparison of Tourists arrivals to Malaysia in 2014 and 2015
(Source: Tourism Malaysia, 2016)

Tourist arrivals from the long-haul markets reached 776,673 in 2016, constituting 6% of the total arrivals to Malaysia. Countries that recorded growth included Egypt (+22.2%) and United Kingdom (+2.2%). The following markets recorded a decline, i.e. Germany (-7.7%), France (-9.4%), Russia (-12.7%), Italy (-30.1%), Netherlands (-30.5%) and Spain (30.6 %). Among the factors that influence the arrival trends included early effects of Brexit campaigns, travel advisories against Malaysia issued by the United States, Canada and United Kingdom with regards to the bombing incident in Puchong in June 2016, in relation to IS activity in Malaysia. Europeans now choose to travel domestically or to neighboring countries due to fear of terrorist attacks as well as the weakening of the Pound Sterling for the first time in 30 years due to Brexit (Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board, September 2016).

Establishing Malaysia as a global biodiversity hub is a mission under Entry Point Project Nature Adventure (ETP, Annual Report, 2014). In contrarily to the statement, Malaysia, due to logging activities in rainforests and the perceived

destruction of Orang Utan habitats for palm oil plantations, Malaysia faces negative perceptions internationally. Leatherback turtles are virtually extinct in Malaysia due local tour operators allowing tourists to use flash photography (PEMANDU, 2014). Similarly, poor planning of accommodation which does not take into account the carrying capacity of environmentally-sensitive ecotourism sites has resulted in numerous complaints by tourist. This leads to overcrowding, congestion and problems of sewage and waste disposal. These in turn cause tourist discomfort and directly impacts overall satisfaction (Kamaruzaman & Handrich, 2010).

Annual tourists arrivals to increase from 28.5million in the year 2015 and target to reach 33.8 million in 2018 as Malaysia remains vulnerable to a global economic downturn. Since 1999, Malaysia has marketed itself in Australia, Europe and the United States using the slogan 'Malaysia, Truly Asia'. Operative marketing promotions are assisting to increase the country's global profile, comprising the 2015 'Year of Festival' which highlights a range of cultural events. Malaysia is actively encouraging international tourist arrivals. The real challenge is not only to increase the growth of International Tourist in numbers in arrivals to a country but it too underlying on percentage from the arrivals that keen to revisit. This is important factor in destination marketing for tourism as revisit intention save of marketing cost to attract new tourist (Opperman, 2000).

Something to wonder about, out of 78% of 24 million tourists that arrives to Malaysia in 2009, came from short-haul markets especially from neighbouring countries, 15% from medium-haul markets and only 7% from long-haul markets (Tourism Malaysia, 2009). In comparison, 43% of arrivals in Singapore were from the medium-haul markets, while 36% of arrivals in Thailand were from the long-haul markets. Revisit Intention of European tourists is crucial as competitive factor for

Malaysia. Outcome of the research later on ought to assist the stakeholder especially the travel agencies and destination promoter to recognize the faithful tourists and maintain them in the database as repeat visitors.

Malaysia is particularly reliant to the tourists from the short-haul markets that spend less in generating revenue in Malaysia versus their average spend in other neighboring destinations. This is due to the currency exchange value. Connectivity needed with long-haul markets especially European tourists who have a strong spending nature due to the currency differences (Figure 1.2). Therefore, this study examine the relationship role played by holistic image of Malaysia, quality of environment and tourist experience on revisit intention of European tourists to Malaysia.

Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), diversify over the years in liaison to other individual sectors of Malaysian economy, such as agricultural, service and industry. In the year 2008, the contribution of agricultural sectors, industry sector and service sector were 10.1%, 43.7% and 46.3% respectively (The World Fact book, 2009). Tourism contributes largely to the Malaysian service economy, by increasing the foreign exchange earnings, create employment opportunities, increase domestic savings and attract investments. Hence, it is vital to have continuous development in the tourism industry in order to survive in the highly competitive market by studying the possibility intentions to revisit of international visitors. As another similar problem was noted too, Singaporean tourists were the main contributor to Malaysia tourism revenue since many years back. Thus, this study is to determine the important factors that may enhance tourism activities and consequently to sustain the influx of Singaporean tourists in the future. Referring to Harun (2011) and Weiss (2015), it is pertinent to attract other strong market to this country especially

European market that in the past used (since 1980's) to be the only strongest market for the country.

The global economic downturn resulted from the financial crisis, the rise and fall of the world oil price, fluctuations in the exchange rate and the outbreak of influenza A (H1N1) virus caused a downward trend in tourism. In the year 2008, Asia and the Pacific region experienced a decreasing number of international tourist arrivals from growth of 9.6% in 2007 to only increase of 1.2% in 2008. Intensification in the aviation fuel prices caused an increase of tourism prices (Tourism Highlights, 2009). Therefore, precautions to mitigate the effects of the unexpected must be taken. Furthermore, most of the research carried out by experts only dwelled on attracting potential new tourists instead of focusing on intentions to revisit. Though, the costs to retain the repeaters were lower compared to cost involved in attracting new potential tourists (Um, Chon & Ro, 2006; Oppermann, 1998). In addition, the return of the tourist to a particular country is nevertheless a positive indicator of tourist satisfaction (Oppermann, 1998). So, this study is confidently essential to help formulate a strategic marketing plan to persuade international tourists to revisit Malaysia.

Furthermore, it is obviously significant as Malaysia the legacies of colonial ties, national needs and familiarity with each other with Europe especially Britain, Portugal and Holland markets. These promotion factor to increase revisit intention among European will surely shape and influence the tourist arrival and receipt for the country generally and particularly improvement in the quality of the environmental factors. Perspective to focus on European market has been agreed by the Tourism Minister himself at very recent time that the closure of four Tourism Malaysia office abroad namely in Perth (Australia), New York (United States of America),

Stockholm (Sweden) and Johannesburg (South Africa) has influence to focus shifted to the major European market such Britain, Germany and France (Bernama, 14 January 2017). The same report mentioned Malaysia Airline too has stopped its service the Stockholm, Perth, New York and Johannesburg.

In reference of statistics, in the year of 2017, the top 10 tourist source markets for Malaysia was Singapore with 12,441,713 tourist arrivals, Indonesia (2,796,570), China (2,281,666), Thailand (1,836,522), Brunei Darussalam (1,660,506), India (552,739), South Korea (484,528), Japan (392,777), Philippines (370,559), and United Kingdom (358,818) (Tourism Malaysia, 2018).

European tourists' activities in Malaysia motivated on nature, social element which differ from perspective of other major market. In long run European tourists are quality tourists to Malaysia from the point of awareness given by them in treating environment of Malaysia. This attitude of European tourists sinks well with sustainability purpose which lies in the quality of environmental factor in this study.

In 1999, Malaysia Tourism Board has come out with a campaign known as "Malaysia Truly Asia", and it has successfully brought in over 7.9 million of tourists into Malaysia and receipts around RM 12.3 billion revenue and the revenue and tourist arrival number are keep increasing year by year (refer to Table 1.1). The number of international tourist arrivals compared to domestic tourism is extremely important for new employment creation and domestic value chains, especially in developed economies. However, the economic development potential in the tourism sector is generally and fondly associated with international tourism because of its capacity to generate foreign exchange and provide opportunities for the transfer of capital and knowledge. Hence, even to questioning the revisit intention of

international tourist is futile looking at nature capital that Malaysia possess. To support this, the Malaysian Minister for Tourism and Culture himself believed the depreciation of the ringgit currency value (the ringgit is close to MYR 4 for every USD 1) (Astro Awani, 11 August 2015), is beneficial to the country's tourism industry. He further quoted *"it was good for the industry as Malaysia becomes affordable destination for foreigners"* (The Straits Times, 7 August 2015). So, when the awareness of importance of revisit intention arises among stakeholder and host, the duty to safeguard and care for the environmental quality factors are even more crucial. This will not only attract European tourists to revisit Malaysia indeed to preserve the sustainably of our own biodiversity and ecological as well.

The core of any tourism product is the physical plant, which refers to the site, natural resources, facility and conditions of the physical environment, such as weather and climate (Smith, 1994). It is the physical environment that provides the basic external conditions for tourists' activities. In an era when people are under heavy pressure, one of the major motivations for travel is to avoid the resident environment and seek a site with a pleasant environment for releasing psychological stress/pressure, recovering from fatigue and relaxing the mind (Hsu et al, 2000). Therefore, environmental quality must be taken into account as an important factor in potential tourists' decision-making process, and it can have an important effect on tourism competitiveness of destinations (Mihalic, 2000). From this point of view, destinations need to maintain high environmental quality to attract tourists. However, the environments of some large tourism destination countries, such as Egypt, China and India, are deteriorating due to urbanization and industrialization. Several "traditional" environmental problems, such as garbage disposal and water pollution, still threaten the sustainable development of these areas. Meanwhile, the problem of

haze pollution has risen in recent years, and air quality has become a universal concern (Coxhead & Jayasuriya 2010).

For all that reasons highlighted in above section (problem statement), subsequently this research will determine the task to boost the annual receipt for the country through repeat tourist from Europe. Also, deprived of addressing the environmental qualities issue the aim to achieve this is questionable in European market perspective especially.

1.4   Research Objectives

Corresponding to each research question, the research objective is being addressed below:

1) To study the relationship between holistic images (HI) and the quality of environment factors (QEF).

2) To investigate the relationship between the quality of environment factors (QEF) on the revisit intentions of European tourists to revisit Malaysia (IRIE).

3) To find the relationship between the qualities of environment factors (QEF) on the tourist experience (TE).

4) To find the relationship between tourist experience (TE) on the revisit intentions of European tourists to revisit Malaysia (IRIE).

5) To determine the mediating effect of tourist experience (TE) of Europeans tourists on the relationship between the quality of environment factors (QEF) and their revisit intentions (IRIE) to Malaysia.

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions of the current research are as follows:-

1. Do holistic images (HI) influence the quality of environmental factors (QEF)?

2. Does quality of environmental factors (QEF) influence intended revisit intention (IRIE)?

3. Does quality of environmental factors (QEF) influence tourist experience (TE)?

4. Does tourist experience (TE) influence revisit intention (IRIE)?

5. Does tourists' experience (TE) have the mediating effect on the relationship between the quality of environmental factors (QEF) and the revisit intention (IRIE)?

1.6 Research Hyphotheses

Parallel to each research question and the research objective that addressed above, the hyphotheses for the study as follows:

H1$_a$: Holistic images (HI) have influence on the quality of environmental factors (nature - QEFN)

H1$_b$: Holistic images (HI) have influence on the of quality of environmental factors (social - QEFS)

H1$_c$: Holistic images (HI) have influence on the of quality environmental factors (man-made - QEFM)

H2$_a$: The quality of environmental factor (nature - QEFN) has an influence on the intended revisit intention (IRIE)

H2$_b$: The quality of environmental factor (social - QEFS) has an influence on the intended revisit intention (IRIE)

H2$_c$: The quality of environmental factor (man-made – QEFM) has an influence on the intended revisit intention (IRIE)

H3$_a$: The quality of environmental factors (nature - QEFN) has influence on the tourist experience (TE)

H3$_b$: The quality of environmental factors (social - QEFS) has influence on the tourist experience (TE)

H3$_c$: The quality of environmental factors (man-made – QEFM) has influence on the tourist experience (TE)

H4: Tourists experience (TE) has an influence on the revisit intention (IRIE)

H5$_a$: Tourists experience (TE) has mediating influence between the qualities of environmental factors (nature - QEFN) and the revisit intention (IRIE)

H5$_b$: Tourists experience (TE) has mediating influence between the qualities of environmental factors (social - QEFS) and the revisit intention (IRIE)

H5$_c$: Tourist experience (TE) has a mediating influence between the quality of environmental factors (man-made - QEFM) and the revisit intention (IRIE)

1.7   Scope of the study

The scope of the study was confined to the tourism industry in Malaysia. The study focuses about revisit intention in tourism industry. The study intends to understand how revisit intention of tourist in related to environment quality factors namely nature, social and man-made. The application holistic image of Malaysia among tourist and the causal relationship between qualities of environment factors is identified. The role of tourist experience as a mediator between environment quality and their willingness to revisit Malaysia is analyzed. In summary, the antecedents considered in this study have a strong relevance and impact and are important additions to the literature on destination image. As in this study, three components of holistic image are considered: cognitive, affective and connotative. Inadequate literature found investigating the revisit intention linked to environment quality as predictor. The environment quality factors in the past research were deserted. So, there is a need to progress in this part in upcoming studies. Nature and social elements are frequently concomitant by means of destination attractiveness