

Segmentation of nature tourists through motivation of travel to Kuala Gandah National Elephant Conservation Centre

ABSTRACT

Segmentation of nature tourists is an important step related to tourism products planning and in formulating comprehensive tourism policy. Studies in the segmentation of nature tourism of people who visited Kuala Gandah were based on their travel motivation to recognize the affiliation among nature tourists groups. A total of 401 samples of respondents were surveyed through purposive sampling design. Multiple Discriminant Analysis (MDA) test was administered to segmentise and predict nature-tourist types. The results showed that 64% of the original cases were correctly classified and 61% of cross-validated grouped cases correctly classified. Ecotourists do not differ from other segments in terms of social-demographics and trip characteristics but had higher contributions to travel motivation attributes. Results suggest that the ecotourists are included in 'hard ecotourism', while nature escapists and comfortable naturalists in 'medium ecotourism' and passive players in 'soft ecotourism'. The results propose several implications for nature product promotion, development, and implementation of a sustainable tourism policy. Such research would help destination marketing organizations more effectively by linking environmental attributes to specific motivations.

Keyword: Nature tourists; Motivations; Segmentation; Managing implication