SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

Linking Servicescape, Tourist Satisfaction and Overall Tour Guiding Experience: The Case of Taman Negara National Park, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This study has two key objectives. The first objective is to determine the characteristics of servicescape, while the second is to investigate the impact of servicescape on tourist satisfaction and the overall tour guiding experience. The linkages are attempted on a sample of 385 local and foreign visitors to Taman Negara National Park (TNNP) through the application of exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression. The experimental results show that: (a) there are five characteristics of servicescape in the TNNP, and (b) servicescape has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction and the overall tour guiding experience. The theoretical and managerial consequences of the findings of the study are presented and recommendations have been made for researches in the future.

Keywords: Servicescape, Tour Guide, Satisfaction, Experience, Malaysia.

INTRODUCTION

The service environment is a vital feature that moulds customer experience and affects customer satisfaction (Ezeh & Harris, 2007). This important function of the service environment was identified in the Seventies by Kotler (1973), and the term 'servicescape' was later coined in the nineties by Bitner (1992). Namasivayam and Mattila (2007) indicated that the aim of servicescape manipulation is to draw out feelings of contentment that create satisfaction in customers. This is an important aim within the context of

tourism because customers spend a lot of time in the neighbourhood or area (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996). Tourist satisfaction is particularly crucial for those involved in the tourism sector if they hope to survive the competition in a very challenging market (Meng *et al.*, 2008).

According to previous studies into services management and marketing, customer satisfaction is the result of how a customer perceives the value received (Hallowell, 1996); perceived quality and perceived value are regarded as being among the top ranking factors that determine customer satisfaction as a whole (Fornell *et al*., 1996). In the context of the service environment, particularly in tourism, the perceived quality of servicescape may play a key role in moulding a tourist's experience, which ultimately determines the tourist's satisfaction (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1995). A review of the available literature has revealed that numerous research has been conducted in an effort to understand service-oriented concepts (e.g., quality, value, and satisfaction) in the context of tourism (Hutchinson *et al*., 2009). However, the concepts and theories on consumer behaviours such as expectancy-disconfirmation theory, value creation process and value outcomes need to be enhanced by the introduction of new variables and/or a modified structure (Gummerus, 2013; Oh *et al*., 2002; Oh & Parks, 1997). As such, it is of crucial importance that the effects of servicescape

and customer satisfaction, as well as other service-oriented values such as guiding service and tour guiding experience be investigated to ensure that a consolidated service orientation is able to provide a complete service value to the customer.

According to Kwortnik (2008), research on servicescape has mainly been in the retail industry but seldom in the tourism industry. This is also the opinion of Namasivayam and Mattila (2007). The research on servicescape has helped managers to improve on features that were found to be lacking (Ezeh & Harris, 2007). Wakefield and Blodgett (1996) emphasised that the tourism industry depends heavily on servicescape to evoke the level of arousal or excitement that customers desire to experience. Thus, it is necessary to plan and manage the design of a servicescape properly so as to ensure that tourists have a positive experience. A poor servicescape can negatively affect the disposition of a tourist, which in turn will have an impact on tourist satisfaction, and in the end, the service staff will have to work harder to boost the tourist's mood (Namasivayam & Mattila, 2007).

In tourism, the main benefit that the tourist seeks is a unique experience, while the functional benefits (e.g., food, accommodation, goods) are secondary (Kwortnik, 2008). Thus, it appears that the design of a service environment can determine the kind of experience that the tourists have. Wakefield and Blodgett (1995) discovered experimentally that the quality of servicescape, which

determines the enjoyment derived from watching sports matches, influences a customer's decision to continue visiting a stadium. They learned that a stadium needs to take into account crowding, space and aesthetic variables that have effects on the satisfaction of spectators with regard to the servicescape because these variables influence their enjoyment of the game (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1995). A study by Kwortnik (2008) proved that servicescape can be used in a cruise to determine tourist emotions, experience and behaviour. In addition, the importance of the characteristics and aspects of servicescape obviously differ for each service because of the different target audiences (Ezeh & Harris, 2007). This highlights the need to identify the characteristics in national parks, which are becoming more popular among tourists that have yet to be examined on a wide scale. Moreover, Namasivayam and Mattila (2007) also regretted the fact that there is very little information available on the relationship between servicescape and service encounter satisfaction. Therefore, this study aims to bridge that gap by investigating the impacts of servicescape on tourist satisfaction and the tour guiding experience as a whole.

The Taman Negara National Park (TNNP) is popular with tourists because of its tropical rainforest, which happens to be one of the oldest rainforests in the world. Tourists are generally attracted by the natural scenery and wildlife available in national parks (Okello &

Yerian, 2009). The servicescape is a vital element required by tour guides if they are to provide interpretation services (Yamada, 2011). An appropriate and properly designed servicescape is highly significant and essential for a guided tour experience. This is supported by earlier studies within the context of tour guiding (e.g., Geva & Goldman, 1991; Black *et al.*, 2001; Ruiqi & Pritchard, 2009), which confirms that the guiding service can only take place when there is a destination to explain to tourists. More studies must be carried in view of the importance of how visitors perceive TNNP. The likely prospects of this industry should not be overlooked because TNNP is a popular tourist destination and it is the first national park to be set up in Malaysia. Therefore, this study suggests that servicescape is an important factor in determining tourists' satisfaction with tour guiding experience as a whole in TNNP.

Chui *et al.* (2010) examined the characteristics of tourists' experiences and servicescape in TNNP. The study classified the activities selected according to different tourists' features and assessed their satisfaction with regard to the servicescape of TNNP. Although their study focused on the aspects that were assessed, it failed to mention the characteristics that were included in the assessment. In addition, the study excluded the flora and fauna from its assessment of the servicescape, although this is the main attraction of the park. Thus, this study examined the elements

that should be included when assessing tourist perception concerning the quality of the servicescape of TNNP. By gaining knowledge about the characteristics of servicescape, the management is able to focus on those issues that influence tourists' perception of the park. Tourists' perception is moulded by the service they encounter, and ultimately tourists' perception influences their satisfaction (Chi & Qu, 2008). Therefore, this study is aimed at examining two key objectives, namely, to examine the servicescape characteristics at the TNNP, and to explore the relationship between servicescape, tourist satisfaction and the overall tour guiding experience. To be more precise, this study examined: (a) the relationship between servicescape and tourist satisfaction, (b) the relationship between servicescape and tourist satisfaction with tour guiding services, and (c) the relationship between servicescape and the overall tour guiding experience.

This paper is arranged into five sections. The next section gives a review of past literature on servicescape, tour guiding and tourist satisfaction. This is followed by a description of the methodology, measures and data analysis employed in this study. The next section presents a discussion of the results and findings. The last section is the conclusion, which is comprised of the theoretical and practical implications, and recommendations for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Servicescape

Servicescape refers to the manipulation of the service environment by service operators to induce customer satisfaction (Bitner, 1992). Rosenbaum and Massiah (2011) believe that Bitner (1992) came up with servicescape aspects that have been among the most extensively applied by researchers. Bitner (1992) emphasised that differences exist in each industry or even between the services inside the same industry because of the various target markets and therefore, the attractions of each servicescape also vary. Thus, it is suggested that researchers have to make suitable changes to those aspects that are considered as appropriate for the industry or services being assessed. However, many researchers regard the aspects developed by Bitner (1992) as the key aspects that can usually be applied to many service settings (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011).

The classification of the servicescape aspects and characteristics must incorporate both tangible and intangible components, which are necessary to obtain a satisfactory experience from the services provided (Hoffman & Turley, 2002). The aspects identified for this study are listed in Table 1. Bitner (1992) proposed three aspects of servicescape that are usually applicable across a variety of fields. First, the ambient aspect is comprised of mostly intangible components which are, however, noted in our subconscious; for instance, the playing of music in a café to put customers in a more relaxed mood. Second, the space

and function aspect is there to stimulate us visually. For instance, the tables in a restaurant are meticulously arranged so as to enable customers to enjoy some measures of privacy while having their meal. Third, the signs, symbols and artefacts aspect concerns with references or signs provided to explain the functions of or directions to particular sites (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011). For instance, a sign that gives the history of a building, a sign that points the direction to the meeting room, or a board listing out the actions that are permitted and those that are prohibited at the site.

Other than the above aspects, this study discovered that another aspect that is highly appreciated in a national park setting is cleanliness (Chui *et al.*, 2010). This aspect was considered by Wakefield and Blodgett (1994) when they investigated the servicescape of stadiums. The cleanliness of the facilities and surroundings at the park can be easily assessed by visitors and this has an influence on the tourist's perception and satisfaction. In addition, this study also included the wildlife aspect. It has been established that the flora and fauna in national parks are significant attractions that have an effect on tourist satisfaction (Okello & Yerian, 2009; Chui *et al.*, 2010). Plants are also included in the assessment of the aspect because distinctive plants in the park are broadly mentioned in the park leaflets.

TABLE 1
Aspects of Servicescape

References	Servicescape Aspects	Example of Components
Bitner (1992)	Ambience	weather, temperature, air quality, noise, music, odour
	Space and function	layout, equipment, furnishings
	Signs, symbols and artefacts	signage, personal artefacts, style of décor
Wakefield and Blodgett (1996)	Facility cleanliness	clean setting and environment, clean carpets and floors
-	Flora and fauna	wildlife, plants

Tour Guides

Tour guides are especially important in national parks because they ensure the safety of tourists while jungle trekking (Yamada, 2011). Tour guides can simultaneously provide a meaningful explanation of the surroundings such as on the beliefs and practices of those living in the jungle, and teach the tourists concerning the plants and animals found there (Randall & Rollins, 2009). Ap and Wong (2001) hypothesised that tour guides have innumerable tasks, which include explaining strange sights, settling problems, ensuring the safety of tourists and building interpersonal ties within a tour group. Other attributes of tour guides that have been determined by research are that they need to be responsible, alert, well-informed and friendly (e.g., Zhang & Chow, 2004; Black

& Weiler, 2005; Yamada, 2011). All these characteristics are factors that contribute to tourists' satisfaction with their tour guides.

Zhang and Chow (2004) mentioned that tour guides are able to provide either a satisfactory or unsatisfactory tour experience, and they also recognised that satisfied tourists eventually attract more tourists but that dissatisfied tourists would make negative comments that could drive tourists away from these destinations. Studies have confirmed that tour guides have positive impacts on tourist satisfaction with guiding experience (Zhang & Chow, 2004; Black & Weiler, 2005; Peake *et al.*, 2009; Huang *et al.,* 2010; Yamada, 2011). Other than the role of tour guides in influencing tourist satisfaction, Bowie and Chang (2005) stated that other variables, namely customer expectation, attitude and behaviour also influenced tourists' satisfaction with regard to the guiding package. What is remarkable is that very few researchers have mentioned the role servicescape plays in influencing tourists' satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience.

Overend (2012) proposed that the design of tourist sites is vital to the creation of a successful tour experience. Tour guides need to work together with the site management to provide a decent tourist experience and consequently a positive tourists' satisfaction. While many studies have been conducted to investigate the impacts of the performance of tour guides on tourists' satisfaction, very few studies have been aimed at assessing the influence of servicescape on tourists' satisfaction. Furthermore, Yamada (2011) suggested that training should be provided for tour guides to enhance their knowledge about a destination, and this proposal clearly indicates how important a tourist destination is to tour guiding.

Tourist Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is defined as the contentment that comes from the pleasure of experiencing a product or service (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003). Ekinci and Sirakaya (2004) explained that tourist satisfaction is measured by customers according to their experience and expectation of a service. Satisfaction can be aroused by behaviour, emotion and equity (Bowen & Clarke, 2002). Research on customers' satisfaction is essential for service providers because satisfied customers are potentially loyal customers as they will continue patronising the same service operators, or they are great marketing tools for publicising the service by word of mouth (Chi & Qu, 2008). In addition, studies have been carried out to measure tourists' satisfaction with tour packages in order to examine the factors that influence tourists' satisfaction in guided package tours (Bowie & Chang, 2005); to ascertain and compare the satisfaction experienced by tourists from guided and non-guided tours (Poudel & Nyaupane, 2013); and to explore the connection between tour guide performance and tourist satisfaction (Huang *et al.*, 2010), and so on. Despite the various factors that have been studied, only

a few research has examined servicescape as a variable for tourists' satisfaction with the services of tour guides.

The term 'overall satisfaction' is used to assess tourist satisfaction with regard to other services or factors in relation to experiencing a product or service. For instance, McDowall (2010) carried out a study on tourists' satisfaction in terms of tourist visits to Bangkok. They discovered that a number of components within the industry (e.g., hygiene, sightseeing, shopping, price) contribute to the enhancement of tourist satisfaction. There are diverse subsectors in tourism that influence tourist satisfaction with a service or destination. Chi and Qu (2008) discovered that tour operators, transportation and food have an impact on the overall satisfaction with a tour package. This study focused on the servicescape of a national park and its impact on tourist satisfaction with regard to the servicescape, the performance of the tour guide and the overall tour guiding experience.

METHODOLOGY

Sample and Procedure

For this experimental research, the data were collected by means of self-administered questionnaires from visitors to TNNP. TNNP, which is located in Kuala Tahan, Pahang, is one of the most ancient tropical rainforests in the world (WWF Malaysia, 2003). It is a massive park covering an area of 4,343 square kilometres across Pahang, Kelantan and Terengganu. It can be reached by various modes of transportation, and the park provides accommodation, facilities and amenities for tourists. The targeted site for the study was at the main entrance to TNNP in Kuala Tahan, Pahang, which, according to the statistics on visitors, receives the most number of visitors compared to all the other entrances. In order to obtain a balanced opinion, the targeted population for this study were both local and foreign tourists who had experienced the services of tour guides in TNNP.

Measures

This study made use of multiple item scales obtained from various established sources in the literature. The survey questionnaire was made up of two sections as follows: questions to assess the concepts of servicescape, tourist satisfaction, and the overall tour guiding experience; and the questions that were formulated to elicit information on frequency of tourist visits and demographics. Servicescape was measured in terms of the five aspects stated in the literature review, namely, ambience, space and function, sign, symbol and artefacts (Bitner, 1992), cleanliness (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994), and flora and fauna. Then, a total of 21 characteristics were categorised according to the aspects concerned. Ten attributes were modified from earlier studies on national parks (Lee & Chen, 2005), tour guide interpretations (Chen *et al.,* 2006), and hot spring recreation areas (Lee, 2010). The rest of the attributes were constructed from the publicity materials

and the feedback received from the officers of TNNP. The American Consumer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), which was developed by Fornell *et al.* (1996), was used to measure tourists' satisfaction. Huang *et al.* (2010) also employed this model in their study. Tourists' satisfaction with servicescape, tourists' satisfaction with tour guide services, and tourists' satisfaction with the overall tour guiding experience were measured specifically by using 3 items for each of the concepts developed by Fornell *et al.* (1996) and Huang *et al.* (2010). However, the items were adapted somewhat to fit the context of the research.

Since it was estimated that there were 41,000 guided tour tourists in TNNP, therefore, according to the calculation of sample size by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sample population of 381 people was required for this study. The purposive sampling method was used for this study because only tourists who had employed the services of tour guides were deemed to be appropriate as the respondents. Hence, with the assistance of tour guides and the employees of TNNP, 500 questionnaires were given out to tourists who had experienced the services of tour guides. The data were analysed by using the SPSS, whereby the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with VARIMAX rotation was used to confirm the servicescape aspects. Then, the research questions with regard to servicescape relations were answered by means of linear regression analysis.

Reliability

A pilot test was carried out at the Kuala Tahan entrance to the national park to ensure the reliability of the measurement and to determine the internal consistency. Forty completed questionnaires were returned. The reliability of the measurements was ascertained by means of a reliability analysis using SPSS. The results indicated that all the concepts were above the proposed value, i.e., > 0.08. Cronbach's alpha values for the factors were high, while the servicescape value was 0.91, satisfaction with guiding service value was 0.95, satisfaction with servicescape value was 0.88, and satisfaction with the overall tour guiding experience value was 0.96.

Data Analysis

A descriptive analysis was performed using SPPS analysis. The reliability of the internal consistency was evaluated according to the reliability analysis using SPSS. Following that, an exploratory factor analysis was performed to ascertain the characteristics of servicescape. Finally, multiple regression was carried out to explore the connections between the concepts being studied.

RESULTS

A total of 385 tourists or roughly 77% of the targeted population took part in this study. According to the results of the descriptive analysis, 54% of them were foreign tourists, while 46% were local tourists, indicating that more foreign

tourists, who employed the services of tour guides, were attracted to the park. Almost 57% of the tourists are males and 43% are females, implying that male tourists are more interested in visiting the park. Meanwhile, 40% of the respondents aged between 30 to 49 years, 42% aged below 29 years, and 19% aged above 50 years at the time of the study.

The park attracted more single tourists because according to the data, 66% of the tourists were not married. As mentioned earlier, the reliability coefficients of the measurements for the variables were ascertained by means of Cronbach's alpha calculation in SPSS (DeVellis, 2003). The reliabilities and loadings of the servicescape are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Servicescape Items (n=385)

Factor/ Item	M^a	SD	Loadings
Sign, symbol and artefacts			
(Cronbach's alpha = 0.95)			
The park has distinctive interpretative signboards.	3.80	0.83	0.94
The park has adequate warning signals.	3.83	0.86	0.92
The park has adequate interpretative signboards.	3.79	0.89	0.91
The park has easily identifiable interpretative signboards.	3.90	0.77	0.87
Cleanliness			
(Cronbach's alpha = 0.86)			
The river in the park is clean.	4.25	0.71	0.84
The facilities in the park are clean.	4.24	0.64	0.81
There are sufficient trash cans in the park.	3.94	1.00	0.81
The trails in the park are clean.	4.23	0.60	0.78
The toilets in the park are clean.	3.97	0.81	0.72
Flora and fauna			
(Cronbach's alpha = 0.87)			
The park has a range of wildlife.	4.48	0.52	0.85
The park has a variety of birds.	4.30	0.51	0.79
The park has a variety of plants.	4.42	0.56	0.79
The park has a variety of insects.	4.45	0.50	0.78
Wildlife can be viewed easily in the park.	4.32	0.50	0.62
Space and function			
(Cronbach's alpha = 0.82)			
The park has scenic trails.	4.21	0.78	0.78
The park has adequate facilities.	4.03	0.95	0.72
The park has adequate trail signs.	3.92	1.03	0.68
The park has adequate recreation facilities.[b]	4.08	0.77	0.46
Ambience			
(Cronbach's alpha = 0.84)			
The park has a pleasant climate.	4.30	0.49	0.85
The park has a well-maintained natural landscape.	4.43	0.49	0.84
The park has good air quality.	4.46	0.49	0.69
Total Cronbach's alpha = 0.88			

[a]Scale: 5 = Strongly Agree, 1 = Strongly Disagree
[b]Item removed.

From the table, it can be seen that the aspects of servicescape carried the anticipated alpha values of more than 0.8, which are considered to be good alpha values (George & Mallery, 2003). The characteristics that were distributed appropriately in the various aspects were verified by EFA as being reliable. This also confirmed that the *flora and fauna* aspect as a critical factor in the TNNP servicescape. One item, (*the park has adequate recreational facilities)*, was excluded from the space and function aspect because its factor loading (0.461) was different from the factor loading of between 0.60 and 0.80 of the other characteristics. Due to variations in the factor loading and the fact that the characteristic could be considered to be the same as *the park has adequate facilities*, the authors decided to remove the item. The rest of the 20 characteristics in the servicescape revealed that the Cronbach's alpha was 0.89, which showed good reliability and so did all the aspects.

Each aspect was arranged according to the loading of its items to denote the importance of the aspect (Brown, 2009).

The priority factor in the list was the *sign, symbol and artefacts* aspect, which could be an indication that the tourists would value a servicescape with good signages for directions and information concerning the park. However, the mean (below 4 = Agree) of the items in this aspect was the lowest among all the aspects, indicating that the tourists did not have favourable opinions of the park with regard to this factor. Then, *cleanliness, flora and fauna,* and *space and function* were listed according to their importance in the servicescape of the park. Respondents had average views regarding following the items: '*There are sufficient trash cans in the park*', '*The toilets in the park are clean*' and '*The park has adequate trail signs*'. This shows that the park authorities will need to take steps to improve the cleanliness of the park and the direction signs in the park. *Ambience* was the least important factor; this perhaps indicates that the tourists are not very concerned about the climate, natural landscape and air quality given the fact that they are in natural surroundings.

TABLE 3
Reliability analysis of Tourists' Satisfaction (*n=385)*

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	*M*	*SD*
Satisfaction with Guide Services	3	0.72	4.27	1.31
Satisfaction with Servicescape	3	0.78	4.14	1.51
Satisfaction with the Overall Tour Guiding Experience	3	0.76	4.25	1.23

Table 3 gives the results of the reliability analysis of the measurements on tourists' satisfaction. The measurement

used for the three variables was considered to be reliable, where the alpha value for each variable was above 0.7. Thus, the

results shown in Tables 2 and 3 prove that the internal consistency of each concept is supported. The mean of each satisfaction was also found to be more than 4, indicating that the tourists were pleased with their tour guides, the servicescape and their overall tour guiding experience.

TABLE 4
Linear regression analysis of servicescape as the independent variable (*n = 385)*

	Satisfaction with servicescape	Satisfaction with guiding service	Satisfaction with overall tour guiding experience
Unstandardized coefficients: beta			
(Constant)	3.186	7.15	6.445
Servicescape	0.106	0.06	0.072
Unstandardized coefficients: std. error			
(Constant)			
Servicescape	0.615	0.606	0.542
Standardized coefficients: *Servicescape*	0.007	0.007	0.006
F	0.610	0.432	0.513
p	227.218	88.037	137.038
R²	0.000	0.000	0.000
	0.372	0.187	0.264

Table 4 presents the findings on the impacts of servicescape on the individual's satisfaction. According to the table, servicescape is an important variable in each of the satisfactions ($p<0.001$). The relationship between servicescape and satisfaction with servicescape was found to be positive (β = 0.610), whereby a higher positive perception of the servicescape resulted in a higher satisfaction with servicescape ($R^2 = 0.372$). As predicted, this is attributed to the direct relationship between the independent and dependent variables. In addition, the servicescape also had a positive impact on satisfaction with the guide services (β =0.432) and satisfaction with the overall tour guiding experience (β =0.513). It was found to have a smaller impact on satisfaction with guide services ($R^2 = 0.187$) in contrast to satisfaction with the overall tour guiding experience ($R^2 = 0.264$). Nevertheless, servicescape is a significantly important determinant of tourist satisfaction with guide services. It also plays an important role in moulding and determining tourist satisfaction with regard to the overall tour guiding experience.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study experimentally examined the relationship between servicescape and tourists' satisfaction with the overall tour guiding experience at TNNP in Malaysia. Based on the findings, there are five factors or characteristics of the servicescape

quality in TNNP: signs, symbols and artefacts, cleanliness, flora and fauna, space and functions, and ambience. The results have proven that the Flora and Fauna characteristic is definitely an important aspect that demands special attention from the management of TNNP. As such, the verification of the new aspect, flora and fauna, and the positive feedback from the tourists with regard to the characteristics indicate that most tourists focus on this factor and that presently the park is able to meet their expectations. As such, it is up to the authorities to ensure that they are able to maintain the park and protect it from illegal deforestation and hunting because the flora and fauna are vital assets and attractions in the tourism sector. On the other hand, the park authorities need to take measures to improve the management with regard to the cleanliness and put up more signages.

The findings of this study strongly support the concept that servicescape has a direct influence on tourists' satisfaction. The experimental results also verify that servicescape is a factor that affects tourist satisfaction with servicescape, guide services and the overall tour guiding experience, indicating that the impact of servicescape on tourist satisfaction with servicescape is a further acknowledgement of the importance of servicescape in the context of tourism destinations.

The results with regard to the positive relationship between servicescape and tourists' satisfaction with guide services and the overall the tour guiding experience support the proposal that the servicescape is a crucial factor that influences tourists' satisfaction during the exchange of services (Namasivayam & Mattila, 2007). As mentioned by Reimer and Kuehn (2005), providers of hedonic services should pay more attention to the quality of the servicescape. Tourists generally have a positive opinion of the park except for the issues that are related to the signages in the park and cleanliness. Similarly, Chui *et al.* (2010) reported poor levels of satisfaction with regard to the hygiene and signages in TNNP. As such, the park authorities must correct these matters and take steps to improve the perception of tourists concerning the park in the future.

Furthermore, as suggested by Reimer and Kuehn (2005), servicescape is also an indication of satisfaction with other services. The findings can increase the awareness of tour guides and park authorities on the importance of servicescape with regard to tourists' experience. Although guided tours and other services in relation to a tour guided experience are factors that have impacts on tourists' satisfaction with guide services and the overall tour guiding experience (Huang *et al.*, 2010), the findings prove that servicescape is also a factor that determines satisfaction. Tour guides should not ignore the quality of servicescape when providing their services because tourists may measure the quality of the tour guides according to

the conditions in the park. Therefore, tour guides should ensure that the conditions at a particular destination are positive, so that tourists are able to have a pleasurable travel experience as well. Obviously, a pleasurable environment is essential in any travel experience because the quality of the surroundings could ultimately impact tourists' overall experience (Kwortnik, 2008). Finally, the park authorities could use the findings to enhance the quality of their servicescape.

This study had certain constraints; one of which was that the amount of time spent by the respondents with the tour guides in the park was not determined. There might be discrepancies in the satisfactions caused by the length of time spent at the park. Moreover, although the study showed that flora and fauna are important components of the servicescape at the national park, the study was only carried out in one park. Other factors could also possibly influence the quality of the servicescape at other national parks. Thus, it is recommended that studies be carried out in the future to compare the variations in tourists' satisfaction with regard to the different periods of time spent by tourists in the park. Further research should also be carried out at various national parks, such as geoparks or marine parks, in order to discover more servicescape characteristics that have effects on tourists' perception and satisfaction.

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