



***VISITOR'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS CONSERVATION IN NATIONAL  
ELEPHANT CONSERVATION CENTRE (NECC), KUALA GANDAH,  
PAHANG***

**MOHD ASYRAF BIN ABDULLAH**

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**MOHD ASYRAF BIN ABDULLAH**

**FACULTY OF FORESTRY  
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my beloved family especially for my father Abdullah Mad Ali, my mother Halimah Md Ali and people who are special to me for being my strength and always supporting me throughout my study. Without their love and support, this project would not have been made possible.

## ABSTRACT

National Elephant Conservation Centre (NECC) has become one of the popular destinations for eco-tourism. With the availability of various facilities and services provided, visitors who come to the NECC expect the quality of experience gained not to be forgotten. The study aimed to determine the visitors' perception towards conservation services provided at the National Elephant Conservation Centre (NECC), Kuala Gandah, Pahang. A total of 255 sets of the questionnaire were distributed to the visitors who already visited the NECC. The study also identified the socio-demographic characteristics of visitors at NECC, Kuala Gandah. Most of the visitors were satisfied with the services in NECC, but the level of satisfaction can be increased if the management of the centre needs to create more activities according to conservation concept that can improve knowledge and awareness among the visitors.

## ABSTRAK

Pusat Pemuliharaan Gajah Kebangsaan (NECC) telah menjadi salah satu destinasi popular untuk pelancongan eko-pelancongan. Dengan adanya pelbagai kemudahan dan perkhidmatan yang disediakan, pengunjung yang datang ke NECC menjangkakan kualiti pengalaman tidak dapat dilupakan. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menentukan persepsi pelawat terhadap perkhidmatan pemuliharaan yang disediakan di Pusat Pemuliharaan Gajah Kebangsaan (NECC), Kuala Gandah, Pahang. Sejumlah 255 set soal selidik diedarkan kepada pengunjung yang telah melawat NECC. Kajian ini juga mengenal pasti ciri sosio-demografi pelawat di NECC, Kuala Gandah. Kebanyakan pengunjung berpuas hati dengan perkhidmatan di NECC, tetapi tahap kepuasan dapat ditingkatkan jika pengurusan pusat perlu mewujudkan lebih banyak aktiviti mengikut konsep pemuliharaan yang dapat meningkatkan pengetahuan dan kesedaran di kalangan pengunjung

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Last but not least, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all of those who are not mentioned here that has helped me during this whole journey.

Thanks

## APPROVAL SHEET

I certify that this research project entitled “Visitor’s Perception towards Conservation in National Elephant Conservation Centre (NECC), Kuala Gandah, Pahang” by Mohd Asyraf Bin Abdullah, has been examined and approved as a partial fulfilment of the rudiments for the degree of Bachelor of Forestry Sciences in the Faculty of Forestry, Universiti Putra Malaysia.

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Dr. Diana Emang  
Faculty of Forestry  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
(Supervisor)

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Prof. Dr. Mohamed Zakaria Hussin  
Dean  
Faculty of Forestry  
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date: January 2019

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENT	PAGE
DEDICATION	i
ABSTRACT	ii-iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
APPROVAL SHEET	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	x
<b>CHAPTER</b>	
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	
1.1 Background and population elephant in Malaysia	1
1.2 Importance of elephant conservation in NECC	2-3
1.3 Problem statement	4
1.4 Research objectives	5
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	
2.1 Introduction	6-7
2.2 Visitor	7-8
2.3 Human-elephant conflict management	9
2.4 Visitor perception	10
2.5 Services	11
2.6 Conservation centre	11
2.7 Animal welfare	12
2.8 Legislation and agency involved to conservation	12



CHAPTER		PAGE
<b>3</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	
	3.1 Study area	15-16
	3.2 Research design framework	17-18
	3.3 Pilot study	18
	3.4 Data collection	19
	3.4.1 Questionnaire design	20-21
	3.4.2 Sampling technique	22
	3.4.3 Sampling size	23
	3.5 Data analysis	24
	3.5.1 Descriptive analysis	24
	3.5.2 Spearman correlation analysis	25
	3.5.3 Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS)	26
<b>4</b>	<b>RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS</b>	
	4.0 Introduction	27
	4.1 Descriptive analysis	
	4.1.1 Profile of visitors	28-30
	4.2 Visitors of characteristic	31
	4.2.1 Respondent of have visited NECC before	31
	4.2.2 Respondent of Kuala Gandah is a best place for conservation	31
	4.3 Statistical analysis	
	4.3.1 Respondent visitor perception toward conservation services	32-34
	4.3.2 Spearman correlation coefficient	35-42
<b>5</b>	<b>CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
	5.1 Conclusion	43-44
	5.2 Recommendation	45-46
	<b>REFERENCES</b>	47-50
	<b>APPENDIX</b>	51-57

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
3.1 Likert scale	21
3.2 The strength of the correlation	25
4.0 Sicio-demographic characteristics of respondents	28
4.1 Percentage of have visited NECC before	31
4.2 Percentage of the best place for conversation	31
4.3 Percentages of each statement	32
4.4 Correlation between education level and statement B	35
4.5 Correlation between income and statement B	38
4.6 Correlation between question do you think Kuala Gandah is one of the best places with statement B	40

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
3.1	Location of National Elephant Conversation Centre, Kuala Gandah.	18
3.2	Research design framework	17
A	The picture shows the main gate of NECC, Kuala Gandah Pahang	55
B	The picture shows the activity in NECC	55
C	The picture shows the elephants (Selendang and Elley), a victim of the trap in the plantation area.	56
D	The picture shows the tourist enjoyed by watching elephant with near distance.	56
E	The picture shows a survey conducted to the visitors in the study site.	57

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DWNP	The Department of Wildlife and National Parks
CITIES	The Convention on International Trade and Endangered Species.
NECC	National Elephant Conservation Centre
WWF	World Wildlife Federation
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PERHILITAN	The Department of Wildlife and Natural Park Peninsular Malaysia
IEF	The Global Elephants Establishment
ECTU	The Elephants Capture and Translocation
PWA	The Protection of Wildlife
$r_s$	Correlation / rho
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science
%	Per cent
>	More than
<	Less than
=	Equal

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background and population elephant in Malaysia

Found in Asia and Africa, the elephant is the biggest terrestrial warm-blooded animal. It is under the Elephantidae family within the Proboscidea. The Asian elephants can grow as tall as 2.5 to 3 m at the shoulder and weigh up to 5,000 kg. Only the males have tusks. At the starting of the 20th century, more than 100,000 Asian elephants may have existed. Whereas an exact population of Asian elephant cannot be estimated exactly, it is assessed that between 30,000 and 50,000 Asian elephants are remaining.

An estimate puts the Peninsular Malaysia elephant population at 1,220 - 1,460. This based on information collected by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), Peninsular Malaysia through its inventory and observing programs from 2000 to 2002. The Taman Negara National Park holds the most significant elephant population in Peninsular Malaysia with at 290 – 350 elephants.

## 1.2 Importance of elephant conservation in NECC

Anthropogenic activities such as forest degradation, exploitation and habitat destruction can be associated with the increase in human populations. This situation degrades the natural habitat of the Asian elephants making finding food sources became more difficult for this animal. As a result, elephants were found in plantations and villages, looking for food to survive, thus creating human-animal conflict.

Today, the population of these animals has significantly reduced and become one of the endangered wildlife species on earth. Human-elephant conflict is a big topic that discusses damages that had been done by the animals. In the area where human-elephant conflict is critical, elephants are seen as a threat to the human. This is because to elephants raid crops and cause property damage that make humans do not regard elephants as good neighbours. For safety reasons, humans tend to kill this animal that gives threaten to them. In the 1980s, elephant poaching was at a high demand. In that time, elephants were recorded under Appendix II by CITES (the Convention on International Trade and Endangered Species). Under Appendix II, species are not debilitated by eradication, but rather their exchange expects control to avoid using that would meddle with their survival.

The Global Elephant Establishment (IEF) is a non-benefit organisation of people and foundations devoted to the protection of African and Asian Elephants around the world. According to The Global Elephant

Establishment, (2017), in 1998, frustrated by the lack of funding available for elephant conservation and research efforts, Michael Fouraker, Executive Director of the Fort Worth Zoo envisioned an elephant foundation that would provide funds and expertise to worthy projects. The mission of the IEF is to help and work elephant conservation, and training programs in oversight offices and in the wild, with an accentuation on administration, security and relevant research. Since 1999, IEF has offered help to more than 120 elephant preservation ventures worldwide, and we are moving toward \$5 million in coordinate money-related advice.

IEF is an association working persistently and effectively for the conservation of elephants. It has a demonstrated reputation and is a great decision to get reserves for the advantage of elephants. More than 85% of the considerable number of assets raised by IEF has gone straightforwardly to programs. Besides, no board part gets monies from IEF. Or maybe they all make noteworthy money related commitments to IEF.

Regarding the decline in the number of Asian Elephants, the National Elephant Conservation Centre (NECC), Kuala Gandah, Pahang has been established by The Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) in 1989. The centre is the home for the Elephant Capture & Translocation Unit (ECTU) that began the elephant translocation program in 1974. This unit responds to relocate this elephant from areas where the habitat had been invaded by development to safer habitat including Taman Negara National

Park. The effort on relocating 700 wild elephants has reduced the human-elephant conflict and economic loss of the country (Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment).

Other than that, the NECC also functions on trained elephants from the conflict area using the translocation exercise. Some elephants that brought from Thailand and Myanmar used in helping the captured wild elephants throughout Peninsular Malaysia for the translocation process.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

In the era of modernisation, people lack awareness to protect wildlife especially elephant because people like to hunt this big mammal to poaching the husk and get a massive amount of money.

In Malaysia, there is a conservation area for Asian elephant conducted by PERHILITAN in Kuala Gandah. No research has been done to determine the visitor's perception towards conservation services in NECC Kuala Gandah. For the time being, we can only assume that the tourists are satisfied with the conservation program including activity and functions of conservation provided by the NECC.



#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The objective of the study was to determine the visitor's perception towards conservation provided at the National Elephant Conservation Centre (NECC), Kuala Gandah, Pahang.



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