

**FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO VISITORS'
BUYING DECISION TOWARDS NATURE-BASED
TOURISM PRODUCTS: A CASE STUDY ON
KINABALU PARK, KUNDASANG**

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ABSTRACT

Nature based tourism is the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry because there is a trend towards an increased specialization among tourists. This study was conducted in Kinabalu Park, Kundasang Sabah, one of Sabah's popular vacation destinations, attracting more than 3000 tourists each year. The objective of this paper is to present findings of the factors that contribute to visitors' buying decision towards nature-based tourism products at Kinabalu Park, Kundasang, to identify the buying decision pattern for nature-based tourism products among local and international visitors, to find out how local and foreign visitors spend their leisure time and to make suggestions and recommendations to the Park and tourist authorities on how to attract more tourists to purchase the nature-based tourism product.

The findings of the study indicate that price, product, promotion and place were found to be significant factors contributing to visitors' buying decision to purchase nature-based tourism products. Respondents' variables also affecting visitors' buying decision – demographic of visitors, purchase involvement, motivational involvement and attitude towards purchasing. The profile of buying decision and buying pattern among local and international visitors in Kinabalu Park, Kundasang were examined for association with their socio-demographic and visit characteristics such as gender, age, marital status, education level, occupation, length of stay and companionship. The findings also show that the most popular activities that both local and international respondents wanted to spend during their leisure time was traveling. 68.45% of the respondents made their decision to buy nature-based tourism at Kinabalu Park, Kundasang few weeks closer to

departure of time. The result from this study could assist the Park management to better improve its quality of products and services.