

**TOURISM MARKETING IN SABAH:
A STUDY ON KINABALU PARK AS A LEISURE AND
HOLIDAY DESTINATION FOR DOMESTIC
TOURIST MARKETS**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
DISCLAIM OF LIABILITY	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABSTRACT	xi
CHAPTER 1	
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of the Study	2
1.3 Problem Statement	4
1.4 Limitations	7
1.5 Scope of the Study	8
1.6 Significance of the Study	8
1.7 Definition of Terms	8
CHAPTER 2	
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW	11
2.1 Tourism Marketing is Unique	11
2.2 Definition of Marketing	12
2.3 Marketing Orientation	14

2.4	Market Segmentation	14
2.4.1	Identifying market segments	15
2.4.2	Market Segmentation Methods	16
2.4.3	Market Segmentation Bases	17
2.5	Positioning	19
2.6	Branding	20
2.7	Marketing Planning Process	21
2.8	Overview of the Tourism Product in Sabah	22
2.9	Marketing Perspective of Tourism Product	24
2.10	The Tourist Market	26
2.11	Tourism Marketing Mix	31
2.12	The Research Framework of Tourism Marketing	32
CHAPTER 3		
3.0	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	35
3.1	Secondary Data	35
3.2	Primary Data	35
3.2.1	The Research Design	35
3.2.2	The Target Population and the Sample Size	36
3.2.3	Methods for Data Collection	37
3.2.4	Data Analysis and Interpretation	38
CHAPTER 4		
4.0	ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA	39
4.1	Frequency and Characteristics of Respondents/Visitors	39
4.1.1	Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents	39
4.2	Data Analysis and Discussion	43
4.2.1	Respondents' Awareness Towards Kinabalu Park	43
4.2.2	Respondents' Positioning Towards Kinabalu Park	49

ABSTRACT

Tourism is not only arguably the world's largest industry, it also involves the greatest flows of people on the surface of the earth. It is a major agent of change and as one of the most visible expressions of globalization. Tourists and tourism development affect almost every country. They produce impacts upon communities, environments and economies. At the same time, tourism is a source of immense enjoyment and pleasure for hundreds of million of people and creates contact and communication between peoples from different regions and cultures.

This study discusses the marketing of Kinabalu Park as a domestic tourist destination for leisure and holiday, analyzes the motivational factors underlying decisions to visit Kinabalu Park by the various existing local market segments.

The tourism industry is crucial to Sabah as the state government sees tourism as an avenue to diversify the state's economy. However, the review on the local tourist industry and its literature through the marketing plans and domestic tourism reports for the last five years (between 1995 to 1999) shows that the domestic tourist arrival to the state has not been performing very well. One of the main factors leading to this trend was the lack of awareness

from domestic market towards the various tourist destinations in Sabah particularly Kinabalu Park.

This research study has the following objectives:

- i. To market Kinabalu Park as a tourist destination to domestic arena.
- ii. To promote tourism to and within Sabah with Kinabalu Park as a catalyst.
- iii. To stimulate and position Kinabalu Park into a local tourism industry.
- iv. To profile the local tourists into several segments through lifestyle orientations and demographic behaviour.
- v. To investigate brand image strategy across the segments.
- vi. To study the selected tourists' awareness towards Kinabalu Park as a leisure and holiday destination across each cluster. This exercise will provide the researcher an in-depth data on the behaviour of the respondents with regards to the awareness dimension.
- vii. To analyze the motivational factors and recommend a strategic set of brand's campaign for domestic tourism.
- viii. As an activity characterized by goodwill, domestic tourism will promote nation-building and peace amongst the people of various ethnic and races in Malaysia. It can promote a greater respect for human life.