

# **The Moderating Role of Training on Personality and Behaviour Intention to Participate among Nature Tourist Guides**

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## **Abstract**

This paper aims to examine the moderating role of training factors in the relationship between personality and behaviour intention to participate in a career as a nature tourist guide. The survey was conducted in three (3) states, i.e. Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan, representing East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. The quantitative method with descriptive research designs has been used to explore insights in the data related to the study's objective. The data were collected using questionnaires adapted from previous studies. The sample of this research consisted of 115 respondents who attended nature tourist guide courses. Purposive sampling technique was applied, and reliability procedures were also confirmed. The survey data were analysed by descriptive and regression analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-25). The finding shows that training moderate the relationship between personality and behaviour intention to participate as a nature tourist guide in Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan. The finding of this study can be used by the relevant parties to understand the importance of training as a moderator that could influence the relationship between personality and behaviour intentions to become a nature tourist guide.

## **Keywords**

Training factors, personality, behaviour intention, nature tourist guide, ecotourism

## **1. Introduction**

In this modern economic world, tourism is one of the most important resources in the world. It has many positive and negative effects on the environment and human lives. According to Tao and Wall (2009), tourism is one of the strongest sectors globally and seldom occurs in isolation. This sector is highly dependent on the resources available globally, and natural resources become the main element in the existence and development of ecotourism (Caballero-Lascurain, 1996). In 2006, the International Ecotourism Society stated that the ecotourism sector is experiencing rapid growth at a rate of 20% - 30% per year, it is considered the fastest market compared to the tourism industry as a whole and has been well known in the international market since 1990 (Rivera and Croes, 2010). Based on the encouraging market performance, most countries worldwide begin to realise the impact of ecotourism on their country's economic development (Bhuiyan et al., 2011). Ecotourism not only benefits the economy of a country, but it is also able to improve the development and standard of living in rural communities around the ecotourism area (Weinberg et al.,

2012). Today, most developing countries have made ecotourism a focused tourism activity. Malaysia also takes this opportunity to focus on these benefits by promoting the country as an ecotourism destination that attracts tourists.

In Malaysia, Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture (MOTAC) has been given the responsibility to emphasise ecotourism issues and carry out promotional activities to boost tourist arrivals in the country that can contribute to the national income. MOTAC acts aggressively in promoting tourist attractions internationally, especially with the launch of major tourism campaigns such as "Visit Malaysia" campaign which has been organised since 1990. A similar approach has also been taken by other countries in Southeast Asia, such as Indonesia and Thailand, which focus on local ecotourism and encourage communities to get involved as ecotourism has proven to improve local communities' economic status (Abdul Halim and Omar, 2018). Razak (2015) stated that in Malaysia, several states have a wealth of natural resources, namely Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan, which have high ecotourism value. The wealth of natural resources in the region has created a variety of ecotourism activities that can contribute to local communities' income. However, according to the Ministry of Rural Development (2019), Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan recorded the highest poverty rate than other states in Peninsular Malaysia. This scenario shows that the local community does not seem to benefit from the existing ecotourism activities. The local community should receive various benefits from local ecotourism activities such as being a travel agent, restaurant, accommodation operator, and an important career for ecotourism activities, namely nature tourist guide.

### **1.1 Objectives**

This study examines the moderating role of training in the relationship between personality and behaviour intention to participate in a career as a nature tourist guide in Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Personality**

Personality is one of the most important predictive factors for job performance (Mayangsari et al., 2020; Arifin et al., 2019). However, personality is also one of the factors to predict behaviour intention (Talib et al., 2019; Arifin et al., 2019). Beer and Brooks (2011) state that personality can describe an individual's behaviour and distinguish it from others. Although a group of individuals who have similarities in terms of education, knowledge, and skills but different personalities possessed by them can make a job or behaviour better than others (Sackett et al., 2002). Furthermore, if an individual's personality is appropriate to the task or job being performed, the individual will be stable and consistent in carrying out the task or job for the required period (Denissen et al., 2011; Gerber et al., 2011).

### **2.2 Behaviour Intention to Participate**

Behaviour intention refers to the three (3) main functions: attitude, perceived behaviour control and subjective norm (Foster et al., 2020; Yusliza et al., 2020; Ginanjar et al., 2019; Supriatna et al., 2019; Manman et al., 2016). Through the theory of planned behaviour, intentions, or willingness to engage in a behaviour is a prelude to the real action (Brayley et al., 2015). Ajzen (2011) explains that intentions or willingness can be one of the benchmarks to an individual's level of readiness to perform actual behaviour. Furthermore, Ajzen (2012) also states that behaviour intentions can be an impetus to an individual's motivation to act. However, one of the earliest studies by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) states that behaviour intentions are derived from an individual's psychological literature.

### **2.3 Training**

Training is part of human resource planning once an employee reports himself or herself with an organisation. Through proper and accurate training, it can positively impact knowledge in terms of sharing and creation. According to Keng-Boon et al. (2012), training and development are the dominant practice in quality management, and it is closely related to knowledge sharing. In order to measure the effectiveness of training conducted, an evaluation of the training needs to be implemented. D'Mello (2013) states that evaluating training is seen in terms of basic understanding of the job until the behaviour change that occurs. Today, many organisations around the world make training as a part of their employees' activities. However, the contribution of training is rarely evaluated, whether it achieves its implementation objectives. Training has been seen to contribute to knowledge sharing. However, it should have a strong relationship to organisational management, infrastructure, and collaboration between employees to ensure that knowledge sharing occurs at the best level (Goh, 2002). Also, an increase in members' knowledge can occur if the organisation enhances the culture of sharing simultaneously, which will also have a positive impact on the transfer of knowledge (Syed-Ikhsan and Rowland, 2004). Thus, it shows that the importance of procedures in performing training. The management

of an organisation needs to design appropriate training modules depending on their employees' needs and provide the right workplace environment so that knowledge can be applied (Abd Rahman et al., 2013).

H1: Training moderates the relationship between personality and behaviour intention to participate in a career as a nature tourist guide in Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan.

## 2.4 Research Framework

Referring to the literature above, Figure 1 demonstrates the proposed conceptual framework for this study.

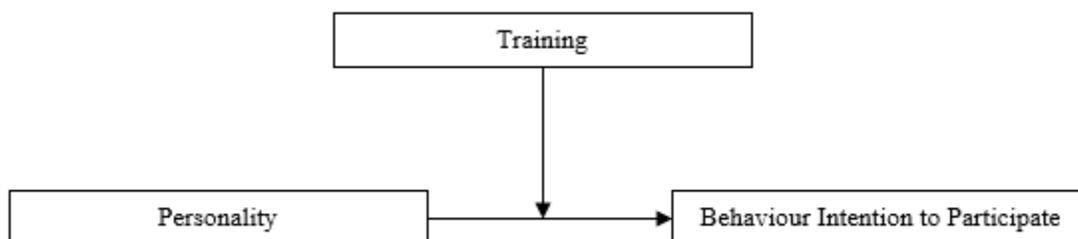


Figure 1. Research Framework

## 3. Methods

This study's data were collected from participants who attended the course to obtain a license as a nature tourist guide in Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan that represent the East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. This study uses a quantitative method. Specifically, a survey questionnaire was used to collect the required data related to this study. Data gathered using a self-administered survey. The questionnaire divided into four (4) sections: section A is on demographic profile, section B is on personality, section C is on behaviour intention to participate, and section D is on training. The measurements used in this study adapted from the prior studies. Measurement of personality has adapted from Myers and McCaulley (1985), consisting of six (6) items. The items measuring behaviour intention to participate have adapted from Van Hooft and De Jong (2009), consisting of five (5) items. The measurement of training is adapted measurement from Noe and Wilk (1993) of seven (7) items and Curry (1997) of four (4) items. Five Point Likert Scale used in the questionnaire to assess personality, behaviour intention to participate and training using a range scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The survey data analysed by descriptive and regression analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-25). The data were presented in tables. The data collected based on the respondents' availability during their participation in the course as a nature tourist guide and permission had obtained from the organisers before they answered the questionnaire.

## 4. Data Collection

A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed to nature tourist guides participants in Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan. Purposive sampling technique was employed in this study to obtain the required data. However, only 140 questionnaires were returned, and from out of the total, 25 questionnaires were rejected due to incomplete making it only 115 questionnaires used in this study. Therefore, it has been classified as a respondent's response rate of 93.3% for the current study. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), if the population involved is 150, then the appropriate sample size is 108. Therefore, 115 respondents in this study are considered sufficient as the sample size.

## 5. Results and Discussion

As stated previously, this study employed the survey design in the form of a questionnaire. Thus, before the questionnaire was spread out to the respondents, instruments need to be tested to determine if they meet validity and reliability requirements. So, in this study, the questionnaire's validity was conducted through the distribution of questionnaires to 30 players in the tourism industry. The objective is to obtain feedback related to the understanding of the questionnaire. Besides, the questionnaire was also evaluated by relevant field experts who are university lecturers. Next, Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the questionnaire's reliability to ensure that the measurement items were reliable. Questionnaires were distributed to the nature tourist guides participants in Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan. However, before the data analysis process is carried out, the data screening process is implemented to ensure that all data is clean and complete. A total of 115 questionnaires were identified as complete for the analysis process.

## 5.1 Results

The demographic profile of the respondents was tabulated based on the returned questionnaire. Table 1 represents the respondents' information by state, gender, age, marital status, education level, and household income. Respondents involved in this study are from three (3) states, and the majority are from Pahang of 69 (60.0%), followed by Terengganu of 44 (38.3%) and Kelantan of 2 (1.7%). The overall number of respondents, 92 (80.0%), was male, while 23 (20.0%) were female. In terms of age and marital status, a total of 56 (48.7%) of the respondents were aged group between 21 - 30 years and a total of 65 (56.5%) of respondents were still single. Furthermore, most of the respondents have the highest level of education which is Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) or Equivalent of 42 (36.5%) and have a household income below RM1,000 (US\$238.29) of 50 (43.5%).

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents.

Demography	Category	Number of respondents (Frequency)	Percent (%)
State	Pahang	69	60.0
	Terengganu	44	38.3
	Kelantan	2	1.7
Gender	Male	92	80.0
	Female	23	20.0
Age	Below 20 years	9	7.8
	Between 21 - 30 years	56	48.7
	Between 31 - 40 years	30	26.1
	Between 41 - 50 years	13	11.3
	Between 51 - 60 years	5	4.3
	Above 61 years	2	1.7
Marital Status	Single	65	56.5
	Married	48	41.7
	Divorced	2	1.7
Education Level	No Formal Education	6	5.2
	Form Three Assessment (PT3)/ Equivalent	11	9.6
	Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM)/ Equivalent	42	36.5
	Malaysian Higher School Certificate (STPM)/ Equivalent	6	5.2
	Diploma	30	26.1
	Bachelor's Degree	15	13.0
	Master's Degree	5	4.3
Household Income	Below RM1,000 (US\$238.29)	50	43.5
	Between RM1,001-RM1,500 (US\$238.53-US\$357.44)	28	24.3
	Between RM1,501-RM2,000 (US\$357.68-US\$476.59)	14	12.2
	Between RM2,001-RM2,500 (US\$476.83-US\$595.73)	5	4.3
	Between RM2,501-RM3,000 (US\$595.97-US\$714.88)	9	7.8
	Above RM3,000 (US\$714.88)	9	7.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>115</b>	<b>100</b>

DeVellis (2003) states that if Cronbach's Alpha's value is more than 0.70, then it is acceptable for use. Table 2 shows the results of the reliability of the instrument. In this study, an instrument used for the variable is reliable because it

has high Cronbach's Alpha value (0.705 for personality, 0.827 for behaviour intention to participate, and 0.926 for training).

Table 2. Reliability Measurement.

Variable	Item	Cronbach's Alpha
Personality	P1	0.705
	P2	
	P3	
	P4	
	P5	
	P6	
Behaviour Intention to Participate	IP1	0.827
	IP2	
	IP3	
	IP4	
	IP5	
Training	T1	0.926
	T2	
	T3	
	T4	
	T5	
	T6	
	T7	
	T8	
	T9	
	T10	
	T11	

Table 3 shows the values of Skewness and Kurtosis. Skewness and Kurtosis are used to determine the normality of the data for a study. According to Chua (2006), data is considered normal if Skewness and Kurtosis's values range from -1 and +1. For this study, the Skewness and Kurtosis values are in the recommended range, then the data are normal.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics (Skewness and Kurtosis).

Variable	Mean	Std.	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Deviation	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Personality	4.03	0.59107	-0.255	0.226	-0.725	0.447
Behaviour Intention to Participate	3.86	0.53820	-0.174	0.226	-0.021	0.447
Training	4.42	0.53565	-0.910	0.226	0.534	0.447

Table 4 shows the result of multiple regression analysis. In Table 4, Model 1 indicates a positive and significant relationship between personality and behaviour intention to participate in a career as a nature tourist guide in Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan (R square change = 0.164,  $p < 0.01$ ). The result showed that 16.4% of the dependent variable (behaviour intention to participate) variance explained by the independent variable (personality). In Model 2, it was indicated that training moderated the relationship between personality and behaviour intention to participate (R square change = 0.094,  $p < 0.01$ ).

Table 4. Model Summary of Regression Analysis.

Model	R				Change Statistics
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		R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.405 <sup>a</sup>	.164	.157	.49424	.164	22.180	1	113	.000
2	.508 <sup>b</sup>	.258	.245	.46773	.094	14.173	1	112	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Personality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Personality, Training>Personality

c. Dependent Variable: Behaviour Intention to Participate

Table 5 show that in Model 1 personality has positive and significant ( $t = 4.710$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) relationship with the behaviour intention to participate in a career as a nature tourist guide in Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan. Table 5 shows that training moderate the relationship between personality and behaviour intention to participate ( $t = 3.765$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). It shows that the related parties' training will affect individual personality and behavioural intention to participate in a career as a nature tourist guide.

Table 5. Multiple Regression Analysis Results of Standardized Beta Coefficients.

Model	Variables	Standardised Coefficients		
		Beta	t	Sig.
1	Personality	.405	4.710	.000
2	Training > Personality	.644	3.765	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Behaviour Intention to Participate

## 6. Conclusion

This study has successfully investigated the moderating role of training on personality and behaviour intention to participate in a career as a nature tourist guide in Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan. As expected, training moderate the relationship between personality and behaviour intention to participate. This study's findings would enrich the peoples, industry players, and government to understand the role of training as a moderator in influencing the behaviour intention to participate in this career. Understanding the impact of training on the personality and behaviour intention to participate will help stakeholders such as industry players and the government make possible effort to ensure career involvement as nature tourist guides increase, especially for local communities in ecotourism spots.

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