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Please provide a 500 words abstract outlining your thesis; you may wish to attach a table of contents or any other relevant material:

Lack of public awareness on the biodiversity conservation is the main cause of the biodiversity loss. This needs to be emphasized by stakeholders in the conservation effort, particularly in some major conservation areas including the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Gunung Mulu National Park (GMNP). As a result of threats such as natural catastrophes, pollution, poaching, and uncontrolled urbanisation or human development, GMNP is at risk of being inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The UNESCO status is possible to be withdrawn if the criteria of it are not maintained or degraded due to lack of emphasis on awareness of the importance of the site. However, it is still limited information on to what extent is the public aware of the importance of biodiversity conservation in GMNP and its relationship to their well-being. Thus, the study attempted to elucidate the biodiversity conservation awareness among public in GMNP and its relation to public well-being. Specifically, the aim of this study is to examine the level of awareness (knowledge, attitude, and experience) among local community and visitors in GMNP towards biodiversity conservation; to determine the relationship between local community's level of biodiversity conservation awareness and their well-being; and to examine the willingness to pay among local community and visitors for biodiversity conservation in GMNP. A mixed method, concurrent nested strategy was used where the validated questionnaire that distributed to the visitors (n=87) and local community (n=99) through online and face-to-face survey. A personal interview was conducted to the 12 key informants who are professionals, local community, and visitor representative by snowball sampling. Based on the awareness constructs, it was found their level of knowledge and experience is high, while attitude portrays moderate level. The visitors have higher level of knowledge, attitude, and experience than local community. The level of education and number of dependents had influenced their awareness towards conservation. In terms of well-being, the economic and social factors had significantly predicted awareness accordingly. It shows that the neighborhood, life and social relations, services and facilities, education, and culture as well as monthly income influence their current level of awareness of biodiversity conservation. From the study, the estimated mean as compared to current entrance fee which is willingness to pay (WTP) among public was MYR40.61 (USD9.60) per entry and it is highly influenced by their level of attitude and experience. The level of attitude among the respondents has influenced the WTP for the existing park entrance fee. Meanwhile, there is no awareness construct that affects the WTP for increased fees among visitors and the local community. The low level of knowledge and experience of the respondents, but high level of attitude has influenced the good WTP for cheaper park entrance fee. The public WTP also was found to be influenced by environmental and social factors, although the economics did not play a significant role. The empirical study provides insights into developing biodiversity conservation framework for GMNP which emphasize on community psychology as part of social movement towards holistic management in the park.

Keywords: Biodiversity; Knowledge; Attitude; Contingent Valuation Method; UNESCO

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