

Model of Sustainable Community Participation in Homestay Program

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Abstract

Tourism is one of the important sectors contribute to the world economic growth according to the World Tourism Organization (UNTWO). The increase of international tourists arrival from 438 million in 1990 to 940 million in 2010 or 114.6 percentage show that the tourism sector has become a potential sector in providing a huge job market to the people. Referring to (UNWTO, 1998) the tourist arrivals are expected to increase 4.4 percent between years 2010 to year 2020. The aim of this study is to develop model of sustainable community participation in homestay program. A total of 306 respondents were selected using a stratified random sampling based on number of participants in the homestay program from several locations in Malaysia. All the data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). This study successfully developed fit model between community participation and sustainable development among the homestay participants. Finding from present study indicate that community participation in community-based tourism has influenced to the sustainable development among the homestay participant in the study area.

Keywords: community participation, community-based tourism, homestay, sustainable development

1. Introduction

Tourism has converted the essential provider to the world economic growth. The increasing of international tourists arrival from 438 million in 1990 to 940 million in 2010 or 114.6 percentage show that the tourism has a potential sector in providing a huge job market to the people. Referring to (UNWTO, 1998) the tourist arrivals are expected to increase 4.4 percent between years 2010 to year 2020. (RNCOS, 2009) conclude Malaysia is a popular tourism destination in the ASEAN because of the multicultural society, historical background and the beautiful of nature. The development of tourism sector in Malaysia begin in 1970 where the objectives are to increase income from money exchange, increase employability, encourage regional development and diversified economic base in order to increase revenue of the country. Currently the tourism sector turn out to be the main contributors to the economic growth in this country. The numbers of tourists are increased from 22 million in 2008 to 23.6 million in 2009. The figure increased in 2010 to 24.6 million. The numbers of tourist arrival are targeted 25 million by the year of 2015 (Tourism Malaysia, 2011) noted that the tourism sector will contribute 115 billion Ringgit Malaysia and provide two million employability to the country by the year 2015.

Realizing the potential of tourism sector, the government through Ministry of Tourism has formulated Tourism Transformation Plan 2020 to promote creativity and innovation in tourism industry to achieve the target 36 million tourist arrivals and revenue 168 billion ringgit Malaysia by 2020 (Tourism Malaysia, 2011). Government of Malaysia through the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Rural Development has given special emphasis to the development of community rural tourism. The community based tourism (CBT) has become crucial in the tourism industry especially in Asian countries such as Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia and also in others countries in Africa, United Kingdom, Australia and Carribbean. In Malaysia, a community based homestay is one the popular program in the CBT activities (Hamzah, 2009; Yusof *et al.*, 2012). Based on the statistics from the Ministry of Tourism, the numbers of homestay participants in Malaysia has increased to 2984 in year 2010. The growing concerns of the homestay program are the sustainable revenue of the community participants is still low compared to the others types of accommodation. Whereas the participants involved in the program homestay are increased. The objective of this study is to develop structural model of sustainable community participation in homestay program in Malaysia.

1.1 Community Based Tourism – Homestay Program

Community based tourism (CBT) can be concludes as a person by some collective responsibilities and the ability to make

collective decisions by representative bodies (Jamaludin *et al.*, 2010). The first homestay program in Malaysia was started in Temerloh Pahang 1995 by Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism. This program is under the 9th Malaysia Plan (2006-2010). The main purpose of the government to set up this program is to rise income and to generate employability among the rural community through involving in the rural tourism industry. Community have their authority to resolve the development such as safeguards the environment and increase cultural awareness (Tsonis, 2009). The activities in the program were organized collectively by the local community. The visitors or tourists have a huge benefits from this program. The involvement of visitors in the activities which is planned by committee of the program will be able to expose them to recognize the culture of local communities and raise closer relation between them.

Homestay program concept in Malaysia is different from others countries. The guests have the opportunities to cooperate, share information, experience, values and life style of the host family as well as the local community. The two parties with the different cultural backgrounds would interact to each other in many activities together with their adopted families such as cooking, eating, and playing (Ibrahim, Y., & Razzaq, A. R. A, 2009).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Sustainable Tourism Development

The World Tourism Organisation concluded that sustainable tourism development has become the essential tool in the economic growth and reduction of poverty in the certain areas. The involvement of several stakeholders and local communities in the decision making process is the most important strategy to postulate the sustainable tourism development (Augustyn, 1998). Wilson *et al* (2001) claim that the community participation and contribution is a critical factor for the successful rural tourism development. Crawley and Gillmor (2008) also takes into account all the different types of resources such as community participation in developing integrated rural tourism development. Sustainable tourism can be defined as "tourism which is developed and maintained of community or environment in such a manner that it remains viable over an infinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human or physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and wellbeing of other activities and processes (Butler, 1991).

Sustainable development has comprehensively debated in the tourism sectors because of the development can postulate the chances to boost economic growth, safeguards environment and increase quality of life of local communities (Eagles, McCool, & Haynes, 2002). The community based tourism has converted an essential tool for sustainable management (Sebele, 2010; Taylor, 1995). This finding support by Fallon & Kriwoken (2003); Gursoy & Rutherford (2004); Nicholas, Thapa & Ko (2009) conclude that the development of sustainable tourism is challenging without assistance and involvement of the local residents. Theory exchange theory has been used to gauge the influence of community participation to the sustainable homestay program. Based on this theory, the community will assistance and contribute in the exchanges with visitors if they are benefit to the community. However if the activities are gain cost more than benefits, they are to dissent this activities or program development (Gursoy *et al.* 2002 ; Lee T H, 2013).

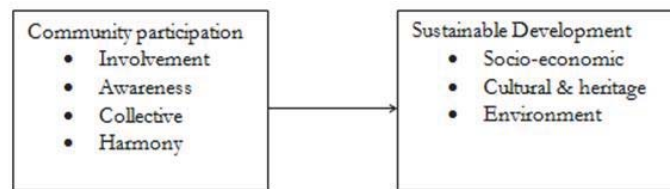
2.2 Community participation

Community participation is referring to the individual's willingness to engage and contribute in an activity in the decision making process, in accordance with the requirements (Til, 1984). In other words, community participation is to contribute to the establishment and development of the community based on existing resources (Stone, 1989). Community participation plays an important role in the development of sustainable tourism community. This is because the ability of communities to improve the positive factors in community-based tourism industry and reduces the negative factors that hinder the development community (Jamal & Getz, 1995). Okazaki (2008) Selin & Chavez (1995) noted that there are three levels of community participation consist of non-participation, degree of tokenism, and degrees of citizen power are used to assess various levels of involvement and participation in the community based tourism. Tosun (2006) conclude that by having the participatory approach, local community will gain the opportunities and benefits from the tourist which is taking place in their areas. Review by kayat (2007) concluded that community involvement in the homestay program is influenced by motivational factors. Therefore, to improve community participation in this program awareness and motivation courses should be provided to participants so that they can feel this homestay program can improve their living standards. In addition, local residents can also increase their knowledge by sharing the knowledge and experience through interaction with visitors (Brohman, 1996).

3. Methodology

The proposed conceptual framework is based on the reviewed of literatures and the corresponding theoretical perspective as shown in figure 1. The variables were identified and the hypotesis have been developed which is shown in figure 1. The population for this study comprised of all the homestay participants derived from the Tourism Services Division, Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia. The number of participants in the Malaysian Homestay Program is 3,264 people. A total of 306 samples were selected using stratified random sampling and the data was processed and analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Among the analysis is a reliability test, descriptive and inferential analysis.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



4. Findings and Discussions

4.1 Demographic Profiles

According to Table 1, of the total 306 respondents, 66 percent were female and 34 percent were male. The study also found that 60 percent of respondents were aged between 40 to 59 years and 80 percent were married. While education showed 30.1 percent is the basic level and education level SPM is 39.2 percent. In terms of work found 88.3 per cent of the working period under 10 years.

Table 1: Demographic Profiles

| Demographic Profile | Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 104 | 34.0 |
| | Female | 202 | 66.0 |
| Age | Below 20 years | 0 | 0.0 |
| | 20 to 29 years | 10 | 3.3 |
| | 30 to 39 years | 24 | 7.8 |
| | 40 to 49 years | 85 | 27.8 |
| | 50 to 59 years | 107 | 35.0 |
| | 60 years and above | 80 | 26.1 |
| Marriage Status | Single | 18 | 5.9 |
| | Married | 242 | 79.1 |
| | Widower | 46 | 15.0 |
| Education | Never go to School | 6 | 2.0 |
| | Primary School | 92 | 30.1 |
| | SRP/ PMR (completed form 3) | 54 | 17.6 |
| | SPM (completed form 5) | 120 | 39.2 |
| | STPM | 15 | 4.9 |
| | Diploma | 13 | 4.2 |
| | Degree | 6 | 2.0 |
| Working Length/Period as participant of homestay | Less than 5 years | 182 | 59.5 |
| | 6 to 10 years | 88 | 28.8 |
| | 11 to 15 years | 32 | 10.5 |
| | 16years and above | 4 | 1.3 |
| Monthly Income* | RM300 and below | 6 | 2.0 |
| | RM 300 to less than 550 | 19 | 6.2 |
| | RM 550 and above | 281 | 91.8 |

4.2 Reliability Test and Data Normality

As shown in the table 2, the mean value for each of dimension of community participation and sustainable development varies from 1.60 to 1.93. The standard deviation for these facets ranges from 0.40 to 0.45. The alpha value for community participation is 0.873. The alpha value for dependent variable that is sustainable development 0.920. All these alpha values are higher than 0.6 meaning that the factors used in the study is suitable and can be accepted as a measurement (Sekaran, 2003). Furthermore, normality tests shows that the data is normally distributed since the value of skewness and kurtosis is below ± 3 (Coakes and Steed, 2003)

Table 2. Descriptive and Correlation

| | M | SD | sv | kb | hv | L1 | L2 | L3 | |
|----|-------|------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---|
| Sv | 1.933 | .423 | 1 | | | | | | |
| Kb | 1.782 | .408 | .562** | 1 | | | | | |
| Kv | 1.674 | .458 | .474** | .702** | 1 | | | | |
| Hv | 1.687 | .449 | .362** | .686** | .707** | 1 | | | |
| L1 | 1.710 | .430 | .303** | .420** | .435** | .413** | 1 | | |
| L2 | 1.697 | .421 | .293** | .441** | .467** | .438** | .830** | 1 | |
| L3 | 1.649 | .436 | .297** | .488** | .510** | .467** | .759** | .795** | 1 |

| | |
|---|---|
| F1- Community participation sv – involvement kb- awareness kv- collective hv- harmony | F2 - sustainable development L1- socio-economic L2- cultural& heritage L3- environment |
|---|---|

4.3 The Assessment of Fitness for The Model

Structural equation modeling technique was use to estimate multiple and interrelated dependence relationships and used to represent the unobserved concept in these relationships and account for the measurement error in the estimation process (Hair, 1998). In this study the unobserved exogenous variable is the community participation and unobserved endogenous variable is the sustainable development. Amos version 6 was used to measure the model fit. Several measures of goodness of fit were evaluated for the structural model: Chi-square/degree of freedom, Goodness of fit index (GFI), Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), Normalized fit index (NFI), Comparative index (CFI) and Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA).

Table 3

| Goodness of fit model Index | Recommended good fit value* | Proposed Model |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Chi-square | | 39.087 |
| Probability | | .000 |
| GFI | >.90 | .966 |
| NFI | >.90 | .972 |
| TLI | >.90 | .969 |
| CFI | >.90 | .981 |
| AGFI | >.90 | .926 |
| RMSEA | <.08 | .081 |

Hair, Anderson, Tathnam, Black (1998) and Arbuckle & Wothke (1999)

The overall model fit is marginal with the values of GFI, NFI, TLI, CFI and RMSEA. The likelihood ratio chi-square value 39.087 with 310 degree of freedom is statistically at the 0.05 significant levels. It can be concluded that significant differences exist between the proposed model and the recommended model. The GFI value 0.966 is at a marginally acceptable level, but the RMSEA has a value which falls inside the acceptable range of 0.08.

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