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Local Community Attitude and Support towards Tourism Development in Tioman Island, Malaysia

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Abstract

Tourism development is a double-edged sword for local communities and attitude directly affects the current and future tourism industry development. Community positive attitudes will encourage tourists' satisfaction levels and contributes to the word-of-mouth promotion among them. Therefore, the involvement and the participation of the host community are pertinent towards the success of the tourism development plan. The findings of the study indicated that the Tioman Island community supported future tourism development based on the personal benefit they received. It is a clear statement that the role of the residence is necessary to support tourism development and maintain its robust growth.

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Keywords: Development,; attitude; personal benefit; perceived impact; future support

1. Introduction

The tourism industry faced a rapid growth with holistic support from local communities who involved directly and indirectly in this industry. Tourism acknowledged as one of the major attributes for cultural and economic today and its offer the opportunity to the local communities. The growth of the tourism industry is crucial to the economic growth as well as the related field such as transportation, leisure services and hospitality (Telfer, 2002). On the other hand, tourism also becomes the symbol to support the communities especially in changing the economics atmosphere. This is because the ability of the tourism industry to generate income, currency exchanges as well as provides the employment opportunity

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(Hanafiah, Harun & Jamaludin, 2010). The rapid growth in the tourism industry will certainly transform the tourist destination spot, but with unplanned tourism development, it could lead to environmental degradation and socio-economic disparity amongst the local community.

Local residents are the main stakeholders of tourism developments. Currently, the number of studies on local community attitudes towards future tourism development is increasing due to the nexus between community support and government future development. However, limited research embarked on the roles of personal benefit on residents' support towards future tourism development (Angelkova, Koteski, Jakovlev & Mitrevska, 2011). Jafari (2001) suggested that tourism development research should consider the roles of perceived benefit on tourism planning and development. Thus, this paper look into the personal benefit that local community gain from tourism development and how did they perceive the development impact as well as their support towards future development.

2. Residents' perceptions

Local community support for tourism is necessary to ensure the commercial, socio-cultural, physiological, political and economic sustainability of the industry. Their role in influencing the tourism development activities through working together with the government is vital (Jamaludin, Othman & Awang, 2009). Furthermore, Cottrell & Vaske (2006) argued that the perception of the local residents was the most accurate factor in evaluating the current situation towards the destination due to the closeness of the area. However, the findings of those studies have produced inconsistent results. Therefore, it is essential to promote positive perceptions among local residents as this affects their support on tourism development. Most of the tourism literatures suggest that local residents' perception of tourism impact varied based on their perception on the benefit generated from the development (Dyer, Aberdeen & Schuler, 2007).

Residents' perception of social and cultural impacts of tourism development researched extensively. However, tourism development generates crucial consequences that may affect the respectful area. Besides delivering positive impacts such as enhancing local economies, being a source of new employment opportunities, additional tax receipts, foreign exchange earnings and income, tourism development have the potential towards negative outcomes (Ko & Steward, 2002). Some residents expected to perceive tourism as having negative social and cultural impacts and some inclined to see tourism as having positive economic, social and cultural impacts. This notion then reinforced by Harrison (2001) on the role of personal benefit that local community obtained from tourism development may commute adverse and positive perception on tourism development.

The affiliation between residents' attitudes and level of tourism development was researched thoroughly by numerous scholars. Allen et. al. (1993) found that residents' perception of tourism impact will be less positive as level of tourism in the community increased. Further, Perdue, Long & Allen (1993) also summarized that residents' initial attitudes towards tourism were enthusiastic, but as the cost outweighed the benefit of tourism development, attitudes achieve a threshold after which residents support for tourism declined. Meanwhile, Wang & Pfister (2008) conducted a research on the impact of personal benefit obtained from tourism development, and they discovered that, benefit and cost assumed to be more carefully evaluated and as benefits exceed the cost, the residents' will be more supportive on tourism development. When the cost exceeds the benefit, residents' tend to be more negative toward tourism development.

The significant role plays by the personal benefit from tourism development, especially the implicit social values in the process of exchange for residents' favourable attitudes towards tourism development. In addition, Jurowski, Uysal & William (1997) found out when the residents' did not enjoy any direct economic benefit from tourism, the residents will be neutral. In line with that, Allen et. al. (1993) argued

that communities with low tourism and strong total economic activity will foresee tourism development more favourable than communities with low tourism and high economic activity and communities with high tourism development and weak economic activity. Meanwhile, few researchers found that some of residents' still believe there will be economic benefits from tourism development. Even though the residents did not gain direct economic benefit from tourism, they will demonstrate positive attitudes towards tourism based on a variety of shared social benefits with tourism development (AP, 1992; Conlin & Baum, 1996; Tosun, 2002; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2011; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011).

3. Tourism development in Tioman Island

Tioman Island is the largest island off the South-East Coast of Peninsular Malaysia, situated at 40 kilometers from the coast, its modest area of 138KM is nevertheless bigger than such well-known island. Its position had imbued the island with some strategic importance in the maritime trade between China and Southeast Asia. Tioman Island probably served as a historic landmark and watering place for the ancient mariners. The island is rugged with mountainous backbone and constitutes a formidable barrier to overland movements. In 2011, the number of tourist arrivals reached 126,660 tourists domestically as well as internationally. This is the increasing of 8.8% in 2010 which recorded the number of tourists is 213,158 (Pulau Tioman Development Authority, 2012).

There are five villages on this island which are Kampung Salang, Kampung Tekek, Kampung Air Batang, Kampung Paya Genting, Kampung Mukat and Kampung Juara. In 2012, the total number of the local community in Tioman Island is 3,314 residents. The list of the population out of the five villages obtained from the Pulau Tioman Development Authority.

Table 1. Tioman Island population

Name of Village	Total House	Total Residents
Kampung Salang	36	279
Kampung Air Batang/ Tekek	459	2,092
Kampung Paya, Genting & Lanting	86	435
Kampung Mukut	41	225
Kampung Juara	62	283
Total	687	3,314

Currently, the largest village is Tekek occupied with a police station, primary school, local offices of agriculture and veterinary department and an airport. The traditional economy of the island is farming, fishing and coconut cultivation involving 70% to 80% of the population. Radical changes in land use began in 1965 of seafront land originally occupied by the Malay people. Ownership transferred to a numerous local and international business corporation with diversified interest in the hotel, travel and tours, development and management of golf courses and operation of the resort (Pulau Tioman Development Authority, 2012).

The international beach resort has a catalytic effect in inducing further land use changes in the island. Its success encouraged a trend in which landowners participate directly as chalet operators to take advantage of the continuing influx of tourist. The potential worth of privately owned seafront land has thus acquired a real value as sites for chalets and other tourist related projects. There are three different levels of tourist facilities on the island in the form of the international class beach resort serving the up market tourist sector, the middle level mini resort and the village chalet and the village chalets catering for

the budget travelers. The majority of the family run establishment provides limited units of chalets and basic services mainly in the provision of food and drinks, hiring of boats, package tours and snorkelling trips (Pulau Tioman Development Authority, 2012).

4. Methodology

A quantitative survey used to identify residents' perceptions towards tourism development impact in the Tioman Islands. The survey explored the residents' perception on tourism development impact from economic, social, environmental perspectives and future support. The questionnaire was divided into three sections of respondent profiles, perception of tourism impacts and future supports. Variables are adopted from the Latkova & Vogt (2012) and Lankford & Howard (1994) based on a series of review on the existing literature dealing with local community attitudes toward tourism development.

The measurement of the attitudes used in this study applied the Tourism Impact Attitude Scales developed by Lankford & Howard (1994) as the standardized of measurement of resident attitudes toward tourism developed. This measurement tested the various settings of tourism area and support was gathered from Latkova & Vogt (2012). The number of questionnaires distributed is 248 with 185 valid responses. Respondents were given a total of 33 questions based on a 5-point Likert scale. The passable sample size was 248 respondents based on Krescjie & Morgan (1970).

Table 2. Stratified sampling calculation

Area	Tioman Population	The Stratified Random Sampling	Sample size	Validated Questionnaires
Kampung Salang	279	$279 / 3,314 (x) 248$	21	17
Kampung Air Batang/ Tekek	2,092	$2,092 / 3,314 (x) 248$	156	118
Kampung Paya & Lanting	9,721	$435 / 3,314 (x) 248$	32	26
Kampung Mukut	10,964	$225 / 3,314 (x) 248$	16	10
Kampung Juara	8,844	$283 / 3,314 (x) 248$	22	14
Total	N= 3,314	-	n=248	n=185

Stratified random sampling method was used to achieve representative from the whole group of islands for a broad range of attitudes. 185 questionnaires were completed from 384 respondents approached, representing a 48.18% response rate for this study. Many respondents refused to participate in data collection for several reasons, but the most obvious reason was that some respondents were not interested as much tourism research projects had already been done on Tioman Island over time.

In ensuring a reliable instrument used for this study, all items validated using factor analysis method. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to gather information pertaining to inter-relationship among variables. In this procedure, the items were gathered in a smaller group of linear combinations of the original variables that captured in the pattern of correlation. The Barlett's Test of Sphericity shows statistical significance with the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of 0.89, exceeding the recommended value (Hair et. al., 1998). From the Varimax-rotated factor matrix, three factors representing 53.24% of the explained variance were extracted from 21 variables. The results showed the alpha coefficient for all three factors ranged from 0.81 to 0.87.

Table 3. Factor analysis on tourism development impact dimensions

	Factor Loading		
	1	2	3
<u>Factor of economic impacts from tourism development</u>			
The benefits of tourism to the community outweigh its costs	.775		
Tourism creates desirable employment opportunity for the residents in the community	.721		
Local businesses benefit the most from tourists	.702		
Standard of living has increased due to tourist spending to the community	.683		
Tourism helps improve the economic situation for many residents in the community	.657		
The cost of living in the community was remained as low as before tourism was introduced	.601		
Tourism development creates part time jobs for Tioman Island residence.	.524		
<u>Factor of environmental impacts from tourism development</u>			
Tourism contributes to the negative effects of vegetation and loss of meadows, and green space		.781	
Tourism produces large quantities of waste products		.765	
Tourism has not improved the ecological environment of the community in many ways		.743	
Tourist's littering destroy the beauty of the island		.684	
Tourism caused environmental pollution to the island		.644	
Tourism development causes congestion.		.613	
Local residents feel uncomfortable living in tourists hotspot		.521	
<u>Factor of social impacts from tourism development</u>			
Increase tourism provides more recreational activities for residents			.785
Tourism has increased residents' pride in the local culture in the community			.746
Tourism is encouraging a variety of cultural activities to the local			.715
Tourism negatively contributes social problems such as crime, drug use, prostitution, and so forth to the community			.982
Tourism has not resulted unpleasant overcrowded situation for the community			.657
Tourism is the major reason for the variety entertainment in the community			.621
Tourism development does not modify local culture and living style.			.575
Eigenvalues	4.8	4.2	3.9
% of variance	26.41	21.14	18.24
Cumulative variance (%)	26.41	43.28	53.24
Cronbach's alpha score	.87	.85	.81

5. Residents' perception on tourism development

Table 4. Perception on tourism development impacts

Variables	Mean (<i>M</i>)	Std. Deviation (<i>SD</i>)
<u>Economic impacts</u>		
The benefits of tourism to the community outweigh its costs	3.68	.901
Tourism creates desirable employment opportunity for the residents in the community	3.55	.886
Local businesses benefit the most from tourists	3.52	.879
Standard of living has increased due to tourist spending to the community	3.92	.848
Tourism helps improve the economic situation for many residents in the community	3.83	.904
The cost of living in the community was remained as low as before tourism was introduced	2.18	.791
Tourism development creates part time jobs for Tioman Island residence.	3.68	.901
<u>Environmental impacts</u>		
Tourism contributes to the negative effects of vegetation and loss of meadows, and green space	3.55	.886
Tourism produces large quantities of waste products	3.52	.879
Tourism has not improved the ecological environment of the community in many ways	3.92	.848
Tourist's littering destroy the beauty of the island	3.06	1.331
Tourism caused environmental pollution to the island	3.68	.901
Tourism development causes congestion.	3.55	.886
Local residents feel uncomfortable living in tourists hotspot	3.52	.879
<u>Social impacts</u>		
Increase tourism provides more recreational activities for residents	4.12	.848
Tourism has increased residents' pride in the local culture in the community	3.85	.864
Tourism is encouraging a variety of cultural activities to the local	3.87	.759
Tourism negatively contributes social problems such as crime, drug use, prostitution, and so forth to the community	3.67	.918
Tourism has not resulted unpleasant overcrowded situation for the community	3.61	.779
Tourism is the major reason for the variety entertainment in the community	3.86	.726
Tourism development does not modify local culture and living style.	3.69	.802

5.1. Economic impact

According to the table above, the most notable result of this sub-section analysis is related to the local business benefits ($m=3.68$) and the desirable employment opportunity ($m=3.55$). This could be true based on the mushrooming of local tourism related businesses around the island. Based on the fact, it is believed that tourism development successfully creates a lot of job opportunities to the population. In addition, respondents also agreed with facts about economic benefits outweighed its costs ($m=3.68$), economic situation improves ($m=3.83$), and living standard increased ($m=3.92$). This is expectedly happening as the

tourism is known as the main economic sources in the area. However, the residents perceived their living cost were increased caused by tourism ($m=2.18$).

5.2. Environmental impact

Most of the respondents viewed the environment impacts of tourism from the negative perspectives. The majority of them agreed that, tourism brings pollution to the island ($m=3.68$) and tourism contributes to the negative effects of vegetation and loss of meadows and green space ($m=3.55$). Further, most of the respondents agreed that tourists' littering destroy the island's beauty ($m=3.06$), tourism produces noise ($m=3.26$), tourism produces large quantities of wastes ($m=3.52$) and tourism deteriorate the ecological conditions ($m=3.92$). The populations mean score indicated that the perceptions on the environment impacts are detrimental but there are spaces to be improved.

5.3. Social impact

The majority of the respondents agrees that tourism provides more recreational activities ($m=4.12$) and tourism is the foremost reason for any entertainment of the island ($m=3.86$). This could be wholly true as the recreational and entertainment activities will certainly attract more tourists to come to the island. Despite the great magnitudes, majority of the respondents agreed tourism has increased their pride in the local culture ($m=3.85$) and tourism has encouraged a variety of cultural activities to the local people ($m=3.87$). Lastly, respondents believed that tourism does not bring unpleasant overcrowding issues to the island ($m=3.61$) and has not contributed to the negative social problems ($m=3.67$).

6. Support for future tourism development

Table 5. Support for future tourism development

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Tourism industry should be actively developed in my community	4.71	.458
I support tourism and would like to see it become important part of my community	4.69	.464
I will support new tourism facilities that will attract more tourism in my community	4.69	.464
I believe tourism should be actively encouraged in Tioman Island	4.67	.487
The government supports the promotion of tourism in Tioman Island	4.73	.496
My community should become more of a tourist destination	4.67	.520
Long term planning on the environmental aspect would exaggerate tourism business	4.63	.546
Tourism industry increases the quality of the outdoor recreation opportunities in my community	4.58	.541
It is important to manage the growth of tourism in Tioman Island	4.73	.446
I believe the tourism sector will continue to play a major role in the economy of the community	4.76	.429
Generally, the positive benefit of tourism outweighs the negative impact	4.71	.471
The future of Tioman Island as a tourist attraction is sustainable	4.81	.391

The majority of respondents perceived that the tourism sector will continue to play a significant role in the economy of the local community in Tioman Island ($m > 4.00$). In other words, perhaps local communities were too reliant on the tourism sector as their main source of income. Moreover, the local communities perceived that Tioman Development Authority had promoted the island effectively. Tourism industry generates income, especially those who are operating the chalets, resorts or rooms, sea taxi provider, shops and handicraft shops. Based on Gursory & Rutherford (2004), residents tend to support future tourism development if they consider tourism as a tool to generate income as well as create job opportunities.

7. Conclusion

Residents' of Tioman Island portrayed positive perception towards the economic and social impact of tourism. However, they depicted the impact of tourism on the environment in the opposite way. This finding supports the case from previous researchers who reported that each tourism impact element has both positive and negative impacts (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2011; Tosun, 2002; Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Ap, 1992). The finding of this research is also consistent with the previous study by King (1993) who contended that, once a community becomes a destination, the lives of residents in the community are unswervingly affected by tourism.

Future attitude towards tourism development is also discussed in this article. The importance of gaining local community support for the tourism development has been researched by tourism scholars as vital components in achieving successful tourism industry. Support for future tourism development is a key factor in developing and implementing successful initiatives. On the other hand, residence should actively participate in community activities as well support tourism and community development. According to Kepe (2004), local communities must have the sense to help their community in order to ensure they can achieve the positive benefit from tourism development. As suggested from previous research, the communities must work closely with the government organizations to educate people about tourism development impact.

The outcome of this study is quite alarming in many ways. Failure to take an integrated and holistic approach in developing the island tourism will only expose them to further decline, in terms of both their natural beauty as well as the number of tourist arrivals. Therefore, it is believed to have some restriction on several views such as responsible tourism practice and quality of life. Thus, prospective research is needed to better understand the impact of tourism development on residents' quality of life.

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