

## The Community Support for Sustainable Tourism: A Marine Protection Area Community in Islands Malaysia

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**Abstract:** This study explained the issues of the Malay community's support on tourism development and the complicated issues of marine conservation, local development, government policy and ecological change. To have an insight into the challenges posed by these issues this study on three local communities near Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) on the Islands of Peninsular Malaysia. The central question was What are the level of local supports on the conservation outcomes, the level of improvement on their livelihoods and what are the supportive capacity that can be considered in communities near MPAs on the Islands of Malaysia in consideration of ecological sustainability. This study developed a model of community support based on the social exchange theory. The variables for support are influenced by perceived benefits, perceived costs and community satisfaction. Perceived benefits are affected by community satisfaction, institutional trust, power to influence tourism and neighborhood conditions.

**Key words:** Community support, trust, power, community satisfaction, sustainability, capacity

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### INTRODUCTION

One of the most tremendous issue in tourism over the past two decades are the growth of interest on tourism industry in the islands. Most of the tourism industry in the islands started from local community involvement on supplying the chalets to tourists. Local community get involved in tourism began in year 1970s as the tourists as budget tourists but not currently parallel to mass tourism. During the infancy stage, community tourism was suppressed by local government fearing the negative impacts of the industry, immoral behavior influences among the community associated with the sudden influx of this type of development. However, over the past few years, tourism development has been promoted vigorously by the local government, to reveal how tourism in assist to boost rural development (Abdul-Aziz *et al.*, 2014). The tourism industry has developed the rural or kampung economies, live hood through a significant contribution on small retailing, besides involved in agriculture, fishing and water transportation industry. The phenomenal growth of tourism industry by local communities was induced both by the growing popularity of alternative tourism from the west and increasing demand in mass tourism. The islands destination areas evolved the backpackers tourists and

Foreign tourists from Western Europe, attracted to Kampung's ambience (Abdul, 1990). Due to the lack of other affordable alternatives to the luxury accommodations or hotels, the Western tourists willing to stay any chalets available on the islands. The high demands of small chalets reflected the increasing number of accommodation supply on islands. Some local villagers maintain their distinct Kampung image but many local operators have sacrificed the supply of accommodations with hybrid images to accommodate as many tourists as possible. Critical debate on selling to outside entrepreneurs because of better offered by the outside entrepreneurs (Hall, 2001). The local system is increasingly threatened in the rapid globalizing which coastal environmental, social and economic vulnerability are the often the outcomes. The importance of "community support" is therefore are the main focus of this research. Targeting the process of coastal societal development. In relation to the changing types of tourists and their motivation, the entrepreneurial process and the political and planning influences. The support in this research is the equivalent to the incipient stage of tourism in islands to conventional mass tourism in a form of circumstantial alternative tourism.

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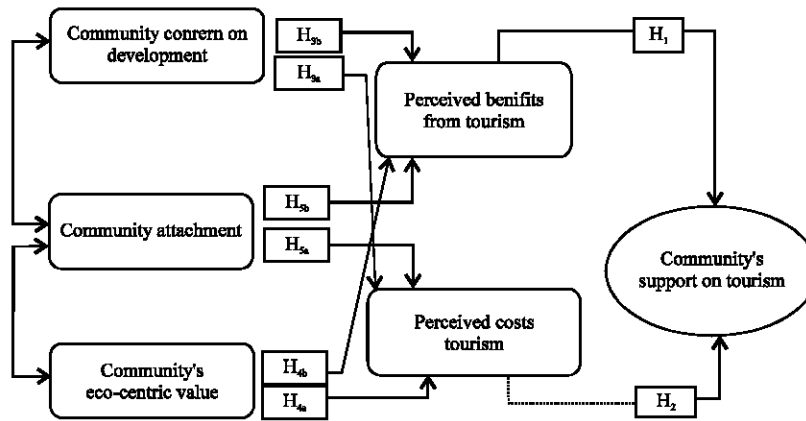


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework on social exchange model (Gursoy and Rutherford, 2004)

intervention is essential to manage the growth of this development as to prevent the displacement and marginalization of the local community by maintain the local uniqueness and hence, attractiveness of coastal tourism products and attractions. The coastal tourism is a fragile destinations, the transcend changes is a basis for decision-making because the coastal tourism is the complex interaction between society, land use management and government policy. The respond of community systems to the environmental. Tourism can be the important potential in promoting the country and the community livelihood specially the community in rural areas. The government's strategies to create more job opportunities and climate and eliminate poverty among the rural community. It can be as a tool in generating a side income for rural communities.

The islands tourism should be managed by local communities to achieve better living. The development of community tourism appeared to be a potential solution and settlement to the mass negative impacts. The tourism industry create a core services such incorporate on hotel management, food and beverage and other complementary services to tourists and sub infrastructure that led to other development such physical infrastructure, hospitals, education and complex properties the tourism industry are the economic impact on communities, improvement of social economic and lifestyle upgrading. At stage of tourism planning, the local community's attitude and their degree of involvement by the local communities are the strong influence for social equity.

**Literature review:** The islands tourism has become essential notion both the natural and society changes, the government intervention is essential to manage the growth of this development as to prevent the displacement and marginalization of the local community by maintain the local uniqueness and hence,

attractiveness of coastal tourism products and attractions (Gursoy *et al.*, 2002). The coastal tourism is a fragile destinations, the transcend changes is a basis for decision-making because the coastal tourism is the complex interaction between society, land use management and government policy. The respond of community systems to the environmental. Tourism can be the important potential in promoting the country and the community livelihood specially the community in rural areas. The government's strategies to create more job opportunities and climate and eliminate poverty among the rural community. It can be as a tool in generating a side income for urban communities (Hall, 2001). The islands tourism should be managed by local communities to achieve better living. The development of community tourism appeared to be a potential solution and settlement to the mass negative impacts. The tourism industry create a core services such incorporate on hotel management, food and beverage and other complementary services to tourists and sub infrastructure that led to other development such physical infrastructure, hospitals, education and complex properties the tourism industry are the economic impact on communities, improvement of social economic and lifestyle upgrading. At stage of tourism planning, the local community's attitude and their degree of involvement by the local communities are the strong influence for social equity.

**Study framework:** Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Hypothesis constructs

#### Benefits of development:

- H<sub>1</sub>: a direct relationship exists between the perceived benefits of tourism and community's support for its development

**Cost of development:**

- H<sub>2</sub>: an inverse relationship exist between the perceived costs of tourism and community's support for its development

**Community concern:**

- H<sub>3a</sub>: a direct relationship exists between the level of concern of the community and perceived benefits of tourism
- H<sub>3b</sub>: an inverse relationship exists between the level of concern of the community and perceived of costs of tourism

**Attachments:**

- H<sub>5a</sub>: an inverse relationship exist between the level of attachment to the community and the perceived costs of tourism
- H<sub>5b</sub>: a direct relationship exists the level of attachment to the community and the perceived benefits of tourism

**Eco-centric attitude:**

- H<sub>4a</sub>: a direct relationship exists between the level of eco-centric value and the perceived cost of tourism development
- H<sub>4b</sub>: an inverse relationship exist between the level of eco-centric value and perceived benefits of tourism development

The study aimed to test theoretical concepts concerning the community support for tourism development and to test hypothesis to confirm causal relationship. The hypothesis will be tested based on the data collected by self-administrated questionnaires of three coastal tourism development in Malaysia located in three islands Pulau Redang, Pulau Tinggi and Pulau Tioman in Malaysia.

**Sampling methods:** For this study in the sampling procedures will be defined. The number of community resided in the three islands are as 3146 population in Tioman islands, 3567 population at the Redang Islands and 4012 population at Pulau Tinggi, Mersing Johor. The study take a Simple Random Sample (SRS) of houses of each islands and it could divide the community into houses of about 20 houses each Kampung and sample every household (or subsample some of the households) in each of 20 households selected at random from the 200 people in the population. The latter plan is an example of cluster sampling. The houses are the Primary Sampling Units (PSUS) or clusters. The number of people are the Secondary Sampling Units (SSUS); often the (SSUS) are

the elements in the population. Pulau Tinggi consists of 19 of Kampung, Pulau Redang has 9 of Kampung and Pulau Tioman has 5 Kampung. The Kampung mentioned are the Primary Sampling Units (PSUS) or clusters. The individual or the community are the Secondary Sampling Units (SSUS).

One-stage cluster sampling will be used in sampling. In one stage cluster sampling, none of the elements that compose a cluster (PSU) are in the sample. One-stage cluster sampling is used in many surveys in which the cost of sampling (SSUS) is negligible compared with the cost of sampling (PSUS) For study the surveys, a natural (PSU) are all the Kampung of all islands; all populations in a selected Kampung are often included as the ssus since little extra cost is added by handing out a questionnaire to all populations in all Kampung rather than some. The sampling cluster is applying equal sizes of estimation (Lohr, 2010).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Measurement of variables:** Community's support for tourism industry will be measured by response to two items assessing their support and opposite tourism development. The community tourism owners will be asked to indicate how much they would support and oppose community industry in coastal tourism development in the islands (Gursoy and Rutherford, 2004). Their response will measure using a 5-points anchor scale with "strongly oppose" at the low and "strong support" at the high end of the questionnaires. The constructs serve as intervening variables between exogenous variables and the dependent on the community owners for tourism development. The fit of the measurement model and the fit of the structural model will be tested using structural equation analysis package. Several tests will be conducted to determine how well the model fits the data. A confirmatory measurement model that specifies the estimate the relationship of the observed variables to the underlying constructs with the construct allowed to inter-correlate will be tested (Gursoy and Rutherford, 2004). Before testing the overall measurement model, unidirectional of each construct will be assessed in the data. The data will construct with unacceptable fits will be specified by deleting the indicators that fail to maintain one-dimensional of the measurement, assessing each construct individually and deleting unacceptable indicators resulted in decrease in the number of variables. Discriminant validity will also be used to assess for every possible pair of constructs in the study. The application of discriminant validity based on two items support and opposite statement of questionnaire that been set up at earlier stage.

**Significant of study:** The finding of this research refine the theoretical basis for explain the elements that affects community owners reaction to and support for tourism development at coastal tourism destination in Malaysia. Their support to the development is important in order to sustain the existence of their livelihood in the tourism industry. The community tourism support for several reasons, first the community support infrastructure such as accommodations, second a friendly and hospitable of community support are the critical factors in the success of the tourism business. Therefore, identifying and understanding the factors that influence local community support for tourism development is very important for planners and for the success of any projects. The result of this study imply planners should evaluate the level of local community have on the tourism, their attitude towards the environment and their local economic situation after the government proposed tourism and marketing the destination.

#### **CONCLUSION**

This study is applying social exchange theory to include a variable set measuring resident's level of support in planning the tourism. The supported path relationships between perceived benefits and costs imply in the study. This study assist to get some findings the perceived level of support by residents influences their perceptions of benefits and costs of the development. Residents who believed that they are capable to influence the government and policy decision and that tourism

business do or do not have much influence over decision making had more favorable perceptions than less powerful residents. Therefore, community support is an important tool to assist in the sustainable development of the industry. The supportive empowering the local residents in decision making can be an effective strategy to influence their perceptions on the industry. Residents should be allowed to participate actively in the decision making and give a voice in making the decision because it will issue affecting their live hood.

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