

LOCAL TOURIST PERCEPTION TOWARDS HOMESTAY: A STUDY IN MASJID TANAH, MELAKA

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ABSTRACT

Homestay is significant because it is regarded as a potentially good product in promoting the country as well as getting the community involved in the tourism industry through rural tourism. There are questions about infrastructure and promoting of Homestay towards local tourist perceptions should be emphasized. In this regard, the study aims to examine the local tourist perceptions towards Homestay in Masjid Tanah, Melaka. The factors studied in this study are the factor of infrastructure and promotion. The findings show that most tourist have good awareness towards Homestay itself.

Keywords: *Infrastructure, Promotion, Local Tourist*

PERSEPSI PELANCONG TEMPATAN TERHADAP INAPDESA: KAJIAN DI MASJID TANAH, MELAKA

ABSTRAK

Inapdesa adalah penting kerana ia dianggap sebagai produk yang berpotensi baik dalam mempromosikan negara serta melibatkan masyarakat dalam industri pelancongan melalui pelancongan luar bandar. Terdapat persoalan mengenai infrastruktur dan promosi inapdesa terhadap persepsi pelancong tempatan perlu dititikberatkan. Sehubungan itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji persepsi pelancong tempatan terhadap inapdesa di Masjid Tanah, Melaka. Faktor yang dikaji dalam kajian ini ialah faktor infrastruktur dan promosi. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan kebanyakan pelancong mempunyai kesedaran yang baik terhadap inapdesa itu sendiri.

Kata kunci: *Infrastruktur, Promosi, Pelancong Tempatan*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the main earning sources for Malaysia. Tourism activities are contributing positively on country's economy by earning foreign exchanges and employment creation (Bhuiyan, 2011). According to the World Travel and In Malaysia, a Homestay programmes is one of the tourism initiatives by the government to encourage the local people to get involved with tourism activities. Given that, this Homestay programmes is to encourage the villagers to involve in the programmes, an equal distribution of the benefits from the programmes among the villagers is mandatory (Noor et al, 2021). Besides the Homestay programmes gives chance to the local people to interact with tourists from other countries during the Homestay visits. These activities are in line with the notion of this programmes to improve the locals' quality of life by encouraging them to communicate with the Homestay tourists.

Homestay is an accommodation that ensures local community's sustainable wellbeing in term of economic, social and culture aspects where the main concept which Homestay is representing is the diversification of local people to attract the visitors Chaiyatom (2010). Through Homestay, tourists have the opportunity to visit rural villages and attractions as well as experience the hosts' culture in their homes. In consideration, the hosts receive the economic benefits in the form of monetary exchange from the products and services they provide. According to Othman (2022), Homestay programmes in Malaysia have been seen as an opportunity to generate additional income as indicated in the business model helping the Homestay operators nationwide earn some extra income from time to time. For example, villagers could show their handcraft in order to generate income and at the same time promote their village to get positive impacts to attract more local tourist. The Homestay operators are developing Malay culture and activities in their accommodations. Necessary spaces, level of quality and security of houses are important elements for the home stay operation in Malaysia.

Homestay locally owned and operated Homestay constitutes a suitable tourist accommodation for the local community to participate in tourism activities (Wall & Long, 1996). Enhance, Homestay cannot simply be classified as a form of accommodation because of its emphasis on the concept of lifestyle and experience, encompassing local culture and economies activities (Inversini, Rega & Gan 2022). International tourists participate in Homestays to experience for themselves the atmosphere of the village and its community's lifestyle. There are also visitors who join the program for cross-cultural study of language and rural communities' lifestyles. For domestic tourists, community programs and motivational courses also often involve Homestay programs as the main package.

Therefore, this research aims to investigate further on the relationship between infrastructure and promotion with tourist perception towards Homestay in Masjid Tanah, Melaka.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Homestay program provides tourists multi ethnic life condition with cultural experiences and economic well beings for the local people (Liu, 2006). Although the Homestay program officially commenced since 1995 and the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Malaysia has issued guidelines for its implementation, the question remains as to whether the Homestay program is executed as a community program or whether it is merely treated as an alternative form of accommodation (infrastructure). Under the guidelines drawn up by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, each house is only allowed to allocate two to three bedrooms, with one double bed or two single beds in each room. When these guidelines are not adhered to, Homestay operators in the same village or adjoining vicinities would naturally feel dissatisfied, especially if the Homestay program in that particular location proves to be more popular.

As for Malacca tourism department, the result of this study can be one way to prove that Malacca is rich with heritage. This including welcoming tourist to get feel about ‘village’ and lived with the owner style. Masjid Tanah is one area that have growth for time to time, and it will be a suitable area to do this study. Many studies mostly reported on the success of Homestay which only focuses on certain popular Homestay destinations (Nindum, 2021). despite there being many more Homestays in the list according to the records in the Ministry of Culture, Art and Tourism (MOTAC, 2011).

This research will be carried out in Masjid Tanah, Melaka. The choice of the study is based on the justification of the place and the development of the place. Masjid Tanah as one of Homestay that develop this industry from year to year to increasing their economy, social and so much more. Therefore, further research needs be done in order to enhance the body of knowledge by expanding research on other Homestay locations to explore their niche and possible challenges faced by the Homestay operators. Each Homestay community could face similar or different challenges in managing the operation as they are likely to offer different packages. Hence, the majority of existing research could be biased being restricted to a small sample size which may not be representative of the entire Homestay programme in Malaysia.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This kind of study is conducted to fulfill several objectives. Among the primary focus of this study is for:

- i. To identify relationship between infrastructure with the perception of local tourists towards Homestay in Masjid Tanah Melaka.
- ii. To identify relationship between promotion with the perception of local tourists towards Homestay in Masjid Tanah Melaka.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourist Perception

Study about tourist perceptions has grown and according to Hidayah et al. (2021), stated that perception is the processes in which people choose, organize, and interpret stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture. According to Bhuiyan (2013) has indicated that generally tourist perceptions towards impacts of the Homestay programme were to preserve the culture, improve the quality of life, and establish sustainable growth of tourism. This is because tourist perceptions might be an impact in Homestay its either positive impact or negative impact towards the operator, residents, or tourists. Therefore, according to Haltman and Säwe, (2016) the discourse of sustainability is in several ways structured around perceptions of wellbeing, concerning both the environment and the people. Tourist perceptions might be influenced by environment of the destinations of place and the person itself. Environment of the Homestay must be comfortable to attract the tourist.

Reisinger and Turner (2012) have explained that understanding of perceptions is important in social interactions because the way a person sees will determine how they have interaction with others. According to Reisinger and Turner (2012), there are 3 main aspects of understanding that can affect sociable and communication interactions. First of all, perceptions are really selective and limited to one

individual or one situation only in the specific context through which social interactions occur. Moment, perceptions involve organizations, that is, groups of men and women or objects according to their common characteristics, which allows us to generate a difference between them. Third, there is also a clear distinction between categories, which prevents the development of precise perceptions. Individual dissimilarities in categories are not easily recognizable and therefore create a perceived notion.

There are 3 types of perceptions:

- a) Perception of others.
 - For example, the perception of tourists to the host or the host's perception of travelers.
- b) Self-perception
 - Examples of tourist perceptions of yourself or your home's perception of yourself.
- c) Perception of perception (met-perception)
 - Shows how others see them. Examples of tourist perceptions of how the host sees them.

Subsequently, when the perception of something is very good, it is more likely that the product is selected from the same other product. In addition, if the perception of a method bad, then the tourists will discover another choice product alternative (Reisinger & Turner, 2012). On top of that, perceptions will also impact the satisfaction of travelers. According to Reisinger and Turner (2012), tourists have always had no knowledge of the tourist destinations they may have never gone to. Therefore, travelers should have a perception of option destinations and destinations that are believed appropriate. In bottom line when the between real perception and perception is considered appropriate, the amount of traveler satisfaction will be high.

Infrastructure

Physical carrying capacity, here the destination's ability to handle tourists crossing border control points and provide accommodation, attractions and transportation is appreciated by Hartwell et al (2016), infrastructure not just about the place for tourist sleep but about all of kind things that will help in achieve the tourist perceptions. The Homestay programmes has successfully contributed in providing alternative accommodation options to tourists that seek a different type of holiday compared to those offered in tourism packages. This gives them choice of accommodation and flexibility as to when they travel (Chan ,2004). There are some accommodation (infrastructure) units which provide cultural and artistic services, recreation services, informing services and commercial ones (Lipianin- Zontek & Szewczy (2019). The Malaysian tourism industry has been rising significantly in year by year. In the world rank Malaysia, stays in 31st position with good transport infrastructure and service facilities (Mohebi & Khalid, 2010). Infrastructure will help tourist perceptions to come true.

Suitable Homestay programs can positively affect local communities through improving social capital, developing community organizations, and building rural infrastructure (Amin et all 2013). For example, a good Homestay will attract tourist and this will help increasing the rural infrastructure or Homestay. Homestay tourism not only creates employment opportunities but also improves infrastructure and generates investment (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011). Tourists will live with a local family in a rural home and learn about close-knit family relationships, enjoy home-cooked food, and discover the simple lifestyle of the countryside. Tourism infrastructure can be regarded as the physical elements that are designed and erected to cater for visitors. The strong relationship between tourism development and infrastructure has been theoretically established by a number of authors (Adebayo & Iweka, 2014).

According to the Tourism & Transport Forum (TTF, 2012), tourism infrastructure is the supply chain of transport, social and environmental infrastructure collaborating at a regional level to create an attractive tourism destination. Thus, tourism infrastructure is the supply chain of transport, social and environmental infrastructure collaborating at a regional level to create an attractive tourism destination (TTF 2012).

- a) Transport infrastructure in this chain provides destination access to tourists from the international and domestic markets, and includes roads, airports, and railways.
- b) Social infrastructure relates to accommodation facilities in the form of rooms to accommodate tourists and other supporting physical structures for various kinds of activities and services that

attract tourists. This infrastructure includes hotels, convention centers, stadiums, galleries, and other necessary facilities.

- c) Environmental infrastructure is a natural value, and refers to national parks, marine parks, and reserves which visitors can tour.

In addition to these three types of infrastructure, tourism infrastructure includes the shared infrastructure, made of a network of regional, state, and national tourism organizations on the market where there is a tourist destination, and is engaged in the distribution of tourism products (TTF, 2012). Tourism infrastructure is the basis of tourism development, as well as a base for utilization of destination resources. The importance of tourism infrastructure like Homestay is reflected in the fact that it can contribute to increasing the efficiency of production and distribution of tourism services, and, in some cases, such as remote destinations, even increase the supply of tourism services that will fulfill the perceptions tourists hope can get at Homestay program.

Promotion

Since the beginning of this concept in Malaysia, some operators have aggressively promoted and marketed their Homestay product to the overseas markets. As a result, their Homestays have gained popularity especially among Japanese, Korean and Singaporean tourists (Jamilah & Amran 2007). As the programme seems to become more and more popular, it garnered the confidence of many newcomers to join the industry (MOTOUR, 2011). As the tourism industry has a significant impact in the economy of different nations in the world, tourism marketing and tourist destination sustainability are some of the most important things in research for the sustainability of the industry (Hartwell et al., 2016). Promotion are one of the marketing strategies to meet the tourist perceptions.

Tourism is a significant component of the growing footprint (Truong & Hall, 2015), while tourism marketing is the application of marketing concept in travel and tourism industry (Avraham & Ketter 2016) as it uses the four Ps, product, price, place and promotion in advertising tourist destination to consumers. There's several reason why use marketing strategies which is promotion as one of tools to influence tourist perceptions. Functional area in a tourism business organization and always uses a wide variety of communications strategies and techniques to promote areas and destinations (Avraham & Ketter, 2016). Using promotion as a tool to achieve the tourist perceptions towards the Homestay is one of good way to know how the promotion helping the Homestay promoters. However, the increasing rivalry in tourism marketing and a greater awareness that retaining effective strategies are critical to sustainable tourist destination development is changing views (Stoeckl et al., 2011). Promotion of critical factors that might influence the tourist perceptions.

The fourth element of the marketing mix is promotion, which is used to communicate with customers. This association is to encourage customers to buy products. Marketing mix means the product, distribution, promotion and pricing strategies to produce and carry out exchanges and achieve the target markets. Marketing mix is an interrelated actions and solutions to meet consumer needs and to achieve the company's marketing goals, a whole Sereikienė-Abromaitytė (2013). Promotion can affect sales in a huge way as it ultimately makes the product visible to the consumer. Marketing in its basic form was known to include only promotion and advertising. Marketing mix is a set of relevant factors and solutions that enable customers to meet the (national) needs and achieve the goals set by the company (Pruskus (2015). The promotion of the marketing mix is a tool that helps disseminate information, encourage the purchase and has an impact on the decision to buy. "4P" marketing mix elements. Supporter complex includes five elements, namely advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations and direct marketing. According to Kotler (2014), promotion as the activities a company performs in order to communicate to its existing and potential customers. Multiple channels were used to communicate to different parties (Distributors, customers) and different means could be used to do promotion.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

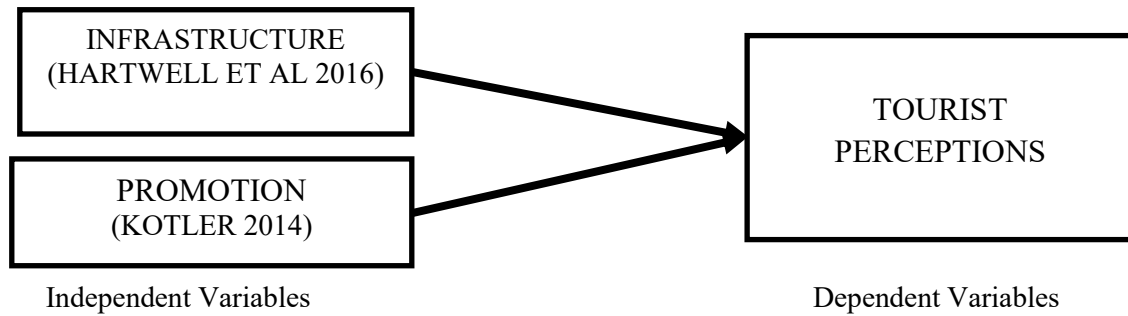


Figure 1: Framework of Local Tourist Perception Towards Homestay

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Hypothesis

This research is a correlation study. It is implemented at Homestay Masjid Tanah, Melaka. The framework is studying the relationship between infrastructure and promotion with tourist perceptions towards Homestay at Masjid Tanah, Melaka.

H₁: There are positive relationship between infrastructure and Tourist Perception.

H₂: There are positive relationship between Promotion and Tourist Perception.

Population and Sampling

This research using formula Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) which is $N > 50 + 8m$. There are 2 independent variables for this research, total sample that will be use is 66 respondents. That means, this research needs 66 respondents to get a significant value for each variable. The number of respondents corresponds to the amount of population inside the study area, according to Sekaran (2000) agrees with Roscoe that for most studies, a sample size between 30 and 500 would be sufficient.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study is based on a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire that distributes fast and it will save cost and time. The questionnaire was prepared in both English and Malay language. It consists of two parts namely demographic profile and tourist perception towards infrastructures and promotion.

Tourism infrastructure is aa range of device and institutions constituting materials and organizational basis for tourism development it comprises basic elements in accommodation facilities, food and beverage facilities, accompanying facilities, and communication facilities. There are 5 items in the questionnaire. The scale of measurement for measuring was a 5 points Likert type scale; with scoring of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The questionnaire example is, 'impression on the homestay infrastructure, road network'.

Promotion is one of tools in marketing strategies. Tourism marketing is the application of marketing concept in travel and tourism industry as it uses the four Ps, product, price, place and promotion in advertising tourist destination to consumers. There are 5 items in the questionnaire. The scale of measurement for measuring was 5 points Likert type scale; with scoring of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The questionnaire example is, 'which promotional channels provided you with further information social media'

Pilot Study

From this pilot study that will be distribute 30 questionnaire survey to respondents using convenience sampling, a pilot study will conduct to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument. This is

important to ensure that the instrument of research is easy to understand and can be used to check the variables research. The acceptable value of the alpha to determine the reliability is 0.70 (Konting, 2005)

Data Collection

Cluster sampling technique was used to collect the data among the tourists in Masjid Tanah, Melaka. Cluster sampling refers to types of sampling methods. Researcher will divide the population into separate groups, called cluster. After that, a simple random sample of clusters is selected from the population. Questionnaire was distributed among the tourist either domestic tourist or local at Masjid Tanah, Melaka

Data Analysis

Data was then analyzed descriptive statistic and inference statistics. In addition, to answer the first questions descriptive analysis will be use, second questions will use correlation analysis and the third questions will be use the regression analysis.

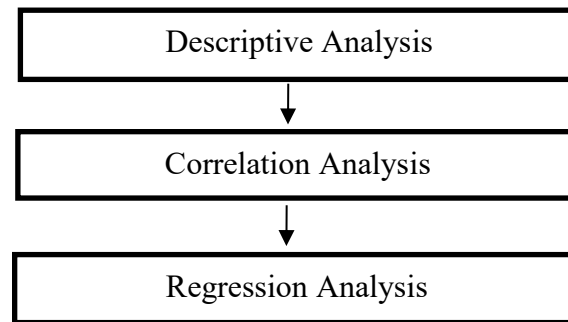


Figure 2: Process of Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis used to determine the level, frequency and percentage of the research variables. Many researchers believe that both descriptive and interpretative approaches entail interpretation, even if the interpretive component is downplayed or masked discussions if its broader narrative and exploration. In this research the demographic profile and variable will be analyzed using the descriptive analysis.

Second questions will use correlation analysis which is to determine the relationship between the variables. According to Pallant (2011), there are two types of statistical techniques aimed at understanding the correlation between the variables or to understanding the difference between the two groups. Pearson correlation is used to study the relationship between two related variables.

The third questions will be using regression analysis to look at the effects of dependent variables on independent variables. Most regression models are multiple regression models because very few economic phenomena can be explained by only a single explanatory variable.

DISCUSSION

The relationship between infrastructure and tourist perception

This study aims to investigate the relationship between infrastructure and tourist perception. It has been shown that there is a positive correlation between infrastructure and tourist perception.

Hypothesis 1 – There are positive relationship between infrastructure and tourist perception.

The relationship between promotion and tourist perception

This study aims to investigate the relationship between promotion and tourist perception. It has been shown that there is a positive correlation between promotion and tourist perception.

Hypothesis 2 – There are positive relationship between promotion and tourist perception.

CONCLUSION

The lifestyle of proper tourist facilities in the Homestay is very important for tourist development in the future. The visitors view network in the Homestay is relatively good and a similar view is also held by the local people. Homestay not just the place for tourist sleeps but all about of kind things that will help in achieve the tourist perception.

As the tourism industry has a significant impact in the economy of different nations in the world, tourism marketing and tourist destination sustainability are some of the most important things in research for the sustainability of the industry. Promotion also one of the marketing strategies to meet the tourist perception. Promotion as the activities a company performs in order to communicate to it existing and potential customers. Multiple channels were used to communicate to different parties and different means could be used to do promotion. All the issues have to be seen as one of factors that could do to improve and enhance the program to perform better in future.

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