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EXPLORE SOCIAL STRATEGIES IN SUSTAINING LOCAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN BATANG KALI, SELANGOR

Nik Anas Aiman R Azmi*(a), & Zaliza Azan*(b)
Corresponding author*

(a) *Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia, kl2204010838@student.kuptm.edu.my*

(b) *Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia, zaliza@uptm.edu.my*

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the sustainability of local tourism development in Batang Kali, Selangor, with a specific focus on the social aspects. It examines the roles and responsibilities within the community that contribute to tourism growth, the challenges faced by organizations, and potential strategies for continuous development. Batang Kali, nestled at the base of the Titiwangsa Mountains and near the resort city of Genting Highlands, is recognized as a potential hub for railway transport and logistics due to the East Coast Rail Link (ECRL). Despite the pandemic's impact on the local tourism industry, Batang Kali has seen the emergence of numerous recreational parks and holiday resorts, especially along the route leading to Genting Highlands. These developments have been licensed by the Selangor Water Management Authority under the Emission or Discharge of Pollutants (State of Selangor) Regulations 2012. The article also emphasizes the importance of semi-structured interviews as a tool for gathering data, enabling participants to share complex interactions, express viewpoints, and aid in understanding the research problem without enforcing preconceived ideas onto the study. The insights derived from these interviews offer a holistic understanding of the challenges and potential remedies for maintaining local tourism development in Batang Kali. The article underscores the need for innovative strategies and adaptability in the face of changing circumstances to ensure the sustainability of local tourism development in Batang Kali, Selangor.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tourism which is defined as a journey made by individuals or groups to visit a specific location for leisure, personal growth, or to discover the attraction's uniqueness. The term "tourism" encompasses all related activities and reflects the needs of the nation and its citizens, as well as the interactions between visitors, locals, governments, and businesses. The concept of sustainability in tourism has become a major concern in recent years. Many nations have started addressing social and environmental issues by forming new alliances, enacting national policies, and promoting eco-friendly travel practices within the tourism sector. These actions aim to balance the demands on the environment, economy, social justice, cultural integrity, and mass tourism with long-term sustainable solutions. Sustainability, in general, refers to a strategy that prioritizes addressing current needs without jeopardizing the capacity of future generations to meet their own needs.

Additionally, it describes sustainability as an evolving process that allows everyone to reach their full potential and better their standard of living while also preserving and enhancing the Earth's life support system. They believe that there is a clear connection between sustainability, tourism, and quality of life. The study will focus on destinations with extremely valuable natural environments, such as the Batang Kali area, which face sustainability issues. This study aims to explore the various roles that sustain local tourism development in the Batang Kali community, focusing on the relationships between different stakeholders and the natural and cultural resources that form the foundation of the tourism industry. It seeks to identify efficient procedures and potential areas for development that can support sustainable tourism. The study also aims to understand the various obstacles that organizations face in maintaining local tourism growth, including socioeconomic barriers and environmental issues.

1.1 Research Objectives:

1. To explore the roles in sustaining the local tourism development in the community.
2. To understand the difficulties that the organization faces in ensuring the sustainability of local tourism within the community.
3. To explore potential strategies for the continued development of local tourism in the community.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 THE ROLE OF SUSTAINABILITY IN MODERN TOURISM

Travel has become a staple in the daily lives of many, with the urge to explore persisting despite global challenges or terror threats. In 2019, about 1.4 billion people across the globe embarked on journeys, making tourism one of the most significant and rapidly expanding industries. Tourism, often perceived as an extension of the relationship between a brand and its consumers, is an intangible commodity that relies more on experiences and trust than physicality. Essentially, tourism is a societal occurrence that arises when individuals visit and stay temporarily in places outside their usual residences.

Tourism can be seen as a bridge connecting the environment, the brand, and the consumer. Any real-world tourism operation must address the potential and actual impacts on both the environment and the tourists. Like contemporary businesses, tourism endeavors aim for sustainability. However, outstanding tourism performance should not be solely credited to non-financial benefits or fleeting advantages without taking into account the socio-cultural and environmental impacts.

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The concept of sustainable tourism development has garnered considerable attention in various scientific research, especially in tourism studies. This area of study has seen rapid expansion since the late 1980s. Buckley (2012) suggests that the term “sustainable tourism” was first introduced nearly two decades ago. The initial decade focused on researching basic frameworks from tourism, economics, and environmental management backgrounds. The following decade saw the emergence of several reconceptualization’s and critiques, such as those by Sharpley (2000), Gossling (2002), Liu (2003), Saarinen (2006), Lane (2009), and Liu (2013).

The most commonly accepted definition of sustainable development is “development that fulfills the needs of the present without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to fulfill their own needs” (The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), 1987). This concept suggests that social justice, environmental conservation, and economic growth are all interrelated and mutually supportive.

4.0 SOCIAL

Tourism, a multifaceted phenomenon, has profound social, cultural, economic, and environmental implications. It has the power to transform communities, influencing everything from value systems and individual behaviors to family dynamics, societal norms, ethical standards, artistic expressions, traditional rituals, and community structures, as outlined by Jaafar, Ismail, and Rasoolimanesh.

The impact of tourism, both positive and negative, is experienced through various social and cultural dimensions. Encounters with tourists can trigger cultural shifts and also have reciprocal effects on the well-being of individuals. On the bright side, tourism can contribute to the preservation of heritage, community development, revitalization of traditions and arts, and safeguarding of local culture and history (Rasoolimanesh, Jaafar, Ahmad, & Barghi, 2017). Additionally, tourism-driven investments often lead to infrastructural enhancements and facility upgrades, thereby improving the quality of life.

Furthermore, foreign ideas are shared when locals and visitors interact, creating a global culture and common worldwide best practices. However, tourism can also negatively impact people' behavioral patterns, way of life, and standard of living (Jaafar et al., 2017).

There are instances when tourism leads to social problems and generates worries, such as prostitution, shortages of water and other natural resources, excessive traffic, degradation of the environment, and congestion (Monterrubio et al., 2020). According to Helgadóttir et al. (2019), overdevelopment for tourist amenities can also interfere with daily life, lead to housing scarcity and traffic, and make inhabitants feel uncomfortable and dangerous. As a result, some may choose to relocate.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Figures and Tables

The current analysis employed a qualitative research methodology. According to earlier study (Patton, 2002; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), the qualitative approach enables an in-depth study of subjects without bringing preconceived preconceptions into the research scenario. According to Edwards and Holland (2013), an interview that is semi-structured is an arrangement in which the interviewee is free to respond to questions in any manner as long as the researcher provides a list of questions or themes they want to cover, like an interview guide. According to Bachiochi and Weiner (2002), semi-structured interviews allow research participants to describe

their feelings in greater detail, offer insights that the researchers may not have anticipated, and generate more high-quality and quantitative data than is usually found in questionnaire surveys. Semi-structured interviews are a useful method for gathering data because they let participants explain intricate relationships, reveal participant viewpoints, and help comprehend the research question without imposing preexisting notions on the investigation (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Grbich, 1999).

Participants targeted for this study are entrepreneur’s business owners who run the tourism business activities that attract tourists to the local area like Hill Lock, Dusun Bonda (Glamping), and 82 Rening. The Batang Kali area's entrepreneur business owners were chosen as the sample of interview subjects. There are financial and pragmatic reasons for this. It is advised to use the maximum by diversity sampling method for unstructured, semi-structured, or in-depth interviews, as it used for this study (Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell & Alexander, 1995; Patton, 2002). A snowball sampling mechanism is used to improve this sampling strategy. Interviewees are asked to select others who they believe could be interested in participating in this study and who might be different from them (Patton, 2002). When the traits that samples are expected to possess are uncommon and challenging to locate, snowball sampling, often referred to as chain-referral, is a non-probability (nonrandom) sampling technique utilized.

The interview process started in early March 2024 in which we had got two respondents from Batang Kali, Selangor tourism places. Whether there's a limited number of respondents that we had for this research, the materials that we gathered are sufficient with detailed information and also they meet with the requirements for credibility with strong support for the findings of our research. For the interview session, the first respondent we interviewed was by phone call directly, while the second interview we interviewed face to face at the outside of the organization and informal like the restaurant. Each of the interviewees had received a briefing about the studies and the processes in question and answer (Q&A) session before the interview process started. Further investigation and questioning inquiries are employed to get closer into the points of view provided by the interviewees. Respondents are guaranteed that their information will be kept private and confidential and utilized specifically for the study purpose. Each of the interview sessions for each respondent are almost an hour. All interviewees cooperated on giving the permission to record video and audio for the interview session to make it easier for researchers to gather the information for the study.

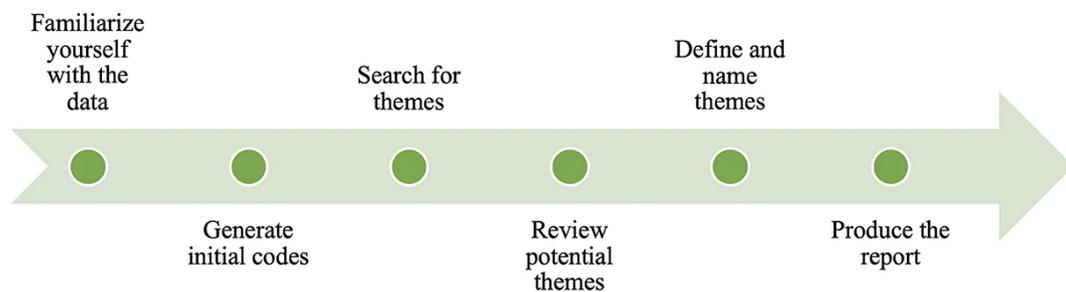


Figure 1. Thematic Analysis Process

The data analysis technique used in this study is Thematic Analysis. The recorded interviews were transcribed code to create a dataset of text. Then the data underwent a structured analysis process to identify and label segments with descriptive codes representing key concepts or ideas. These codes were then organized into potential themes based on commonalities and connections found within the data. The themes were refined through

a process in the study's finding, aiming to enhance social cohesion and community participation in tourism development, managing cultural conflicts, addressing how tourism affects regional social institutions, and making sure that tourism benefits the community are all potential challenges.

6.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The social theme pertains to the promotion and preservation of local culture and societal norms through tourism, with the aim of enhancing social cohesion and community participation in tourism development. Managing cultural conflicts, addressing how tourism affects regional social institutions, and making sure that tourism benefits the community are all potential challenges. Future recommendations should focus on developing cultural awareness among travelers, encouraging community-based tourism, and increasing community involvement in tourism planning and management. A word cloud, also known as a text cloud or tag cloud, is a visualization method used in research to analyze textual data. It displays words to emphasize their importance or frequency, with more frequently occurring words appearing larger, sometimes bolder, or in a different color. This creates a visually appealing image that allows researchers to quickly understand the main concepts and themes in a text corpus.

The first step in this process is data collection. Extracting textual data from various sources is essential to gather raw material for qualitative analysis on strategies to sustain local tourism development. Interviews with locals and tourism industry experts provide key insights into sustainable tourism techniques and the challenges faced in the local context. To preserve the depth of the data, it's crucial that the interviews are accurately recorded. Details, opinions, and specific information from respondents can be captured through audio recordings or meticulous note-taking. These interviews form the basis for understanding the complexities of local tourist dynamics.

The second step involves preparing the data for analysis. Researchers need to remove all irrelevant information that might distort the true picture. This includes punctuation marks such as commas, periods, and question marks that serve grammatical purposes but are irrelevant in the context of word frequency. Likewise, formatting symbols such as carriage returns or line breaks are removed. By eliminating these extraneous details, the textual data becomes more focused and cleaner, making it easier for word cloud generators to identify important phrases and topics in the content.

In the third stage, a dynamic word cloud is created by uploading the cleaned text data. Through an online generator, researchers can examine several visualizations of the most commonly occurring words in their dataset. Customization capabilities allow researchers to make individual changes to the word cloud's appearance, matching the design to their preferred style or the overarching subject of the study project.

The final step involves uncovering narratives in word clouds created from cleaned text data. Words in word clouds exhibit a direct correlation to their size; larger words occur more frequently in the dataset. These key terms often indicate important themes or issues related to the research question, offering valuable insights into the most common ideas in the text. Additionally, the order of words in a word cloud may provide additional levels of interpretation.



Figure 2 shows a Word Cloud results

7.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study is centered on comprehending the conditions, community participation, and potential impacts associated with the sustainability of local tourism in Batang Kali, Selangor, with a particular emphasis on the social aspects. Initially, our research undertook a thorough assessment of resources, encompassing community analysis, environmental evaluation, and examination of tourism services and facilities.

These resources were meticulously scrutinized to identify their potential for sustainable local tourism development. Subsequently, the involvement of the community emerged as a crucial factor for tourism development.

Understanding how local communities engage with tourism development is vital for sustainable planning and decision-making. For instance, tourist attractions in Batang Kali, such as Hot Springs, Waterfalls, rivers, Scenic viewpoints, and more, require community awareness and involvement to maintain cleanliness and attract tourists.

Furthermore, as part of the sustainability of tourism development and attraction, strategies were developed for tourists, such as creating mini farm and mini zoo concepts to attract more visitors to Batang Kali. This also included providing affordable accommodations with numerous available facilities for the visiting tourists.

In conclusion, this research offers valuable insights for promoting sustainable tourism in Batang Kali, Selangor. It emphasizes community participation, resource management, and responsible development, all within a social context, thereby ensuring that the benefits of tourism are shared equitably among all members of the community.

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