

Determinants of tourism routes for tourism development: the mediating role of tourist satisfaction in Malaysia islands

S.M. Hashemi *, J. Jusoh

School of Housing, Building & Planning (HBP), University, Sians Malaysia (USM)

Abstract: The emergence of tourism routes has played a major role in advocating community based tourism serving as a collective marketing tool for mostly small tourism enterprises within a particular destination. In Malaysia nowadays, route tourism is becoming positively developed, including connecting with each other the tourism resources of a number of smaller locations and marketing them jointly as an individual tourism destination area. This particular advancement is more extreme in the case of Island destinations due to their geographic restrictions. A framework for tourism development in the Islands the government of Malaysia is in the process of tourism development goals that make the country one of the best destinations in Asian countries. This research is a framework of the top concern areas for tourism development in Malaysia. The concentrate on the study is tourist route and role of international tourist towards the effects of tourism development in the Islands. The paper discusses how the researcher proposed research framework and strategy to obtain into consideration the developing of tourism destinations base on Islands.

Key words: Tourist route; Destination; Tourism development; Tourist satisfaction; Island

1. Introduction

Today, Tourism remains the world's largest industry and one of the fastest growing sectors, accounting for over one-third of the value of total worldwide services trade (WTO, 2006). Tourism takes various forms on many Islands off the east and west coasts of Peninsular Malaysia. Tourism development started largely as an unplanned process in many Islands (Hashemi, 2014a). In recent years, tourism route have been developed and planned on some Islands in Malaysia. The distinctive nature of the Islands gives rise to specific tourism-environment relationships which can be critical for Islands. Increasing importance is being placed on planned development and environmental aspects of Island tourism development (Wilkinson, 2008). Route tourism is essentially a market-driven approach for tourism destination development (Meyer, 2004). As argued at the beginning of this study the concept of 'route development' is described as the world's best hope to secure sustainability in travel and tourism (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004). The concept is particularly useful on a micro economic-scale because of the involvement of local communities. Besides the economic benefits, tourism can also be conducive to environmental and cultural conservation efforts. Tourism routes can therefore be seen as a vehicle for a variety of government and private sector developmental objectives (Hall et al., 2003; Meyer, 2003).

2. Review of literature

Certainly, there is necessary information on international tourist routes of the country of origin to the destination country and creating it feasible to evaluate the development and, probably, the achievement in appealing to tourists to the destination. A number of observers illustrate 'route tourism' as the world's best except for obtaining durability in travel and tourism (Calvin, 2010). The phrase relates to an effort to provide together a variety of activities and attractions under a unified theme and therefore promote entrepreneurial opportunity through the development of ancillary products and services (Lourens, 2007). The development of tourism routes as tourist attractions has gained prominence in recent years (Hashemi, 2014b). One crucial purpose of these routes, apart from attracting tourists to a location, is to tie-up a number of attractions that might individually, not have the possible to attract visitors to spend some time and money. Utilizing a synergy impact guarantees to have higher pulling power, and it furthermore disperses visitors' money among a bigger quantity of recipients. Generally, the root idea is regarded as by numerous tourism analysts to be an efficient approach of tourism distribution (Meyer, 2004; ECI Africa, 2006). Routes vary considerably in length and scale (local, regional or international), and attract different kinds and numbers of tourists (Meyer, 2004). According to Meyer (2004), routes

* Corresponding Author.

seem to be a particularly good opportunity for developing less explored areas with valuable cultural resources that appeal to special interest tourists, who often not only stay longer but also spend more to pursue their particular interest.

2.1. Tourism development

The growth of the tourism industry has been most timely for several Southeast Asia countries in view of several more general economic and political changes which have taken place in the region over the past two decades (Henderson, 2003). Tourism development in Malaysia is constrained by certain socioeconomic and political factors which require planning considerations beyond the traditional concerns for growth and promotion. Apart from the New Economic Policy which calls for racial-spatial economic restructuring and indigenization of control, tourism development in Malaysia requires reconciliation with the less than liberal religious and cultural orientations of the populace (Holidaying, 2003).

2.2. Tourist satisfaction

Satisfaction is then defined as "a judgement that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provides a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment" Oliver (1997) or as an overall evaluation of a purchase (Fornell, 1992). MacKay & Crompton (1990) define satisfaction in a similar way by focusing on the "psychological outcome which emerges from experiencing the service" (MacKey & Crompton, 1990). Tourist satisfaction is defined as post-consumption evaluation concerning a specific product or service (Westbrook & Oliver, 1991), and proposed to be one of the key judgments that tourists make regarding a tourism service. Hence, it is a well-established, long-standing focus marketer attention (Yuksel & Yuksel, 2002).

2.3. Accessibility

One of the major foundations of tourism is the travel or transport component (Prideaux, 2000). A destination is in many respects defined by its ability to provide appropriate visitor access into a destination and dispersal throughout the destination (Harrill, 2004). The dispersal of visitors throughout a region can provide economic and social benefits including improved services to the host community (Prideaux, 2000). Development of appropriate access for visitors to and within a destination includes consideration of a number of key factors (Hall & Brown, 2006).

2.4. Attractions

A tourist attraction is a place of interest where tourists visit, typically for its inherent or exhibited natural or cultural value, historical significance,

natural or built beauty, offering leisure, adventure and amusement (Newsome et al, 2012). "Natural sites, man-made facilities, businesses or destinations of provincial scope/ interest that generate visitation from outside the immediate/local area; by offering outdoor, educational, scientific, natural, cultural, heritage or entertainment experiences. An attraction's primary purpose is to provide visitors with an experiential product designed to satisfy the traveling needs of visitors but where the sale of goods is of a secondary nature (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004).

2.5. Activity

Tourism characteristic activities can be identified as those productive activities whose principal output is characteristic of tourism (Frechtling, 2010). Tourism is a collection of activities, services and industries which deliver a travel experience comprising transportation, accommodation, eating and drinking establishments, retail shops, entertainment businesses and other hospitality services provided for individuals or groups traveling away from home (Ottenbacher et al., 2009).

2.6. Safety

Safety and security are vital to providing quality in tourism. More than any other economic activity, the success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide a safe and secure environment for visitors (Azam, 2010). Safety and security have always been indispensable condition for travel and tourism. But it is an incontestable fact that safety and security issues gained a much bigger importance in the last two decades in tourism. Changes in the World during the last two decades were enormous (Kovari & Zimányi, 2011). Due terrorist acts, local wars, natural disasters, epidemics and pandemics, that we were witnesses to, security has significantly decreased. The travel and tourism industry could not avoid the negative impacts and consequences of these events. Moreover some of these events manifested the vulnerability of tourism both on global and regional levels (Prashyanusorn et al., 2010).

3. Model on tourism routes

Mariot created a model in 1969, where three different routes link the tourist's origin with the destination. As Figure1 indications, the model identifies an access route, a return route and a recreational route. By using these routes, the traveller is given a direct connection between two places. There is also a third route called recreational route, providing the traveller with a range of services. The model by Mariot indicates that the traveler may enter the recreational route at any time for only part of the journey, making modeling even less predictable given the range of possible options

and motivations to tour. The most important spatial principle inherent in Mariot's model is that of touring Mariot's Model of Tourist route between Two Locations Access routes -the concept of visiting several places during one trip.

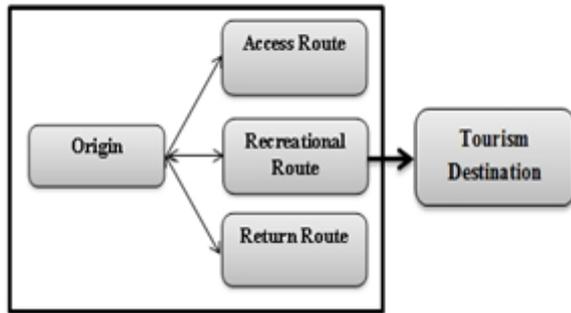


Fig. 1: Model of tourist route between two locations

4. Conceptual research framework

Depending on the variables referred to in section 2.1 to 2.6, the conceptual framework has been designed (Figure 2). The framework has the characteristics of accessibility, attractions, activity, and Safety as independent variables (IVs) and the tourist Satisfaction is a mediating variable (MV), and tourism development is a dependent variable (DV). The framework is utilized to investigation the direct effect of the relationships between independent variables constructs on tourism development in the Malaysia Island. Moreover, it determines the indirect effects of tourist Satisfaction on the relationship between independent variables constructs, and tourism development. The unit of analysis for the research is the individual international tourist in the Malaysia Island.

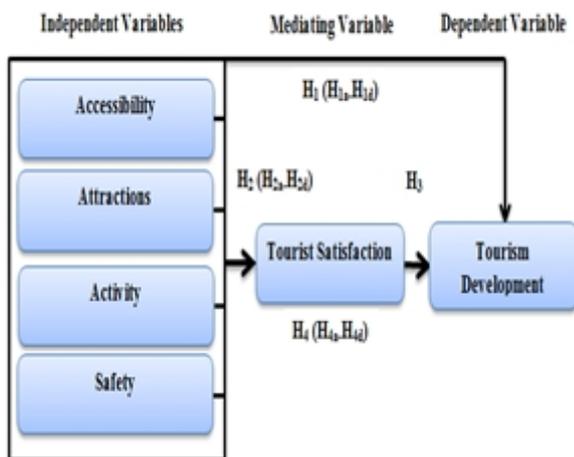


Fig. 2: Conceptual research framework with hypothesized relationship

5. Hypotheses development

Through the conceptual research framework, the research hypotheses for the present research are developed and linked with the conceptual

framework of the research; thirteen hypotheses are mentioned as follows:

- H_{1a}:** Accessibility has a positive and significant relationship with tourism development
- H_{1b}:** Attractions has a positive and significant relationship with tourism development
- H_{1c}:** Activity has a positive and significant relationship with tourism development
- H_{1d}:** Safety has a positive and significant relationship with tourism development
- H_{2a}:** Accessibility has positive and significant mediating effects on the relationship with tourist satisfaction on tourism development
- H_{2b}:** Attractions has positive and significant mediating effects on the relationship with tourist satisfaction on tourism development
- H_{2c}:** Activity has positive and significant mediating effects on the relationship with tourist satisfaction on tourism development
- H_{2d}:** Safety has positive and significant mediating effects on the relationship with tourist satisfaction on tourism development
- H₃:** Tourist satisfaction mediates the relationship between independent variables and tourism development.
- H_{4a}:** Accessibility has positive and significant Mediating effects on the relationship with tourist satisfaction on tourism development
- H_{4b}:** Attractions has positive and significant Mediating effects on the relationship with tourist satisfaction on tourism development
- H_{4c}:** Activity has positive and significant Mediating effects on the relationship with tourist satisfaction on tourism development
- H_{4d}:** Safety has positive and significant Mediating effects on the relationship with tourist satisfaction on tourism development

6. Discussion

Considering that the 1970s, tourism development in Malaysia experienced continuously developed from an alternative field to grow to be a major aspect in the national economic system. It absolutely was incontrovertible that the traveling component for the achievement of tourism industry was induced by its factor to the local economy and for that reason; the tourism industry grew to become an agent for advancement particularly to local tourist destination. Generally, with proper government and private sector leadership, route tourism can play a catalytic role in the economic development of communities. The level of capital invested resulted in a renaissance for local economies, attracting high volumes of visitors. In comparison, the Midlands Meander started tiny and increased naturally. Despite the fact that it has changed the local economy, this route appeals to far less visitors than its alternatives on other continents. The good harmony between all aspects of route tourism development is significant and must be localized to make sure optimistic outcomes. The value of the role of local government and private sector stakeholders during the execution

and in the continuing management of routes cannot be overemphasized, especially in the Malaysia context (see Rogerson, 2002b; Meyer, 2004).

7. Conclusions

The tourism route stays a great advancement strategy as islands possess distinctive natural, social or public attractiveness that generally vaporized to a huge level of tourism. In that regard, route tourism may be described as an effort that provides with each other a variety of activities and points of interest under a unified theme and therefore galvanize entrepreneurial opportunity through the development of ancillary products and services. An overall broad policy implication which may be drawn from this study is that island improvement can enhance their tourist routes, not only by trading on the sources of expansion such as investment in physical and human investment and deal which remain the main ingredients, but also by strategically harnessing the contribution the tourism industry. To promote tourism routes as facilitating tourist during their trip. It is necessary that suitable inspiration, strategies and processes to assist in tourism and the providers are in location; this might be in the form of fundamental facilities such as good transport and communication system and tax affairs to the hotels and other tourism related industrial sectors. Furthermore, infrastructure preparing improvement associated with great power and a sanitary feature is also essential to support tourism route development plans. In addition, the government also assures the security of both foreign and domestic tourists. Is considered that close cooperation of governments with national tourism industry actors at large to support tourism development strategies is needed and also that policy makers should follow sustainable tourism plans for an attractive sustainable tourism and economic development.

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