Over-development in rural tourism: Tourism impact, local community satisfaction and dissatisfaction

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Abstract

Purpose of the study
This study explores local community satisfaction in relation to tourism development and its impacts on the community, particularly economic, social, cultural and environmental.

Methodology
This study was conducted in the Cameron Highlands. Interviews were conducted with five Orang Asli employees of the selected tourism sites; the data from these in-depth, semi-structured interviews was transcribed using ATLAS.ti and analyzed using thematic analysis.

Main findings
The community members perceived social, cultural and economic impacts of tourism development positively. Modernization is recognized among the community members. However, the environmental negative impact such as crowded public place has disrupted their daily life.

Social implications
New perspectives on long-term tourism development for selected places are promoted by this study, which helps the development of indigenous peoples, particularly in Malaysia. Several additional issues need to be addressed by the authorities in designing and administering tourism sites, notably in reference to community acceptability and involvement, as well as the desire for benefits to both local communities and the tourism sites themselves. '

Originality/Novelty of the study
This study supports the results reported in prior studies suggesting that a more active involvement is more effective in planning and managing tourism development. Therefore, it is crucial for the government related agencies and businesses to respond strategically to local communities' input to ensure tourism sustainability.

Keywords: Overdevelopment; tourism development; local community; rural society; Orang Asli

Introduction

Overview of Orang Asli

Seventy countries throughout the world have more than 370 million indigenous people (W. Liu, Vogt, Luo, & He). They have distinct social, cultural, economic, and political patterns from the dominant communities in which they dwell, and they maintain their own unique practises(Krannich & Petrzelka, 2003) These people are the descendants of the earliest residents of a country or geographical area that was later inhabited by people of different cultures or ethnic backgrounds, from the Arctic to the South Pacific. Through conquest, occupation, settlement, or other ways, the newer peoples became dominant.

Peninsular Malaysia's indigenous Orang Asli people are divided into 18 distinct ethnic groups, each with their own distinct dialects and cultures.

They are socially and culturally ostracised). The indigenous tribes dwell in remote areas, far from the modernization and civilization that is typical in urban areas. Displacement schemes were put in place in the 1960s to ensure that these tribes were not left out of the benefits of civilization.

Economic, educational, religious, and cultural aspects were all included in the plan's socio-cultural components .However, there has been a steady rise in the number of tourists visiting indigenous or aboriginal cultures around the world, including Malaysia (Perdue, Long, & Allen, 1990; Saarinen, 2006). An increase in tourism in indigenous communities can have both beneficial and bad consequences on people's daily routines. In order to meet the needs of future tourists, UNEP (United Nations Environment Program, 2015) recommends that new tourist destinations adhere to a set of destination criteria and requirements, including design, landscape, amenities, and provisions. The (Schofield, 2011; H. Wang, Yang, Chen, Yang, & Li, 2010) study indicated that very few travellers genuinely accept the new environment, focused primarily on searching for the facilities that they frequently use, such as hotel chains and fast-food restaurants. In light of this, all forms of tourism development may have a harmful impact on the indigenous environment.

Background on over-development in rural tourism globally

For many regions, rural tourism has become a major driving factor for economic and social growth. Getting rid of poverty while also fostering a sense of community affluence are the two cornerstones of this initiative. According to (W. Wang, Qiao, Cheng, Sun, & He, 2019), the tourist industry has flourished as a result of economic growth and rising living standards. However, the rise of a tourism sector has resulted in increasingly serious environmental issues.

Development in the Cameron Highlands, for example, could have a negative impact on its own success because of the increasing number of visitors and rate of development in that area. There have been a number of environmental and resource-damaging issues in any place that is similar (H. Wang et al., 2010).

Since tourism destinations and its stakeholders are ultimately accountable for the growth of the area, it is important to keep a close eye on both the positives and negatives. Because of this, a constant planning and management process is necessary to ensure the long-term viability of tourism.

In this case, stakeholders must work together to ensure that economic, social, and aesthetic requirements may be met while preserving cultural integrity, critical ecological processes, biological diversity, and life-support systems in the environment (Dabour, 2003).

Governing bodies should play an important role in ensuring that the economic, environmental, and social aspects of tourism are balanced in the future, in order to promote sustainable tourism. Overdevelopment in the tourism business is a term that is not easily defined. In contrast, Cayman News believes that over-development of tourist attractions worsens traffic in high-traffic areas and lowers the standard of living for locals. As a result, carbon dioxide emissions and energy use are both increasing in tourist locations that attract a large number of visitors each year(H. Wang et al., 2010).

There are instances when capacity is exceeded in terms of infrastructure and community acceptance. The number of visitors visiting the Cameron Highlands is considered excessive on certain days. Tourists and locals alike will be forced to deal with heavy traffic in their neighbourhoods if this situation occurs. A single-minded pursuit of economic expansion can lead to the devastation of the environment through pollution such as carbon emissions from tourism

transportation, sewage discharge from tourism lodging, ecological damage during tourists' travel, and other issues(W. Wang et al., 2019).

Tourists in the Cameron Highlands exceeded 750,000 last year, making this possible. Although four roads have been constructed to get to the hill station, there is only one main route in the Highlands proper, according to(Aref, Redzuan, & Gill, 2009; Bachleitner & Zins, 1999) During extended holidays, an average of over 10,000 cars a day would arrive in the neighbourhood, overwhelming the parking lot capacity.

In the context of the tourist development life cycle, the term "carrying capacity" has been used to describe the point at which tourism becomes unsustainable .When the number of tourists exceeds the ideal number of people to be there at any one time, it is known as overcrowding. There are numerous traffic delays in the Cameron Highlands due to the government's lack of planning and organisation (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000).

Literature Review

Cultural Impact

Rural tourism development can have some socio-cultural advantages. The society around tourism destinations is healthier; the local people become used to interacting easily with the tourists, developing abroad minded way of thinking, imitating good habits and understanding other people's habits. In addition, the society may be willing to maintain their own culture, like traditional dances, traditional culinary and heritage, accepting differences and also encouraging people to contribute in tourists' activities. The growth of rural tourism can help to elucidate residents' cultural identity and can contribute to the preservation and revival of their traditional arts, crafts and culture(Jaafar, Kayat, Tangit, & Yacob, 2013; Kim, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2013; Ko & Stewart, 2002).

Ultimately, predicting residents' support for tourism development is a function of the perceived affects on their community (Maksimović, Urošević, & Mihajlović, 2015; Manyara & Jones, 2007). If the local people have a positive perception of the impact of tourism, there is a greater chance of their supporting it. Conversely, should they perceive an abundance of negative impacts, there is the risk that they will withdraw their backing from development of tourism(Krannich & Petrzelka, 2003; Kunasekaran et al., 2017) .

Cultural tourism enables tourists to learn and become aware of the history of the local community. The tourists are able to observe the life from the past, encouraging a feeling of uniqueness. However, Bachleitner and (Zhu, Liu, Wei, Li, & Wang, 2017) explained there are popular destinations of cultural tourism which are no longer classic or traditional places; instead they have been transformed into well developed and new culture centres which affect the original well preserved culture. The authors also argued that, with the rising demands of cultural tourism, exploitation without consideration may lead to negative side effects, harming the cultural identity and authenticity of the local community.

It is believed that the vital challenge of tourism is sustainability without damaging the natural and cultural background (Aghaei Chadegani et al., 2013; Aref et al., 2009) and cultural effects of tourism on indigenous remained a popular research area. Although tourism development can improve local economic growth, the research questions the cultural commoditization that can cause loss of authenticity and cultural values. While the growth of tourism depends on the attraction of the unique culture and heritage, it is necessary to preserve these customs and culture from damage, especially by business considerations. Azhar Ismail, (Aghaei Chadegani et al., 2013; Aref et al., 2009; Perdue et al., 1990; Saarinen, 2006) pointed out that the improvement of indigenous people is not only due to government intervention but also an outcome of the increasing tourism activities. However, they found that the indigenous communities have been through changes, especially due to modernization.

Social Impact

Rural areas are exposed to the outer world because of tourism. According to (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000) tourists have an impact on people's values, their families, their lives and their sense of security. They also have an impact on artistic expressions, traditional rites and community organisations. A effective marketing campaign will only be successful if it has the support of the local community, who will only help if they believe rural tourism would benefit them and their towns. Researchers (Garau-Vadell, Gutierrez-Taño, & Diaz-Armas, 2018; Haralambopoulos &

Pizam, 1996) have claimed that the beneficial consequences of tourism development will encourage local communities to participate in exchanges of ideas and support future tourist development. Being active in tourism can lead to a wide range of possibilities, including employment in homestays and jungle trekking firms, as well as building up handicrafts and retailing businesses (Saarinen, 2006; Schofield, 2011).

The quality of life in a community may be affected by a company's social impact (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Horowitz, 2016). It was determined by Ap and Crompton (1998) that favourable socio-cultural benefits would increase the standard of living, infrastructure and facilities, giving overall safety and enhancing interactions between the visitors and the host community. As a result of this, rural tourism in many countries has been actively promoted by stakeholders such as governments and the tourism industry, but without an overall effective strategy, such as successful protected area management plans and without consultation or inclusion of the local populations (Saarinen, 2006; Schofield, 2011).. Since the difficulty with rural tourism is that local folks tend to be less trained and educated than their urban counterparts, this isn't too surprising. Because of this, there is a risk that the misinformed local communities may lose their own cultural heritage and abandon their traditional lifestyles in order to pursue new global trends, which will have a negative impact on the rural tourism industry.

Economic Impact

According to (E. Lee, 2008; T. H. Lee & Jan, 2019)tourism is a constantly growing service-driven industry which requires skills and knowledge to function successfully. It can be a method to overcome poverty, mainly in some traditional communities. A key aspect of tourism development is increasing employment opportunities. Rural tourism has been identified as a good investment in marketing, involving the community that is responsible for promoting its local products. The uniqueness of rural tourismis its combination of different forms of tourism which includes cultural and heritage components that may lead to local economic growth (Maksimović et al., 2015; Manyara & Jones, 2007; Masron, Masami, & Ismail, 2013).

(Masron et al., 2013; Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017; McCool & Martin, 1994; Zhu et al., 2017) Wei, Li, and explained that tourism development will influence the quality of life among the local community. The wellbeing of an individual or a group of people can be defined as its quality of life. Tourism development has an impact on regional economic growth, presentingis a good opportunity for new investment and employment for the local community. However, this will certainly affect the cost of living of the local community, and thiscurrency inflation has an effect on the quality of life. A considerable amount of literature has been published on rural tourism which is seen as a potential sector to generate income in the local communities. In the event of residents having a negative perception of tourism, they will be encouraged to support such developments and to look for opportunities that benefits themselves by offering tourism-related services and products. Past studies have repeatedly shownthat gaining local community support for tourism development is more likely when positive impacts to the community generated from tourism activities exceed the negative impacts (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996; Horowitz, 2016; Iiyama & Susanti, 2004) and improved community quality of life (Jaafar et al., 2013; Kamaruddin & Jusoh, 2008; Lankford & Howard, 1994; J. C. Liu & Var, 1986; W. Liu et al.)(Other than that, it can be seen as a way to generate income for the communities

Environmental Impact

The Orang Asli have been living in remote forest areas for countless generations, but the development of tourism,which has increased the sizeof the population, may create unexpected disruptions to the community.(Lai & Hitchcock, 2017; Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017; McCool & Martin, 1994; Mokhtar, Poo, & Salleh, 2012) explained that the annoyances to the community may result in the locals questioning the value of the tourism industry. The connection between locals and tourists may be unstable, especially in underdeveloped countries wherethe local people only engage with tourists when providing goods and services in return for the money received from dining, shopping, etc. (Kamaruddin & Jusoh, 2008)pointed out that with the growth of tourist attractions the number of immigrants will also increase as there are opportunities in employment, the congestion causingup to 50% of the original population to move away from the main area and affecting the quality of life of the original community.

Negative influences of the influx of tourists include a rising crime rate, especially theft, violence and vandalism, which instils fear inthe community and again affects their quality of life. Tourism

also affects the indigenous community way of life, with increasing environmental pollution and disruption to wildlife (Masron et al., 2013; Mathew & Sreejesh, 2017; McCool & Martin, 1994). Pollution, or contamination of the natural environment, includes air pollution, littering, noise, heat and light pollution. Furthermore, local governments face pressure to improve the local infrastructure, which results in local government debt.

Despite such negative factors of tourism development, recent studies have identified many positive social impacts that may influence the community's support. These include improvement in standards of living, cleaner communal areas, an increase in the community's interest in the preservation of resources, improvement of public services(Horowitz, 2016; Iiyama & Susanti, 2004; Ismail, Razak, & Ismail, 2013) and an increase in the leisure opportunities available to the community.

Methodology

The case study method serves an exploratory as well as a descriptive function in understanding over-development in rural Malaysia. The tourism site selected for the study is Kampung Sungai Ruil in the Cameron Highlands district of Pahang. The Cameron Highlands is one of the most popular mountain resorts in Malaysia. The communitiy explored is Kampung Sungai Ruil, which is home to Orang Asli Semai.

The fieldwork was conducted in February 2018 at both tourism sites (resorts) and villages. The researchers were given permission to interview the employees by the resorts' management. Also, with the help ofthe Department of Orang Asli Development (JAKOA) Malaysia, the researchers were given access to *Tok Batin* (village head) and permission to enter the village for the fieldwork. Purposive sampling was used and semi-structured interviews were conducted according to previous studies on community participation (Kunasekaran et al., 2017; Mokhtar et al., 2012; Nunkoo, Smith, & Ramkissoon, 2013; Perdue et al., 1990).For the purposes of this study, interviews were conducted with fivevillagers who were employees of the tourism sites. The interviewees were selected based on the belief that they were capable of providing rich and detailed information regarding the selected tourist development and the assumption that they were the best individuals to provide reliable information for this study. *Tok Batin* and the resorts' management helped to identify Orang Asli employee informants.

The interviews lasted 45 to 60 minutes. To accommodate participants' communication styles, theywere conducted in Malay. The interview data were voice recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using the same language since, according to(Saarinen, 2006; Schofield, 2011; Sebele, 2010)), translation is an interpretive act and, hence, the meaning may get lost in the translation process. However, the results were translated into English with consideration given to the best possible way to represent the participants' understanding and experiences. To ensure the reliability of the data, the transcriptions were sent to the participants for their confirmation. All five participants in the study agreed with the transcript data, which were analyzed using ATLAS.ti for coding and theme development purposes. The final aspect of the study involved the reporting and discussion of the findings relating to the research questions.

The data gained from the interviews were classified according to several themes. Each theme from the data is discussed, described, and supported with examples from the responses provided by informants.

Results and discussion

Social Impact

Social representations as mentioned by (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000) are mechanisms used by citizens to test and understand the objects and events found in their surrounding world. They are the influences within a particular society that determine how and what people think in their day-to-day lives and are normally shared among specific groups of the community. Regarding the social dimension, positive effects have been attributed to tourism, including better employment opportunities, lifestyle enhancement, or generating an increase in thequality of life.

Lots of villagers work in the hotel here, I mean in the Cameron Highlands. This hotel in Sungai Ruil employs around 20 people, mostly women. Two of my brothers work at the Strawberry Park

[Resort], one in the kitchen and the other as a tour guide, collecting people and sometimes staying overnight if the tourist wants to go back to KL. (Informant 5)

Based on analyses of the respondents' interviews, it seems that the development of the hotel and tourism sector has provided many job opportunities and most villagers are easily able to find employment in this area.

My husband works on the Golf Club. He works as a driver, picking up the staff in his van. I [also] really enjoy working at the hotel especially in the housekeeping department. There are many job opportunities there, as long as you have, and it's easy to get to work. I too previously worked as a housekeeper, in the staff hostel. (Informant 1)

All the hotels here give employees many benefits. Taking care of the staff and promoting those who deserve it. So, if the employer likes our work, he may see us in person. (Informant 5)

With regard to tourism development in Kampung Sungai Ruil, a variety of positive impacts include an improvement in standards of living, cleaner communal areas, an increase in the community's interest in the preservation of resources, an improvement of public services or an increase in the leisure opportunities available to the community.

The current houses in Kampung Sungai Ruil were built by the government nearly two years ago. This house replaces the old one, and is much more comfortable. (Informant 1)

In addition, Department of Orang Asli Development (JAKOA) Malaysia helps and protects the welfare of indigenous people in terms of development, health, education and so on. They also carry out various community activities for the locals

JAKOA always has activities for the villagers. There are so many things to do in various programmes. So if a girl is not working, there are always cooking activities here like cake-making in the nearest school hall. (Informant 1)

It is JAKOA's job to support us, caring for our well-being and noting what we need. For example, those who succeed in getting 5A in their exams are sent to study at the nearby Science College. (Informant 5)

Cultural Impact

With respect to the cultural dimension, the positive impacts are usually related to the preservation of local culture, or the benefits of a cultural interaction between residents and tourists (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Garau-Vadell et al., 2018; Goulding, Horan, & Tozzi, 2014).

I work in this department. I like to see what people of different nationalities are saying. Malaysia is culturally diverse, with indigenous people, Malays, Indians and Chinese. Foreigners come from Italy, Mexico, France and other countries. Sometimes we understand each other and sometimes we don't. We can speak English,but if they don't understand we just use sign language. (Informant 5)

There may be misconceptions of the Orang Asli way of life in tourists' perceptions of this indigenous people before they actually visit Kumpung Sungai Ruil.

There are certain tourists who underestimate the way of living among Orang Asli. One more thing if the tourists go to our village, it's fine if they speak politely, but sometimes they are rude. They thinkour culture hasn't changed from the days when we wore very little clothing, if they comment on this then I have to correct them. (Informant 5)

One more thing, my son should get on. He'll leave here and become independent. We cannot stay with our parents any longer in the old way. He must finish school especially with the help of JAKOA, and then he can study and work anywhere in a different society. If he stays here he will not communicate well, while with other people he can talk properly. (Informant 5)

With regards to the preservation of the traditional lifestyle of the Orang Asli, it is deteriorating. Kampung Sungai Ruil has been modernized and the traditional bamboo houses replaced by bricks. This situation took place following the tragedy of landslides in 2011, in which the traditional residential area of Orang Asli in Kampung Sungai Ruil was destroyed. As a result, the traditional bamboo houses of Orang Asli no longer be showcased to tourists. In this context, it can be seen as a negative impact associated with the loss of traditions, acculturation, or the de-virtualization, trivialization and dilution of local culture and cultural heritage.

Tourists wanted to visit the old bamboo houses since they are not interested in our modern homes. If there are three to four bamboo houses in the village, definitely tourist will go to see it. However, both houses are fun, but modern houses are more comfortable for the residents to live with. (Informant 4)

Given the diversity of religion practised among the Orang Asli community in Kampung Sungai Ruil, they have their own festive celebrations like Christmas and Hari Raya Aidilfitri.

There is a Christmas celebration in December, and also Hari Raya Aidilfitri as many people have also converted to Islam. (Informant 1)

Craftsmanship is one of the skills represented in the Orang Asli community. However, not many of the younger generation are interested in handicraft or artwork.

My mother is good at weaving mats, like the older people. She is also good at making bubu.But no, it's not for me. I've not learnt how to weave mats. I'm busy with work. Anyway, I'm not interested in doing that kind of thing. (Informant 1)

The local cuisine of the Orang Asli seems to be crucial in promoting the cultural values of this indigenous people, especially in Kampung Sungai Ruil. The traditional food is always sought by tourists, whenever they go. However, based on the observation throughout the field trip, there is no food and beverage outlet offering local food of the Orang Asli, which seems to be as a deficiency in accommodating the demands of the tourist.

Maybe someday I will open a food stall, although we don't want people to think that's all we can do. Does Orang Asli food taste good? Some people might be curious about the local food of Orang Asli. (Informant 4)

Economic Impact

All participants noticed tourism growth, seeing it as able to change their economy but still as a

challengeoverall.

There are still opportunities at the night market, although the majority of sites are taken by Chinese and Indians who have the advantage of selling their own crops. On the other hand, there is still an opportunity to do business at the night market because most of the people at Sungai Ruil are working in the private and government sectors. (Informant 5)

Working in the hotel has become my source of income. There is money to live on, for my wife and children. (Informant 5)

Here we rarely have our own business, preferring to work for other people. Most work in hotels and a few in government departments. (Informant 3)

It is remarkable that participants could experience the opportunity of tourism growth.

Usually we visit Brinchang Mountains to collect vegetables and 'pucuk meranti' in the forest as this is not poisonous. I rarely eat vegetables here. This is because my present salary is only RM 1,000 which is not enough. Staff may also receive 'ang pau' during Chinese New Year, around RM 300 or RM400, or RM 50 for the new staff. (Informant 1)

Before I worked at this hotel, my life was a bit difficult because I came from a very poor family. After working here, my life has improved, from never having a motorcycle or car to owning a car and having my own personal savings. (Informant 4)

Based on analyses of the respondents' interviews, it seems that the development of tourism is supported by the local community. Itis bringing progressive change to the community and some mighteven experience a slight positive impact. agreed that rural tourism has the potential to promote a certain place and at the same time generate income forthe local community. The researchers explained that having positive perceptions,local communities will support the development,recognizing the opportunities intourism-related services.

Environmental Impact

The respondents shared their worries about the environment resulting from the massive development in the Cameron Highlands.

Before the landslide in 2011, when I was working here, the landscape was full of beautiful trees. However, after the disaster the scenery is no longer breath taking and new constructions have sacrificed more trees. Now people can live in comfortable homes but never again have such beautiful scenery. The night market sites are full of waste and debris. The road has become slippery, making it difficult for ambulance and fire and rescue squads to reach their destinations in emergencies. On school holidays, the number of tourists in theCameron Highlands is overwhelming. (Informant 5)

The best thing about the Cameron Highland was actually the cold weather and the nice scenery. Nowadays it is very different, with building and tourists' numbers increasing. The local community is frustrated with the traffic congestion which makes it difficult to carry out their daily tasks. (Informant 2)

A feeling of frustration can be seen from the respondents on the environmental impact. This is supported by), who said that environmental dimensions may contribute to positive and negative impacts; positively they relate to improvements in the appearance of the community, whereas negatively they are linked to an increase in pollution levels, destruction of natural resources and congestion in the use of facilities.

The hotels now at Brinchang, Cameron Highlands are much bigger than before. During the school holidays, I have to travel by motorcycle because of traffic congestion. (Informant 1)

Housing at Kampung Sungai Ruil for the Orang Asli is fully subsidised by the government. We do not have to pay for the houses. A few Orang Asli who moved out from Sungai Ruil have to rent their property. (Informant 1)

Before, it was not like this; there was still forest. They cut down the trees, which on working days causes congestion, and it can take two hours to reach home instead of five minutes. It is hard to go anywhere as there is only one road in the Highlands. Sometimes I wonder why so many tourists prefer coming here; maybe it is because of the weather and the strawberries. (Informant 4)

Conclusion

This research has identified social, cultural and economic impacts of tourism activities on Orang Asli Kampung Sungai Ruil. This study has discussed positive social and economic impact of tourism development in which it has created jobs for the local community. Tourism development has improved formal and informal education among Orang Asli Kampung Sungai Ruil. This is possible with supports from government agencies such as JAKOA and nearby hotels and tourist attractions that provides employment opportunities to them. In regards to positive social impact, these employees have brought their skills in hotel and tourism sector and passing on those skills, such as cake-making skills and cooking skills, to encourage a self-sustaining community.

However, this research also has discussed negative economic impact like the local businesses are dominated by Chinese and Indian who has their own farms and resources. This has created economic inequality in Cameron Highlands. The rapid development also has caused irreversible negative environmental impact in Cameron Highlands. Traffic jam and over-crowded night market remain unsolved. The local community was taken for granted during the tourism planning and development in Cameron Highlands. This study proposes that a more active and effective community participation in tourism development could minimize the negative impacts of tourism. These findings also beneficial in achieving sustainable goal no. 11 that focuses on sustainable cities and communities. Future studies might conduct more detailed investigation pertaining to social, cultural and economic impacts of tourism development on Orang Asli. An active community involvement in tourism development such as Bukit Tadom could be an interesting future research avenue.

Acknowledgement

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