

An Evaluation on the Attitudes of Residents in Georgetown towards the Impacts of Tourism Development

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Abstract

The study confirms the usefulness of social exchange theory in explaining residents' perception toward tourism development in Georgetown. There are positive and significant relationship between personal benefit gained from tourism development, perceived positive impacts and support for tourism development. Nevertheless, only one finding which is not in aligned with social exchange theory. There is no significant relationship for perceived negative impact towards support for additional tourism development. In short, residents who benefit from tourism development in Georgetown perceived greater positive impact than those who receive less benefit or do not receive any benefit. The positive impact that resident perceived has a positive relationship with their support level toward tourism development.

Keyword: Tourism development, social exchange theory, Georgetown, Malaysia, attitudes.

Introduction

Tourism industry has become one of the main income generators for Malaysia since few decades ago. It was estimated to be the second largest income generator in year 2007 (Economic Report, 2006). The World Tourism Action Council Annual Report for 2006 highlighted an impressive projection that the travel and tourism sector is expected to contribute 40 percent of foreign exchange revenue by 2010 (Lim, 2006). The local community becomes the main stakeholder of tourism development. The attitude of local community can directly affect the development of tourism industry. Positive attitude from local residents not only can help in boosting tourists' satisfaction level, at the same time, it contributes to "word-of-mouth" promotion among international tourists. The focus of this study will be Penang, which is one of the states in Peninsular Malaysia. Penang is a state that is rich with culture and history. Founded in 1786 by Francis Light and became the first British trading post in the Far East. It had attracted for more than 10,000 settlers and traders within few decades. Penang known as Pearl of Orient, has attracted massive flow of visitors and tourists from far and near in many years (Tan, 2006). Tourism industry in Penang has gone downhill after it hit its peak point in the 90s and never regains its strength. Issues such as cleanliness, traffic congestion, unconcern from public sector and lack of cooperation within tourism sector itself are impediments to the growth of Penang's tourism sector (Ong, 2003). Eccles and Costa (1996) noted that attractions should offer the visitors a real feeling for the place and facilitating the interactions between tourists and local. Many believe that Penang's charm is diminishing slowly and phasing out by newly developed attractions such as Phuket, Bali and other Indo China countries. In the eyes of foreigners' especially Western tourists, those attractions are more attractive to them (Tan, 2006).

Problem Statement

It is crucial for residents of Penang to be aware of the essentiality of tourism development within the state. Local residents do not understand the economic benefits that tourism brings to them, as they are paying more attention on negative impacts of tourism such as congestion, overcrowding and so on (Gartner, 1996). This research is to evaluate the attitudes of residents in Georgetown, Penang and the impacts of tourism development on the residents. It is apparent that successful tourism planning requires both the involvement and participation of the local residents (Eccles & Costa, 1996).

Research Objectives

- To evaluate the perceptions of local residents in Georgetown towards the impacts of tourism development in Penang.
- To evaluate the impact of tourism industry towards residents of Georgetown.
- To evaluate the relationship between impacts of tourism development on community's personal benefits and support for future development.

Research Rationale

There is very little research that studies the perception and attitude of local residents towards tourism development in Penang. Therefore, this study is essential to provide more in-depth information on attitude and perception of local residents. The result of the study can be a source of information on the local residents mindset towards tourism and how the industry affected their life.

Literature Review

Overview: Tourism Development

Burtenshaw, Bateman and Ashworth (1991) argued that the main task of tourism development is to create a "saleable tourism product" on the other hand and an "environment for living and working". According to Eccles and Costa (1996), tourism is used as a mean to complement economic output among developing countries. Still, when there is an economic benefit, some tourism planners start to ignore environmental considerations. Tourism planners are advised to plan carefully to avoid the problem of over development experienced by Spain in early 1970s. Successful tourism planning requires the involvement of local residents, and government commitments to support on the development of tourism sector and reduce the negative impacts on local community (Jackson, 2006). Many countries achieve both economic and social benefits contributed from the tourism revenue via infrastructure development. Understanding the antecedents and support from local residents towards tourism development is important for local governments and policymakers because the success of tourism activities dependent on active support from local populations. Collaboration in tourism development and policy making suggests significant benefits to all stakeholders (Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Eccles & Costa, 1996; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004) and reduces the potential cost when all stakeholders are actively involved in the decision process to support tourism industry.

Residents Characteristic

Perceptions on tourism impacts from tourism development differs across resident due to socio demographic profiles, as each segment has its own social exchange relations with other stakeholders (Chen, 2001). Length of residence is the most influential factor whether to support or not tourism development of the eight demographic categories (Liu & Var, 1986; William, MacDonald, & Uysal, 1995; Waitt, 2003). According to Kim and Petrick (2003), the residents are found to have a positive significant relationship with tourism positive impacts regardless of the age. The younger the respondents are, the higher their perceptions toward negative impact. The opportunities to benefit from tourism increase with age (McGehee & Andereck, 2004). The roles of gender in tourism development indicated by group stability that enhanced via tourism that provides balanced opportunities for men and women. Males and females perceived differently on impacts from tourism development, and most studies have concluded that women perceived higher negative impacts of tourism development in their community than men (Pizam & Pokela, 1985). Some of the researchers found that those residents who are less educated are more likely to perceive negatively on economic effects of tourism development. On the other hand, those who are well educated are more concern about the environmental and social cost of tourism development (Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003; Teye, Sonmez & Sirakaya, 2002).

Personal Benefits from Tourism Development

Social exchange theory suggests that people evaluate an exchange based on the costs and benefits that are going to be involved in the exchange. Residents are willing to exchange with tourists if they receive more benefits than costs (Jurowski, Uysal & Williams, 1997). An exchange process must satisfy four conditions which are need satisfaction, exchange relation, consequences of exchange and no-exchange outcome (Ap, 1992). Three main elements that can be found in the exchange process are economic, socio-cultural and environmental effects. Using social exchange theory, Jurowski, Uysal, and Williams (1997) developed a model that integrated factors likely to influence reactions towards tourism. In their model, they proposed that perceived potential for economic gain, use of resource base, attachment to one's community, and attitudes towards the preservation of the natural environment will influence how residents perceived the economic, social, and environmental impacts. Gursoy, Jurowski, and Uysal (2002) criticized model by Jurowski, Uysal, and Williams (1997) for aggregating the costs and benefits into three categories, and further breaking down the perceived impact into five areas that are economic benefits, social benefits, social costs, cultural benefits and cultural costs.

Perdue, Long, and Allen (1990) used social exchange theory as foundation to test the validity of the argument that the individual who gains benefit from tourism will more likely to support tourism development. Thus, it should be developed by taking into consideration of local community's needs and desires. Therefore measuring the local community's perceptions towards tourism development plays a vital role to the success of tourism destination. Past researches on tourism focused on the development of a special region or country (Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003), special event (Delamere, 2001) and theoretical development or conceptualization (Ap, 1992). Costa and Ferrone (1995) suggested that there is a difference between the researches on hosts' perceptions which are done by different researchers. Early studies focused on tourism impact (Liu & Var, 1986) or on social or environmental impacts (Ap, 1990). Past studies measurement on residents' perceptions of tourism impacts are divided into two dimensions that are positive and negative impacts, and detail discussion on the next paragraph.

Impacts of Tourism

Theory of reasoned action is the theory that supports the relationship between residents' attitudes toward tourism impacts and their support for tourism development (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Theory of reasoned action indicates that individuals are rational when they make use all information that are available and evaluate the implications of their action before deciding to engage into a particular decision (Ajzen, 1985). By integrating the contentions from previous researches; impacts of tourism development can be divided into economic, socio cultural and environmental impacts (Mathieson & Wall, 1982; Ross, 1992).

Economic Impacts of Tourism (positive impacts)

Previous studies suggested that a majority of residents view tourism as a tool for economic development that support towards tourism activities as an economic development strategy. Residents are more likely to view tourism as a tool to reduce unemployment since tourism activities create new opportunities for employment and it further increases revenue to individual, community and government (Gursoy, Jurowski, & Uysal, 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Keogh, 1990; Walpole & Goodwin, 2001). Almost all studies reported that there is a positive relationship between economic benefits and attitudes towards tourism development (Davis, Allen, & Cosenza, 1988; Perdue, Long, & Allen, 1990)

Social and Cultural Impacts (positive and negative impacts)

Residents' perceptions of social and cultural impacts of tourism development have been studied extensively. However, the findings of these studies have produced different results. Most researchers reported that residents view tourism as providing social and cultural benefits to host community (Besculides, Lee, & McCormick, 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Sirakaya, Teye, & Sonmez, 2002). However, few of them reported that residents tend to perceive social and cultural impacts of tourism development negatively (Johnson, Snepenger, & Akis, 1994; Jurowski, Uysal, & Williams, 1997; Perdue, Long, & Allen, 1987; Tosun, 2002). There are negative social and cultural impacts on the host community such as changes in family structure due to the adaptation practices to suit tourists' need (Dyer et al., 2007). Researchers who examined the relationship between perception of negative social impacts and support for tourism development showed that there is a negative relationship between negative social impacts and residents' perceptions of tourism development (Gursoy, Jurowski, & Uysal, 2002; Sirakaya, Teye, & Sonmez, 2002).

Environmental Impacts (negative impacts)

Environmental knowledge affects level of impacts to be accepted by host community. This is related to assertion that environmental knowledge is negatively correlated with the acceptance (Furman, 1998; Van Liere & Dunlap, 1980) and environmental concern is negatively correlated with the acceptance of negative impacts (Floyd, Jang, & Noe, 1997). When local community has lower knowledge than those who are more educated in this field, they tend to accept greater impacts. This is due to lack of environmental knowledge makes them unable to realize the impacts perceived. As suggested in literatures, environmental impacts are justified by individual economic gains, when there is an economic benefit from tourism activities, the revenue earned is his or hers. However, when the negative environmental impacts are divided over all fellow residents the net individual benefit is higher than the environmental costs; as a result they will ignore the consequences on environment (Husbands, 1989; Lankford & Howard, 1994; Walpole & Goodwin, 2001).

Residents' Attitudes towards Tourism Development

Cycle of revolution model suggests that as the destination in the stage of discovery, the attitudes of residents will be positive and the acceptance among resident will be higher. As the changes occur during the development process, residents' attitudes towards tourism will be different in different stages. Other than that, interaction with tourist will influence residents' attitudes toward tourism development (Butler, 1980). Tourism brought positive influence on cultural activities, entertainment facilities and the number of recreation facilities for local residents (Liu, Sheldon, & Var, 1987; Perdue, Long, & Allen, 1990). Since 1980s, researchers seem to pay attention to the factors that are likely to influence perceived impacts and subsequent supports. These factors includes community attachment or length of residence (Lankford & Howard, 1994), level of participation in recreation (Keogh, 1990), level of knowledge about tourism and the local economy (Pizam & Milman, 1986), personal economic dependence on tourism sector (Liu & Var, 1986), socio demographic characteristics (Williams & Lawson, 2001), type and form of tourism (Ritchie, 1988), and level of contact with tourists (Akis, Peristianis & Warner, 1996; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Burtenshaw, Bateman, & Ashworth, 1991). Various authors have discussed the use of theories in investigating residents' attitudes towards tourism development. These theories include play theory, compensation theory, conflict theories and dependency theory. Yet, none of these theories are proven to provide a proper framework in investigating local community's attitudes (Bystrzanowski, 1989). This is the reason that few authors have identified the main problem in understanding residents' perceptions is due to lack of appropriate theoretical explanation (Ap, 1992; Husbands, 1989; Faulkner & Tideswell, 1997).

Conceptual Framework

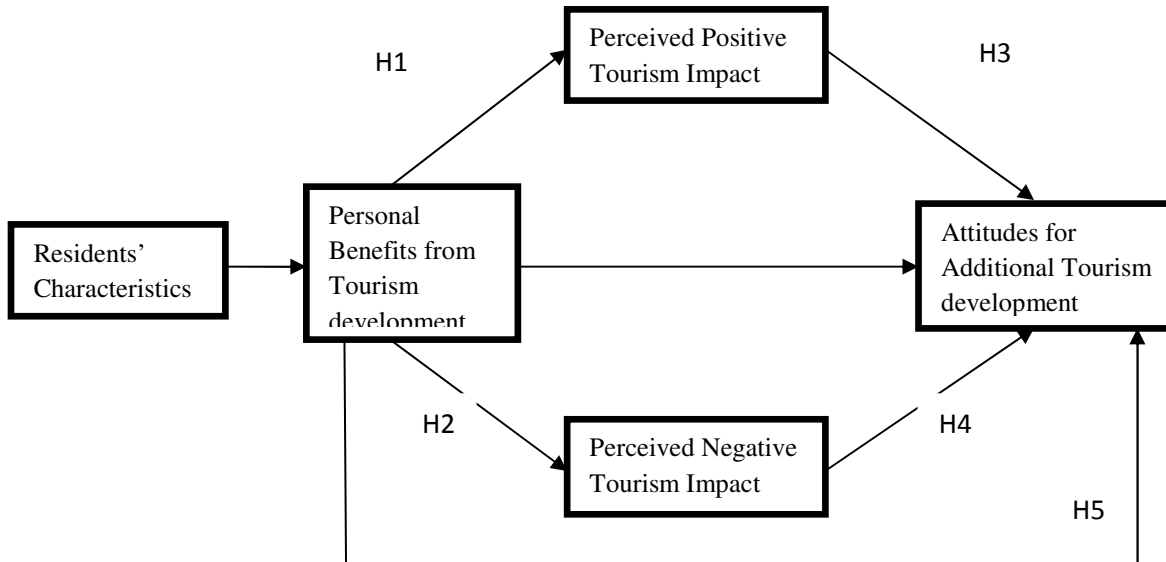
Most of the studies of host community tourism attitudes and perceptions have focused on the differences in the perceived impacts of tourism development among local residents, and the discussion on relationship between local residents' perception of tourism impacts and attitudes toward their own community is very rare (Ko & Stewart, 2002). Perdue, Long and Allen (1990) had suggested a model to interpret the relationship between residents' perceived tourism and attitudes toward host community. The model is utilized to measure the interactive effects of various personal characteristics on impacts and supports for tourism. It is believed that residents who are more economically tied to tourism industry will support tourism development more and vice versa. In short, the location of the residents will affect the support of local community towards tourism development (Iroegbu & Chen, 2001; Mason & Cheyne, 2000; Snaith & Haley, 1995). Residents' characteristics will determine the personal benefits gained from tourism development. The positive or negative tourism impact will affects the perception of local residents. Those who are economically tied to tourism industry will support the development of tourism because the industry brings economy benefits such as employment opportunity, personal income and so on. Lindberg and Johnson (1997) reported that people who put more importance onto economic development will have positive attitude toward tourism. The relationship between a community's economic activity and community's attitudes towards tourism is explored by several researchers (Long, Perdue, & Allen, 1990; Allen, Hafer, & Long, 1993). The findings suggested that residents who are more dependent on tourism perceived higher impacts on tourism. Generally, residents' feelings on tourism become more positive when the level of tourism increased.

Figure 2, illustrates the hypotheses developed for this study and the hypotheses are as following:

H1: Personal benefits from tourism development are positively related to positive perceived tourism impacts.

- H2: Personal benefits from tourism development are positively related to negative perceived tourism impacts.
 H3: Perceived positive tourism impacts' are positively related to attitude for additional tourism development.
 H4: Perceived negative tourism impacts are negatively related to attitude for additional tourism development.
 H5: Personal benefits from tourism development are positively related to attitude for additional tourism development.

Figure 2: Relationship between residents' perceived tourism and attitudes toward host community



Source: Adapted from Perdue, Long, & Allen (1990).

Research Methodology

Population and Sample

The population of this research is residents of Georgetown, the capital city of Penang that includes shop owners and workforce who work in shopping malls, banks and so on. According to Penang State Government (2005), the population of Georgetown in 2005 is 483100. The respondents of the research were chosen from Georgetown residents through probability sampling. This method was chosen because it is the most suitable sampling technique for this research. On the other hand, it overcomes the problems of high sampling cost and unavailability of a practical sampling frame for individual elements (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). This research was conducted in Georgetown that focuses on Macalister Road, Penang Road, Gurney Drive and city center of Georgetown.

Data Collection and Research Instrument

The questionnaires are distributed door-to-door, and this method was chosen because of its higher response rate than other methods (Andereck & Nickerson, 1997). This research is a descriptive research, and the instrument is questionnaires. Descriptive research is used to describe the characteristics of the variable used in research and seek to answer the questions to who, what, when, where, and how (Zikmund, 2003). Variables are derived from a series of 41 tourism attitude scales developed by previous researchers (McCool & Martin, 2000; Allen, Hafer, & Long, 1993; Lankford & Howard, 1994). The questionnaire comprised of five sections in English language. The self-administrated questionnaire is chosen because it is "less time-consuming" and "less expensive" (Sekaran, 2000). Five-point Likert scale has been chosen as respondents' can express themselves better which is 5=strongly agree to 1=strongly disagree. The first section is designed to gather demographic information on respondents such as gender, age, education level, household income per month and length of residence. The rationale behind this was to determine whether local residents' perceptions and attitudes toward tourism development are influenced by the length of their residence in Georgetown. The second and third section are aimed to find out what are perceived impacts of tourism toward respondents, section two is on negative tourism impacts, and section three is on positive tourism impact. This section is important because the perception and attitudes for perceived tourism impacts can be learnt. Section four is to measure the personal benefits gained from tourism activities in all form. Final section of the questionnaire is to study whether the respondents are going to support tourism development in the future.

Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS 15.0) is used to analyze the data collected. Three types of analyses were conducted that are descriptive analysis (frequency and mean), factor analysis and Pearson correlation analysis. Descriptive statistics is used to describe the information of a population or sample. In this case, frequency distribution and mean are used to describe the information of the sample towards the variables. Frequency distribution and mean are presented in percentage. By using the frequency technique, the output of SPSS will include the raw account and the percentage of cases falling into each category, the percentage of valid cases falling into each category and the cumulative percentage. On the other hand, mean is a measurement on central tendency or the arithmetic average (Zikmund, 2003). It is utilized to assess the average scales that respondents respond to the perceived positive and negative tourism impacts. Factor analysis is a technique to analyze interdependency. Factor analysis is used to study the entire set of interrelationships without defining variables to be dependent or independent. Factor analysis combines variables that belong together and have overlapping measurement characteristics to become a smaller set of factors (Lewis-Beck, 1994).

The factor loading can be defined as the correlations between factors and their underlying variables. A factor loading matrix is a key output of the factor analysis and further analysis can be done to the factors through rotations (Kim & Muller, 1978). To explore the dimension of the 18 attribute scale, a factor analysis is performed. Validity and reliability of the adapted scale are established, as the validity tests show how well an instrument that is developed measures the particular concept that it is supposed to measure. Reliability of a scale on the other hand indicates the access to the goodness of the measurement (Sekaran, 2000). To have an idea on the internal consistency among the items and on the convergent validity of the overall scale, a reliability analysis is employed. Pearson correlation coefficient is used to indicate the relationship between the variables. It can be used to test the hypotheses in this research. The correlation coefficient r ranges from +1.0 to -1.0. When r is positive, it indicates that there is a positive relationship between the variables. Otherwise, it represents that the relationship is negative. There is a perfect positive linear relationship when the r equal to +1.0 and negative linear relationship when r achieved -1.0. In this case, there is no relationship between the variables when r is equal to 0.

Data Analysis

Overview

Total numbers of questionnaires distributed are 300 and 22 of them failed to be collected. Numbers of questionnaires utilized in data processing are 278, and the response rate is 92.7%, and response rate of more than 80% can be considered as good response rate (Malhotra, 2004). The questionnaires were distributed in four areas of Georgetown that include Penang Road, Macalister Road, Gurney Drive, and Burma Road. 75 questionnaires distributed in each area, about 75 responded in Gurney Drive, 71 responded in Macalister Road, 63 responded in Burma Road, and 69 responded in Penang Road.

Respondents Demographic Profile

The respondents are made up of 131 males and 147 females where female are slightly higher than males. This phenomenon happens because majority of shop staffs are female. According to Crompton and Sanderson (1990), the flexibility of working pattern creates new opportunities for females. This is one of the reasons why the females' respondents are higher than males. The age of majority respondents fall into the range of 31 to 40 years old. 116 out of 278 respondents' household income per month are in the category of RM3000 and above. Since Georgetown is the capital city of Penang state, therefore it is more developed compared with other county in Penang. There are 87 respondents whose highest education is secondary school qualifications. Few decades ago, most people are unable to send their children for higher education due to the financial constraints; as such most of the respondents' highest qualifications are high school. Respondents who reside for less than one year in Georgetown are the least among the four ranges which only consists of 6.5 percent. This is not an uncommon phenomenon in Georgetown because it is a town with history. It was developed long ago. Majority of residents who reside in Georgetown now have been staying there for decades. That is why respondents who reside for more than 10 years achieved the highest percentage.

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was used to discover the dimensionality of the 23 statements which compute the variables into meaningful and manageable set of factors. The study utilized principal method and varimax rotation method to manage the variables into smaller groups. The factor analysis was done for both perceived positive impact and also perceived negative impact. The results are presented in table 2 and table 3 respectively. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test was conducted to measure the adequacy of sample for factor analysis and the result is 0.63 for perceived negative impact and 0.60 for perceived positive impact. A value of 0.60 or above from Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy test indicates that the data were adequate for factor analysis (Tabachnick & Fidel, 1989). Factors with eigenvalue that equal to or greater than one were extracted for interpretation. To ensure each of the factors identified has only one dimension factor loading of lower than 0.4 will be eliminated from the analysis (Hattie, 1985).

Perceived Positive Impacts

The result from table 2 shows, 12 attributes of positive impact can be grouped into four factors. There are six items categorized under factor 1 which are “restoration of historic building”, “encourages cultural activities”, “develop recreational area”, “improves understanding of community and culture”, “preserve cultural identity” and “improves quality of public services”, and the total variance explained is 15.90 percent. From the concluded attributes, most of them are related to positive cultural impacts. Thus, factor 1 can be renamed as “cultural”. “Economic” factor constituted three attributes which are “improves local economy”, “increases tax revenue” and “provides job opportunities”. Obviously, this factor is renamed as “economic” because of the attributes under this factor are related to local economy. The total variance explained of factor 2 is 15.07%. Factor 3 is renamed as “quality of life” and it is making up of two attributes, “increases appearance of area” and “better shopping opportunities”. It explained 14.06% out of total variance. Both increases appearance of area and better shopping opportunities can contribute to better quality of life for the residents. Therefore, it is renamed as “quality of life” Factor 4 explained total variance of 11.69%. It is constituted only one attribute which is “cultural exchange and education” and renamed as “education” because of the education opportunities gained from tourism development.

Table 1: Factor analysis for perceived positive impacts

| Perceived Positive Impacts Groupings | | Factor Loadings | Communality | Eigen value | Percentage of Variance (%) |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Cultural | Factor 1 (mean=3.21) | | | 2.43 | 15.90 |
| | Restoration Of Historic Building | 0.59 | 0.39 | | |
| | Encourages Cultural Activities | 0.77 | 0.61 | | |
| | Develop Recreational Area | 0.41 | 2.54 | | |
| | Improves Understanding Of Community And Culture | 0.80 | 0.67 | | |
| | Preserve Cultural Identity | 0.84 | 0.73 | | |
| | Improves Quality Of Public Services | 0.63 | 0.46 | | |
| Economic | Factor 2 (mean=4.11) | | | 1.89 | 15.07 |
| | Improves Local Economy | 0.83 | 0.74 | | |
| | Increases Tax Revenue | 0.84 | 0.72 | | |
| Quality of Life | Factor 3 (mean=3.38) | | | 1.27 | 14.06 |
| | Better Shopping Opportunities | 0.81 | 0.69 | | |
| Education | Factor 4(mean=3.72) | | | 1.22 | 11.69 |
| | Cultural Exchange And Education | 0.69 | 0.52 | | |
| Total Variance Explained | | | | 56.72 | |

Perceived negative impacts:

The result shows in table 3 is the result after the elimination of one attribute (increase cost of living) with factor loading of 0.34. 10 attributes of negative impact can be grouped into four factors which are “social cost”, “environmental”, “environmental interference” and “socio-cultural”.

There are six attributes categorized under factor 1 which are “increases amount of crime”, “results more vandalism”, “lead to friction between locals and tourists”, “burden on services”, “negatively affects way of life” and “native people are exploited”, and the total variance explained was 17.46%. From the concluded attributes, most of them are related to negative social impacts. Thus, factor 1 can be renamed as “social cost”. Factor 2 constituted only one attribute which is “result more litter”. The total variance explained of factor 2 is 13.01%. Littering could affect the cleanliness of the area and affect the environment. Therefore, factor 2 can be renamed as “environmental”. Factor 3 is renamed as “environmental interference” because traffic congestion might be the source of noise pollution. Thus, it is renamed as environmental interference. Factor 3 which constituted only one attributes which is “increases traffic problem” explained 12.93% out of total variance. Factor 4 explains total variance of 10.76%. It consisted of two attributes which are “causes changes in traditional culture” and “become overcrowded”, and renamed as “socio-cultural”.

Table 2: Factor analysis of perceived negative impacts

| Factor | Perceived Negative Impacts Attributes | Factor Loadings | Communality | Eigen value | Percentage of Variance (%) |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Social Cost | Factor 1 (mean=2.72) | | | 2.16 | 17.46 |
| | Increases Amount Of Crime | 0.58 | 0.34 | | |
| | Results More Vandalism | 0.73 | 0.54 | | |
| | Lead To Friction Between Locals And Tourists | 0.72 | 0.57 | | |
| | Burden On Services | 0.65 | 0.43 | | |
| | Negatively Affects Way Of Life | 0.71 | 0.53 | | |
| Environmental | Factor 2 (mean=3.05) | | | 1.53 | 13.01 |
| | Result More Little | 0.60 | 0.48 | | |
| environmental interference | Factor 3 (mean=3.31) | | | 1.22 | 12.93 |
| | Increases Traffic Problem | 0.80 | 0.67 | | |
| Socio-cultural | Factor 4(mean=3.22) | | | 1.05 | 10.76 |
| | Causes Changes In Traditional Culture | 0.52 | 0.72 | | |
| | Become Overcrowded | 0.56 | 0.46 | | |
| Total Variance Explained | | | | | 54.16 |

Hypotheses Testing

Significance value $p = 0.05$ was interpreted as 95% of the time the researcher would expect this correlation to exist with only 5% of probability of not true. Table 5 illustrates five hypotheses that have been introduced in the earlier stage of the research. Analyses were done to test the hypotheses whether to accept or to reject the hypotheses introduced. Relationship can be determined through Pearson correlation analysis output as shown on Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3: Relationship between personal benefit, tourism impact and support for tourism

| | | Personal benefit | Positive impact | Negative impact | Support |
|------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| Personal benefit | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .569(**) | -.096 | .616(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .110 | .000 |
| | N | 278 | 278 | 278 | 278 |
| Positive impact | Pearson Correlation | .569(**) | 1 | -.021 | .677(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | | .724 | .000 |
| | N | 278 | 278 | 278 | 278 |
| Negative impact | Pearson Correlation | -.096 | -.021 | 1 | -.124(*) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .110 | .724 | | .038 |
| | N | 278 | 278 | 278 | 278 |
| Support | Pearson Correlation | .616(**) | .677(**) | -.124(*) | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .038 | |
| | N | 278 | 278 | 278 | 278 |

Note: ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Summary of the Relationship Between Variables

| | Personal benefit | Positive impact | Negative impact | Support |
|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| Personal benefit | | +ve | -ve | +ve |
| Positive impact | +ve | | No significant relationship | +ve |
| Negative impact | No significant relationship | No significant relationship | | -ve |
| Support | +ve | +ve | -ve | |

Four hypotheses supported, whereas only one of the hypotheses not from the Pearson Correlation analysis, and the summary for the hypothesis are shown on Table 5.

Table 5: Summary of the Analysis

| Hypothesis | Findings | Discussion |
|--|----------|---|
| H1: Personal benefits from tourism development are positively related to positive perceived tourism impacts | Accepted | The Pearson Correlation test showed that there is a significant relationship between personal benefit and positive perceived tourism impacts. |
| H2: Personal benefits from tourism development are negatively related to negative perceived tourism impacts | Rejected | The Pearson Correlation test showed that there is no significant relationship between personal benefit and negative perceived tourism impacts. Thus, H2 did not held for personal benefit will has a significant relationship with negative perceived tourism impacts and H2 is rejected. |
| H3: Perceived positive tourism impacts' are positively related to support for additional tourism development | Accepted | The Pearson Correlation test showed that there is a significant relationship between perceived positive impacts with support for additional tourism development. |
| H4: Perceived negative tourism impacts are negatively related to support for additional tourism development | Accepted | The Pearson Correlation test showed that there is a significant negative relationship between negative perceived tourism impacts and. Thus, H4 held for negative perceived tourism impacts will have a significant negative relationship with support for additional development. |
| H5: Personal benefits from tourism development are positively related to support for additional tourism development. | Accepted | The Pearson Correlation test showed that there is a significant relationship between personal benefit and support for additional tourism development. H5 held for personal benefit will have a significant relationship with support for additional tourism development. |

Discussion

Overall Residents' Support towards Tourism Development

Table 6 shows the overall residents' support towards tourism development. Basically, the respondents support for future tourism development. From table 6, it showed that the mean of the items are very high with the highest mean value recorded 4.30 that are favoring building new tourism facilities. Meanwhile "holds great promise for future" was the lowest in mean value (3.54). Generally, there is a very high support for future development. All eight attributes or items are relevant to support the Georgetown residents attitudes on supporting tourism development because they feels the need to have new tourism facilities, the government should do more to promote tourism, agreed that it is one of the most important industries, and play major economic role for Georgetown, Penang. Other than that, most of the respondents also believe that it will help community to grow in the right direction, makes them happy and proud to see tourists coming to Georgetown, support tourism, and also they feels that tourism significantly hold great promise for Georgetown future.

The responses received are in aligned with the assumption that those who are directly involved in tourism will support the tourism development initiatives (Akis, Peristianis & Warner, 1996; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Burtenshaw, Bateman, & Ashworth, 1991).

Table 6: Residents' support towards tourism development

| | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|------|----------------|
| Favor building new tourism facilities | 4.30 | 0.66 |
| Do more to promote tourism | 4.28 | 0.62 |
| One of the most important industries | 4.27 | 0.66 |
| Play major economic role | 4.24 | 0.77 |
| Help community grow in the right direction | 3.96 | 0.78 |
| Happy and proud to see tourists coming | 3.83 | 0.80 |
| Support tourism have a vital role | 3.70 | 0.78 |
| Holds great promise for future | 3.54 | 0.94 |

Perceived Positive Impacts

Overall, respondents have agreed that tourism “improves local economy” and “provides job opportunities”. That is because of the areas where data collected are involved in tourism activities such as hotels, shopping malls, tourism attractions and so on so forth. The residents therefore are involved in tourism activities which bring direct economic benefit to them. Previous studies suggest that a majority of residents view tourism as a mean of economic development. Thus, support towards tourism development is an economic development strategy (Gursoy, Jurowski, & Uysal, 2002). According to Gursoy and Rutherford (2004), residents tend to view tourism as a tool that creates job opportunities and generates additional revenue for local community and government. Respondents also agreed that tourism allows “improves appearance of area” and “better shopping opportunities”. As an attraction of tourism, good appearance of area is a must to impress tourists. Thus, local government of Penang should keep on improving the appearance and basic facilities of the areas to attract tourists. Also, the shopping complexes and shops that located in the city center have provided better shopping opportunities to the locals (Brunt & Courtney, 1999; Jurowski, Uysal, & Williams, 1997). Residents believe that tourism creates opportunities for cultural exchange, and increases the quality of life and increased knowledge about the culture in the area (Besculides, Lee, & McCormick, 2002).

Table 7: Overall responses of respondents on positive impacts

| | Percentage of respondents (%) | | | | | Mean | Std D |
|---|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| Positive Impacts | | | | | | | |
| Improves Local Economy | 0.0 | 1.4 | 8.3 | 56.5 | 33.8 | 4.23 | 0.65 |
| Provides Job Opportunities | 0.0 | 0.4 | 12.6 | 56.5 | 30.6 | 4.17 | 0.65 |
| Better Shopping Opportunities | 0.0 | 7.9 | 19.1 | 41.0 | 32.0 | 3.97 | 0.91 |
| Increases Tax Revenue | 1.1 | 4.3 | 21.2 | 47.5 | 25.9 | 3.93 | 0.86 |
| Cultural Exchange And Education | 0.0 | 6.8 | 25.2 | 58.3 | 9.7 | 3.71 | 0.73 |
| Restoration Of Historic Building | 1.1 | 18.7 | 22.3 | 46.8 | 11.2 | 3.48 | 0.96 |
| Improves Appearance Of Area | 0.7 | 14.0 | 27.3 | 53.6 | 4.3 | 3.47 | 0.81 |
| Encourages Cultural Activities | 2.5 | 20.1 | 27.3 | 38.5 | 11.5 | 3.36 | 1.01 |
| Preserve Cultural Identity | 0.7 | 21.6 | 34.9 | 36.7 | 6.1 | 3.26 | 0.89 |
| Improves Understanding Of Community And Culture | 1.4 | 22.7 | 32.0 | 38.8 | 5.0 | 3.23 | 0.91 |
| Improves Quality Of Public Services | 1.8 | 25.2 | 37.8 | 28.8 | 6.5 | 3.13 | 0.93 |
| Develop Recreational Areas | 5.8 | 32.4 | 25.5 | 31.3 | 5.0 | 2.97 | 1.04 |

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = average, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Perceived Negative Impacts

Causes change in traditional culture” recorded mean value of 3.24, residents of Georgetown agreed that tourists might change norms and values of the people (Sharpley, 1994). In long term, traditional value and culture of Georgetown will be affected. According to Tosun (2002), tourism may create social and cultural conflicts at the destination community due to socio cultural differences between host community and tourists.

This is against the result of this study which 36.3% of the respondents disagree that tourism will lead to friction between locals and tourists. This happens may be cause of Malaysia is a multiracial country, locals are used to tolerate with different cultures of various ethnics within community including tourists whose cultures are different from us. On the other hand, there are 41.7% of the respondents who disagree that the tourism development exploits the native people.

Table 8: Overall responses of respondents on negative impacts

| | Percentage of respondents (%) | | | | | Mean | Std D |
|--|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | |
| Negative Impacts | | | | | | | |
| Increase Cost Of Living | 1.1 | 19.1 | 32.0 | 37.8 | 10.1 | 3.37 | 0.94 |
| Increases Traffic Problem | 3.6 | 24.8 | 26.3 | 32.4 | 12.9 | 3.27 | 1.08 |
| Causes Changes In Traditional Culture | 2.5 | 21.2 | 29.1 | 43.9 | 3.2 | 3.24 | 0.91 |
| Become Overcrowded | 0.4 | 21.6 | 39.6 | 35.3 | 1.8 | 3.19 | 0.82 |
| Result More Litter | 4.0 | 27.7 | 32.7 | 30.9 | 4.7 | 3.05 | 0.97 |
| Negatively Affects Way Of Life | 7.2 | 29.1 | 28.1 | 33.8 | 1.8 | 2.94 | 0.99 |
| Increases Amount Of Crime | 9.0 | 28.4 | 30.6 | 30.9 | 1.1 | 2.87 | 0.99 |
| Burden On Services | 7.2 | 35.3 | 29.9 | 25.9 | 1.8 | 2.80 | 0.97 |
| Results More Vandalism | 6.1 | 38.1 | 32.4 | 21.2 | 2.2 | 2.75 | 0.93 |
| Lead To Friction Between Locals And Tourists | 12.6 | 36.3 | 29.1 | 20.9 | 1.1 | 2.62 | 0.99 |
| Native People Are Exploited | 19.4 | 41.7 | 26.6 | 10.8 | 1.4 | 2.33 | 0.96 |

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = average, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree

Relationship between Personal Benefit and Tourism Development

The result of the study showed that personal benefit had a close relationship with support for tourism development. The result was supported by Perdue, Long, & Allen (1990) that suggest personal benefits from tourism are relevant to understanding perceptions of positive impacts. The balance of residents' perceptions of the costs and benefits of tourism become a major factor for the success of tourism industry (Lankford & Howard, 1994; Ritchie, 1988).

Relationship between Perceived Tourism Impacts and Residents' Support

From the result showed that there is a positive relationship (0.677, $p < 0.05$) between perceived positive impacts and residents' support towards tourism development. This happens mainly due to local residents believe that tourism development can bring more economic benefit to them such as improving local economies and provides job opportunities. There is a negative relationship (-0.124, $p < 0.05$) between negative impacts and support for tourism development as shown in table 3 and 4. Although the negative relationship exists, but it is not strong with low significance value of 0.038 compare with others. This happens because the locals perceived the negative impacts far lower than positive impacts. This can be seen when refer to table 8. Overall, residents' perception of negative impacts are lower than 3.0 except for a few attributes. On the other hand, local residents of Georgetown strongly agreed on the positive impacts where some of them are greater than 4.0. Usually, there is a strong support for the relationship between local residents' attitudes on tourism impact and their support for tourism development (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Social exchange theory (SET) is used to support the statement mentioned. According to SET, local residents will involve in the exchange if they can gained benefits without incurring unacceptable cost. If they perceived positive impacts greater than negative impacts, they are prone to support tourism development (Allen, Hafer, & Long, 1993; Getz, 1994; Gursoy, Jurowski, & Uysal, 2002; Madrigal, 1993).

Limitations of the Research

The sample is not sufficient to represent the whole market of Georgetown, although the scope of the research included four areas. This is because all the four areas are involved with tourism activities such as hotels, restaurants, shopping complexes, night clubs and etc. There might have different opinions in other areas which are not involved in tourism activities such as residential areas. On the other hand, the sample collected is too small to represent residents in Georgetown.

Recommendation

Future Research

The scope of study should be extended to whole areas in Penang. A clearer picture on local resident's attitude can be gained and will be helpful for future tourism development. In order to obtain more insight into the attitudes of local residents, questionnaire used in the research should include more extensive and comprehensive perception items.

Government and authorities

Residents' support and acceptance for additional tourism development in the future is crucial for long term success. Therefore, government and authorities should pay more attention to local residents by include them into the planning process. The empowerment could make them more support to the tourism development in the future. As suggested by Lankford and Howard (1994), government and authorities should allow local residents to be involved in the tourism planning in order to gain support on tourism projects to be implemented.

Contribution of Research

This research is able to create awareness on the importance of local community support not only among government and authorities, but also among the local residents themselves. By knowing the essential of locals' support, future tourism development should be considered and appropriate coordination should be taken into consideration to gain cooperation between local community and government.

Conclusion

The findings of this study showed that the attitude of local residents in Georgetown toward tourism development is positive. There are only minority of respondents who are opposing to tourism development. There are five hypotheses accepted and there are significant relationship between personal benefit, perceived impacts and support for additional tourism development variables, that is consistent with earlier studies (Perdue, Long, & Allen, 1990; McGehee & Andereck, 2004). The study confirms the usefulness of social exchange theory in explaining residents' attitudes toward tourism development in Georgetown. For an instance, the relationship between personal benefit gained from tourism development, perceived positive impacts and support for tourism development. Nevertheless, there is a finding which is not in aligned with social exchange theory. Perceived negative impact is not a predictor to measure support for additional tourism development. In short, residents who benefit from tourism development in Georgetown perceived greater positive impact than those who receive less benefit or do not receive any benefit.

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