

A STUDY ON HOMESTAY MALAYSIA: ICT APPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Home Stay Tourism is an emerging concept of tourism developed in recent years in the world of tourism as well in Malaysia. It is a model of life for multiple possible aspects. Natural source, heritage wealth, social parameters, friendly hospitality and many other unexplored treasures of dreams for tourism experts. Homestay tourism cannot thrive without the convergence of the needs of the rich and the poor based on the principle of demand mechanism, since it is a key concept in need. Malaysia can exploit the advantage of the potential of tourism endemic in rural areas, where government programs for the poor. This form of tourism is based on three aspects, namely, services, facilities and attractions. Malaysia has a strong position in traction, and unfair. Homestay tourism occurs if home resources and the natural environment is actually cultivated which serve for tourism and preservation. However Promoting tourism largely depends on the active participation of the private sector and the communities where the government's role would is the mediator of that.

KEYWORDS- *Homestay tourism, Natural resource, Tourism aspects, Homestay promotion.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in its publication shows that the tourism industry has got experience of sustained development and divergence to be the biggest and most rapidly grown economic sector out of many sectors in the globe [61]. Tourism has become an instrumental force for the progress related to socio-economy. It is able to produce an appraised gross production of US \$9.5 trillion, and the amount as expected will rise up to US \$7 trillion by the year of 2013 [61]. The tourism industry has bright prospect because the prediction of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) is that a predictable two billions tourists will have travelling experience round the globe by the year of 2015. The extension and development regarding tourism is

responsible for the growth not only for developed countries but also for developing countries. Furthermore, tourism and its potential in developing countries have been determined as a significant predictor for the growth of global tourism growth [49],[31],[55].

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Malaysia is considered as one of developing nations around the globe. As being a developing country, the main focus of Malaysia is on tourism. The tourism sector in Malaysia works as second biggest contributor to its economy. The efforts taken by Malaysia for the growth and promotion of tourism stuffs are responsible for producing notable outcomes. In the year of 2013, 25.72 million of tourist visit Malaysia which brings RM 65.44 billion money to its economy. The figure shows a growth of 11% in tourist visit and a growth of 10.4% in tariff in comparison with year 2012. The growth is considered remarkable provided the problematic and challenging situation accompanied by the economic slowdown in the world and the rise of price in oil in the year of 2012 [45]. Tourism has shown its presence in Malaysia for quite some time, and the reason behind is that tourism products which are based on nature and culture have got their roots in rural areas. Moreover, it has found its credit considering as a tourism product when the homestay tourism Master Plan starts function in the year of 2001. Tourism in the majority of developing countries is generally shown as that which contributes to minor scale enterprises and straightforwardly enhances the standard of livelihood[31].and it also works as a facilitator to the development of any community. Moreover, homestay offers several prospects for the community, and the major contribution concerns opportunities for employment. The industry related to tourism generally is responsible significantly for the growth of economy and social health of any areas and countries throughout the globe has seen this growth

phenomenon. Now tourism is generally portrayed as a chief foundation provider for the cause giving jobs; in addition, it is seen as a facilitator for rural and urban redevelopment. Many nations which have rural base have got propensity towards tourism as a vehicle for diversifying their economic foundation [7]. In order to establish or develop an industry which is associated with tourism, communities that are rural pursue to change themselves out of a commodity production economy to a place of consumption [22]. The advantage of this type of growth is considered as to encompass the individuals in the villages and other left-over places in and around Malaysia.

2.1 Community Development and CBT

The thoughtful effort by the people of community to engage in work in groups in order to lead the bright potential prospects of their communities and the growth of a parallel set of procedures for aiding the people of the community in these types of procedures are known as a community development [10]. The process related to the development of community relies not only on fields of community development but also on adult education [19]. Community development is consisted of an association which concerns economic growth and the organization of community. Every succeeding enhancement is considered as a distinct component for the development of community. It satisfies a want or need which is human-oriented [21]. The development of the community right through humanity will act as accountable for guiding demands to the cornerstone about power. Fundamental principles meant for this growth are known as the acknowledgment of rights of the any person to choose the degree of public or privacy and the privileges of the group to determine its identifiable demands for the development of community [37]. This is known as a procedure where members of the community join in groups to perform actions collectively and produce answers to the problems that are common in nature. The life standard of rural area people will see growth via the development of the community. There exist manifold procedures to enhance the life standard of the community people. This is considered as unique that aids the programs which are related with homestay and also develop community [55]. During the previous three years, quite a lot of Homestay tourism yields, for example, mining, agriculture, fishery and forestry have worked as contributors [24],[40]. Moreover, it is also seen that the development of the community showcases that tourism works as an alternative to help develop the life standard of the

rural people and to prompt changes positively [44]. The enterprises which are small or medium sized and related to homestay tourism possess potentiality to produce an extent of progressive development connected with society and economy effects on non-urban areas where additional developments might not be sufficient. Community based tourism (CBT) is expected to make contribution to conservation that is both cultural and environmental and to the reallocation regarding economic advantages to the majority of the susceptible groups, as for example, they can be the indigenous communities. Community based tourism (CBT) is known as a procedure which is produced out of not top-down engagement of community in order to enhance products of tourism and facilities and activate a strategy which is tourism-based [56]. Community based tourism (CBT) has a procedure to produce viable foundations regarding backing of money from interior of tourism companies, the community and special events (CTO, 2006). CBT has taken an initiation to function a community, to have the existence of a structure of policy and application of challenging endeavor, the presence of adeptness and support among stakeholders [5]. CBT is known as a procedure of the growth for tourism industry, which is usually acknowledged [57]. Tourism which is community-based thought as a procedure where native populations (rural and economically) request tourists to have a look at the communities accompanied by the supply of overnight lodging. This has prospective advantages to communities, particularly 'commercially grounded' initiatives [47]. In order to improve tourism in the fashion which is more suitable connected with the rural background, the method of CBT has come to the fore and suggested [56].

The involvement of the community under community-based tourism has received consideration by the civil aviation as a single application method out of many strategies to help the poor section of the society, especially in non-urban areas for the growth and partaking in the sector of tourism in a nation [38]. One of the tourism strategies which is based on community performs its activities via homestay program in the non-urban areas. The homestay program works apparently in correspondence with the CBT program [36]. A homestay program is considered as a portion of CBT which functions as an option for lodging which includes the stay of the tourists with nominated families, and there they can have interaction and have experience regarding the usual daily life of those said families and also they can have the life time experience of the culture of the host country [2]. A homestay which is based on

community is known as a single program out of many programs, which is included in the activities of CBT [3] Apart from the homestay, there exist a group of villagers, and they engage themselves in activities, like managing and guiding, for they can get advantages not only for them but also for the villages.

2.3 Homestay as a CBT

Homestay is a form of accommodation whereby visitors will get the chance to stay with the chosen house-owner or host. Around the world, homestay program began informally since the 1970s with some involvement of the local community which provides accommodation in their own homes to foreign tourists by charging a very minimal price compared to hotels or resorts [34]. Such accommodation sector is also known by various terms, such as farm stay, culture homestay heritage homestay, quality life homestay, education homestay [58], voluntary homestay, private accommodation, leisure stay, and cottage [8],[26]. A homestay is a place to stay at a residence by a traveller and especially by a visiting foreign resident who is hosted by a local family. The homestay tourism offers alternative accommodation facilities to the tourists as well as to Malaysia [31]. Based on the introduced homestay concept, its implementation strategy involves the local community. Therefore, the impact of the program towards the local community is indirectly interrelated to Malaysia. Homestay is a home in which used rooms are rented for the purpose of supplementing income [43]. It can realize the potential of homestay tourism, which could generate employment opportunities and increase the income level of rural communities. Homestay programme is, therefore, important in existence as another tourism product. However homestay programme from Malaysian prospective is the group of villagers who are certified to operate by the ministry of tourism Malaysia. A Homestay programme is initiated by those in the grass root, and those people prepare facilities and services for a tourist to put up with the host family during his/her stay in the community and experience the everyday way of life of the family and the community in both a direct and indirect manner [28].

As the majority of homestay programmers are operated in rural vicinities or outskirts of big cities and their activities are mostly culture related, it is therefore normally regarded as a rural-cultural-community-based tourism product. Homestay would become a strategy that can be done to increase economic opportunities and rural development as well as to diminish the poverty rate in an area. The homestay program promotion under their banner, would give guests to experience the rustic life in a

village, experience the activities of their host in daily life, try home-cooking lesson, harvest fruits during fruit seasons, play traditional games and so on that come under CBT.

Through homestay program, rural communities are encouraged to organize among themselves to transform their residence into homestay facilities and offer hospitality services to local and international tourists. Homestay program is an activity that occurs in a rural tourism activity and directly linked to Malaysian culture and the payment paid to the host family includes accommodation, meal and organized activities of cultural lifestyle and leisure, jungle tracking. Homestay planning has followed a significant evolution in development and planning paradigms that are more comprehensive, flexible, responsive, systematic and participatory approaches [33],[56],[54],[59]. This evolution seeks to tourism as an agent for cultural and economic development, especially towards rural community development. The homestay program works as a catalyst for rural community development. The effects of the homestay program towards the community can be portrayed through development of the economy, social capital, infrastructure, as well as the environment. Moreover homestay tourism is growing faster in developing countries than in the developed countries and there are many reasons why homestay tourism is particularly well placed to meet the needs of the rural people [65],[5]. However, there are some challenges to operate a homestay program in Malaysia.

Error! Bookmark not defined. CHALLENGES ON HOMESTAY PROGRAMS

Homestay program has to contest around the world market. However due to certain issues, homestay program does not enjoy certain economic benefits. There is some lacking and problems described below. These issues are, such as lack of visitor, lack of promotion and inability to utilize technology, lack of awareness technology and low skill and capabilities.

3.1 Low Number of Visitors

Tourists play an important role for homestay program. In spite of that, tourists are decreasing day after day in homestay program in Malaysia [35]. Only tourists can contribute to the benefits of tourism. There is lack of preparedness for the changes associated with tourism, and limited opportunities decrease tourist [29]. Community Tourism improving mechanisms used to empower people to take part in community development. Low numbers of tourists are seen in Malaysian tourism. Tourists are losing their interest in Malaysian tourism, so numbers of tourists are

decreasing day after day [20]. However advance promotion of homestay can increase the number of tourists.

3.2 Lack of promotion

Promotion plays an important role for marketing process. Homestay program in Malaysia is facing problems due to poor promotion thorough media [30],[60],[35]. Poor promotion in tourism Malaysia does badly affect visitors[66]. Lack of advertising is a problem in homestay Malaysia [1]. Promoting through the use of technology can overcome the problem [32].The use of technology, such as internet, blog and website can be used as promoting tools.

3.3 Inability to utilize technology

Use of technology is important for any homestay program. But the current homestay administrator and operator do not use technology. Because they are not well trained or do not get proper guidelines. The operator and administrator in homestay Malaysia are not able to use proper technology. Homestay operator and administrator are unable to use technology[34]. The ability of use technology can contribute to develop homestay [12]. Moreover the lack of technology adaption is monitored everywhere, especially in homestay. An example, e-Bario project introduced modern services into the community to familiarize technology into homestay owner. In addition, homestay operators need to have awareness of technology in order to be able to use these various technologies which then can improve their homestay programs and promote Malaysia as a place to visit.

3.4 Key factors for applying ICT in tourism

- IT education and training for policy makers, managers and other players in the industry
- Addition of various sectors like conveyance, gatehouse etc.
- Technical Substructure
- Human Infrastructure, which includes skilled people, vision and organization.
- Legal Setup
 - Regulation of telecommunication breadwinners
 - Subsidies for Internet service workers
 - Permissible framework for online commercial or official endorsement for online marketing.
- ICT culture
 - Create and sustain ICT situation
 - Maintenance and updating of websites

- ICT training for all level of workers
- Launch electronic associations between all related sectors

IV DISCUSSION

Traditional base homestay is a process that shows how homestay runs in the beginning of homestay tourism [46]. Traditional homestay is conducted manually[62]. Consumer needs to go through travel agent. Travel agents set the accommodation for incoming tourists [62]. Despite that, travel agents only give suggestions to customers about their tour plan. Tourist and host there is media which works as agents.

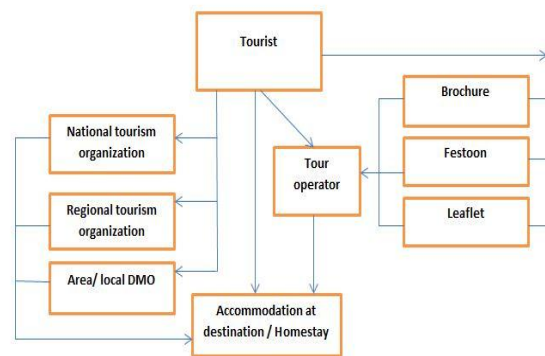


Figure: 1 Traditional based Homestay[62]

4.1 Internet based homestay promotion

Internet based homestay is a chain that shows homestay promotion and marketing dependence on internet protocol [23]. The homestay model manages the complexity of online promotion. Homestay model is a snapshot; it shows how internet works for promotion[62]. Previously the system does not help the user to view their choice. But web recommended system helps users to view and recommend sites of homestay. Recommender systems can now be found in many modern applications that expose huge collections of items to the users [51]. Such systems typically provide the users with a list of recommended items they might prefer, or predict how much they might prefer each item. These systems help users to decide on appropriate items, and ease the task of finding preferred items in the collection. Many term agents are involved in homestay model Destination Management Company (DMC), Destination Marketing Organization (DMO). The overall structure of the industry has been transformed ever since internet has been the

essential communication tool for the industry. Several new developments can be noted.

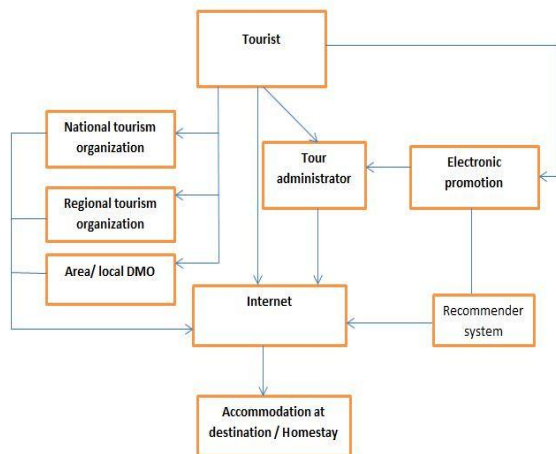


Figure: 2 Internet based Homestay HM-model

V HOMESTAY PROMOTION

Homestay promoting is a marketing processing that provides promotion through electronic and paper media [53],[52]. Homestay promotion is an important part for tourism marketing. There are many ways to promote homestay tourism in tourism marketing [1]. Since from the very beginning, homestay is promoted by brochure, leaflet and travel magazine. The change of modern civilization website becomes a major filed to promote homestay. The use of social network also provides homestay promotion, and social media works as a medium to promote homestay to the world. Facebook twitter, blog and Google site are the promoting tools [6]. On-line tourism marketing system is a promotion for the tourism industry. Besides that, Computer-assisted travel counseling (CATC) is one of the promotion tools for tourist counseling[41]. It is clear that homestay promotion is integrated with technology.

5.1 Brochure and leaflet

The brochure is “the spatial representation of a tension between an individual and a targeted valuable object[27]. Although brochures and leaflets are also highly informative, their main aim is persuasive[26]. The brochures are among the most used and appreciated sources for promoting tourism as well as for homestay. Brochures influence on image formation about a destination so that tourists are attracted about the place [15], [63].

5.2 Travel Magazine

Travel magazines are an information processing mode, and they are used to evaluate attributes, such as the price and the service quality of a travel place. Magazines are meant to be a tourism promotional material of a destination [9]. Potential visitors can enjoy and get excited by reading through travel magazines [9]. Travel magazines are one of the tools to broadcast the performance of tourism sector (Lao PDR tourism strategy, (2006-2020). Now-a-days travel magazines have stronger platform to promote tourism through vibrant photographs and more lengthy articles

5.3 Homestay promotion and technology usage

Since 20 century, people are using Facebook, blog[50] and twitter [48] for promoting product. Blog is an important media to promote and collect users’ views[50]. Besides that, twitter is another promoting tool [48]. It provides a more detailed and logical understating of an industry’s structure by focusing on the concepts, definitions, consumer behavior, economic aspect, market transactions, etc. that depends on Information Technology, web development system, intelligent system [62]. Day after day, the running of homestay tourism is based on internet chains [62]. The modern homestay promotion is using web 2 tools and cloud.

5.4 Facebook

Facebook (www.facebook.com) is one of the foremost social networking websites, with over 8 million users spanning 2,000 college campuses [4]. Marketing in social media has been studied extensively in recent years, specifically for homestay-oriented establishment in. Now-a-days homestay tourism is using Facebook for their marketing and advertisement. Facebook introduces social networking to enhance tourism promotions as well homestay tourism.

5.5 Blog

A blog a blend of the term web log is known as a type of website. Blogs is one of social Medias, and that is gradually becoming the primary medium for traveler [64]. The marketing process in blog is bringing dramatic changes to tourism and homestay. Social networking features, such as blogging would be required in the website for homestay to gain attention from the user group.

5.6 Twitter

Twitter, a micro blogging service which is less than three years old, commands more than 41 million users as of July 2009 and is growing fast [39]. Online user guide for tourist at Twitter in Greece and Twitter has become a promoting tool for homestay tourism. Twitter as an interpersonal communication tool to encourage live interactions among the users and homestay tourists [42].

VI CONCLUSION

There is a need for a well-structured Information System or Intelligent System technologies in tourism industry to facilitate the access of tourist information by the users. The current ICT system has certain limitations. For instance, accessing information through Internet and www is an intelligent mean of getting the information, but many a times, the information is highly fragmented. One shall arrive at it only after intelligent navigation, which is time consuming and may mislead in the process. Sometimes, presentation of information in the web is not intelligent too. Search engines for tourism should be developed. Facilities to browse according to the topic portals can be made. Wireless is likely to be the next major event in the history of technology. Its application in tourism industry is also likely to increase in future. Mobile services shall continue to be an important channel of information and tourism services distribution for both providers and consumers. Therefore, this study unlocks further frontiers for the practitioner of tourism industry in order to enrich their services.

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