



**TOURIST SATISFACTION TOWARDS TOURISM
FACILITIES PROVIDED IN THE URBAN TOURISM
AREA, IPOH, MALAYSIA**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Tourism industry consists of firms, organizations and facilities that are intended to serve the specific needs and wants of the tourists. Poor and dearth of tourism facility management lead to the declining number of tourists, as without tourist satisfaction in the use of facilities and amenities cause a poor destination loyalty in the tourism destination. This research is focusing on Ipoh, the capital city of Perak due its potential, as there are a variety of attractions and tourism products that can attract a lot of tourists. The main objective of this research is to examine the tourist satisfaction level towards tourism facilities provided at urban tourism destination in Ipoh. The focus of this research is to identify the demographic data of the tourist, identify the tourism facilities provided, evaluate tourists' satisfaction and suggest the possible recommendation to improve the current tourism facilities in the study area. The questionnaire survey is used as the main tool to examine the satisfaction level of tourists and it was distributed to a total of 100 tourists from other places including domestic and international visitors. Likert Scale and Relative Importance Index (RII) are used to ascertain the rate of the tourism facilities provided, depending on their satisfaction rank. Spearman Rho's Correlation is also used as a tool to evaluate the relationship between the variables. The outcome of the research shows that the tourists are not satisfied with several tourism facilities based on the result of the RII calculation. There are three tourism facilities that have the lowest satisfaction level among the tourist which are public toilet ranked number 10 with RII 0.624, transportation ranked number 9 with RII 0.652 and supporting facilities ranked number 8 with RII 0.588. The outcome and suggestion of this research will help the local authority and non-government agencies to improve the existing tourism facilities in order to achieve high satisfaction level among the tourists in the study area.

خلاصة البحث

تتكون صناعة السياحة من الشركات والمنظمات والمرافق التي تهدف إلى تلبية الاحتياجات المحددة من السياح. ويؤدي ضعف إدارة المرافق السياحية إلى انخفاض عدد السياح، حيث إن عدم رضا السياح عن استخدام المرافق سيؤدي إلى ضعف الولاء في المقصد السياحي. ويركز هذا البحث على إيوبه، عاصمة بيراك بسبب إمكاناتها، كما أن هناك تنوع عوامل الجذب والمنتجات السياحية التي يمكن أن تجذب الانتباه كثير من السياح. والهدف الرئيسي من هذا البحث هو دراسة مستوى الرضا السياحي نحو المرافق السياحية المتوفرة في مقصد السياحة الحضرية في إيوبه. وينصب تركيز هذا البحث على التعرف إلى البيانات الديموغرافية للسياح، وتحديد المرافق السياحية المقدمة، وتقييم رضا السياح واقتراح التوصيات المحتملة لتحسين المرافق السياحية الحالية في منطقة الدراسة. وأستخدمت الدراسة الاستقصائية كأداة رئيسية لدراسة مستوى رضا السياح وتم توزيعها على مائة سائح من أماكن أخرى، ومن بينها الزوار المحليين والدوليين. يستخدم مقياس ليكرت ومؤشر الأهمية النسبية (ري) للتأكد من معدل المرافق السياحية المتوفرة، اعتماداً على مرتبة الرضا. ويستخدم سيرمان رو الارتباط أيضاً كأداة لتقييم العلاقة بين المتغيرات. وتبين نتائج البحث أن السياح غير راضين عن العديد من المرافق السياحية استناداً إلى نتيجة حساب ري. وتكون ثلاثة مرافق سياحية لديها أدنى مستوى رضا بين السياح، والمراحيض العامة في المرتبة العاشرة مع ري 0.624، وفي المرتبة التاسعة هي النقل مع ري 0.652 والمرافق الداعمة في المرتبة الثامنة مع ري 0.588. ومن شأن نتائج هذا البحث واقتراحه مساعدة السلطة المحلية والجهات غير الحكومية على تحسين المرافق السياحية الحالية من أجل تحقيق المستوى العالي من الارتياح والرضا لدى السياح في منطقة الدراسة.

APPROVAL PAGE

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Nik Marzuki Abdullah and Zalina Mohamed for being the pillar of my success in completing this dissertation; without them, I would not have been where I am today and what I am today.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
NPP2	National Physical Plan 2
EPU	Economic Planning Unit
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
PSSP	Perak State Structure Plan
ILP	Ipoh Local Plan
NKEA	Tourism National Key Economic Areas
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
IMT-GT	Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle
BIMP-EAGA	Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area
IMS-GT	Indonesia-Malaysia-Singapore Growth Triangle
APEC	Asia Pasific Economic Co-operation
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Conferences
MyFEST 2015	Malaysia Year of Festivals 2015
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
EDT	Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory
RII	Relatives Importance Index
MBI	Majlis Bandaraya Ipoh
SPSS	Statiscal Package for Social Sciences

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In recent years, the tourism industry has become one of the most important industries that generate the fastest economic growth in the world, especially in developing countries and become a vital driver for socioeconomic progress (Mansfeld and Winckler, 2008). According to The United Nations World Tourism Organization, UNWTO's long term projection *Tourism Towards 2030*, the arrival of international tourist is projected to increase by 3.3 percent a year between 2010 and 2030 to reach 1.8 billion by 2030 (UNWTO, 2015). Hence, it is essential for countries to promote strategies that can contribute to the growing tourism industry such as travel facilities, human resources development and sustainability (UNWTO, 2016). Tourism product contains all attractions that offer from the tourism location by tourism industry, which include not only natural and man-made but also tourism facilities and services offered (Naderpour, Rajabzadeh and Shabestari, 2011). The tourist is more devoted to a place that gives them better quality experiences of a location's product and facilities than others (Bramwell, 1998). Hence, an accurate information on the demand for tourism can lower challenges for the tourism industry is to stable the supply of facilities, product, and infrastructure with the need that accommodate tourist satisfaction (Kerimoglu and Ciraci, 2005).

The purpose of the study is to identify and analyze tourists' satisfaction towards current urban tourism facilities in order to designate possible recommendation in improving urban tourism facilities in the study area. Ipoh, the capital city of Perak

state on the west coast of peninsula Malaysia was chosen as the study area as Ipoh is not only famous with history and beautiful natural setting, but also well known for its varieties of cuisines which is generating and demonstrate tourism industry in Perak for many years. The culture and heritage values in the urban tourism area in Ipoh become the central attraction for the local and international tourist. Thus, in order to accommodate the tourists' need the provision of tourist facilities is indispensable to satisfy the need and demand fro the tourist in the tourism area. This study provides clear understanding on tourist satisfaction of the study area and provides possible suggestions in improving the current condition of tourism facilities to meet the demand from the domestic and international tourist, thus, generate solutions for the existing shortcoming in the tourism facilities in the study area.

PROBLEM STATEMANT

Ipoh, the capital city of Perak in Malaysia is one of the tourism destinations in Malaysia due to its various tourism products that attract a lot of domestic and international tourist (Ahmad, Yahaya and Asae, 2015). They also state that it has many potential that can be fully exploited for the economic boost from district level to the state level as the tourism sector is considered one of the most significant sectors in Ipoh that can be the main economy contributor that provided income, employment and expanding business opportunity. This is supported by UNWTO (2016) and Jafari (1977) by describing tourism as a situation when a person is far from his or her home and supported by the industry that fulfill his or her needs which give impact to the local culture, economy and natural environment of the place. In addition, align with the tourism as the fastest growing industry in the world; Malaysia is targeting to

achieve thirty six million tourist arrivals and RM 168 billion revenue by the year 2020 through Malaysia Tourism Transformation Plan 2020 (Tourism Malaysia, 2012).

Nevertheless, apart from all the government amendment to support the tourism industry in Malaysia, Dahalan (2010) states due to poor tourism management, including public amenities, the dearth of good entertainment and lack of creativity among tourism planners lead to the declining number of tourists in several tourism locations in Malaysia. Warnken (2002) states an outdated or old accommodation facility can reduce the attractiveness of a destination against competitors with more modern infrastructure. Mohamed (2006) suggests that today's competitive business environment in complexity and globalization lead quality as one of the most important sources of competitive advantage in tourism industry align with the evaluation of customer satisfaction as one way to determine the quality means. Many studies in tourism verify that absent of tourist satisfaction in the use of amenities and facilities leads to poor destination loyalty at the particular tourism destination, Oroian (2012) further suggests destination loyalty can be measured by repeated visits by tourists and their recommendation to other people. Valle, Silva, Mendes and Guerreiro (2006) further explains that service and facility quality, perceived price, customer value and perceptions of company performance as determinants of customer satisfaction which, in turn, is used to explain revisit intentions.

However, lack of understanding on tourists' decision and behavior pattern leads to poor management and strategy of tourism necessity, creating a bad perception of the respective tourism destination. In offering an appealing tourist destination required a profound comprehension of the thought processes that lead tourists to settle on their decision among the diverse choices accessible including the level of satisfaction given by tourism destination. There are many researches on tourism

facilities in the other tourism destination in Malaysia, but there are not many in Ipoh, Perak and mostly, the research focus on marketing and cultural heritage tourism in Ipoh. Therefore, this research on tourist satisfaction towards facilities provided in the urban tourism area Ipoh is necessary in providing the information on tourist perception towards tourism facilities in the study area. Aksu, Icigen and Ethiyar (2010) agree that satisfaction is a crucial element in effecting the destination selection decision, expenditure of goods and facilities at the destination.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the previous discussion on the problem statement above, the following questions have been raised in the study of tourist satisfaction towards facilities provided in the urban tourism area in Ipoh, Perak:

- 1) What is the tourism facilities provided at study area?
- 2) What are the tourist satisfaction levels towards the tourism facilities provided in the study area?
- 3) How can MBI improve urban tourism facilities to meet tourist satisfaction in Ipoh area?

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study is to measure the level of tourist satisfaction towards tourism facilities provided in the urban tourism area, Ipoh. The outcome from this study will assist future tourism planning and management in Ipoh, besides, the research will provide clear data benefiting future research relating to tourism in the study area.

Based on the problem statement and research question discussed above, below are the main objectives of this study.

- 1) To identify the tourism facilities provided at urban tourism destination in Ipoh.
- 2) To examine the tourist satisfaction towards tourism facilities provided at urban tourism destination in Ipoh.
- 3) To suggest possible recommendation in enhancing urban tourism facilities in Ipoh to achieve tourist satisfaction on the tourist destination.

RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

The main purpose of the study is to examine and evaluate the level of tourist satisfaction towards certain tourism facilities in the study area. The evaluation of tourist satisfaction is done by calculating the level of satisfaction with several important tourism facilities in the tourism sector as one of the key elements to bring domestic and international tourist to the destination. According to Malaysia National Physical Plan 2 (2010), high quality tourism infrastructure and facilities shall be provided to enhance tourist comfort and safety without compromising the quality the environment, besides, emphasize on town with special features shall be identified and the development projects to enhance their special features shall be supported by appropriate infrastructure and facilities. The main contribution of this research is the local authority which is Majlis Bandaraya Ipoh (MBI) in identifying the existing condition of the tourism facilities in the urban tourism spots, evaluating the tourists perception towards them and suggesting the possible solutions to overcome the

problems. The outcome of this research will guide the local authority, MBI to improve the shortcoming in the existing facilities provided in the research area.

Lastly, this research gives a significant contribution in providing data for future academic purposes and policy makers related to study area and tourism sector in urban tourism area Ipoh, Perak. The research will function as a pillar for decision makers in planning and organizing tourism sector in Ipoh based on current condition and demand to satisfy the tourist. Thus, the tourism products and facilities that are available in the tourism area can be fully utilized and restored accurately by using this research resource as the outcome of the research provides a better understanding on the tourism issues. Future researchers will have the opportunity to widen the study scope, such as impact, socioeconomic, culture and heritage, local community involvement and issue in tourism sectors in Ipoh. In addition, as cited by Giuliana (2002) discovered at tourism is a complex movement that concerns many other disparate sectors involving socioeconomic, hence, highlight the significance of a proper long term planning as well as maintaining satisfied tourist markets and avoid unanticipated impacts.

SCOPE AND LIMITATION

The beginning of this research started by reviewing previous literature studies done by researchers from various related topics starting from tourist satisfaction to tourism in order to have a bigger picture of this study. The study focus on tourist satisfaction towards facilities provided in selected urban tourism area in the Ipoh city center and along the Kinta River, besides those only ten crucial tourism facilities selected for evaluation on visitor satisfaction. The target group of this study focusing on the visitor

that visit within the study location radius further, the target group comprises of domestic and international tourist. The researcher collects the primary data from the target group through survey by using 110 questionnaires. This range of study guides to focus on a specific facility related to determination of satisfaction on specific area, thus, it is important to keep the correct analysis by using a consistent variable in the research. From the data collected, the level of satisfaction is identified based on issues and problems occurring in the existing tourist destination.

There are various factors causing limitation to this study, especially due to time constraints, inadequate resources, human attitude, health problem and financial restraints. One of the most difficult data collections is from primary data which required cooperation from more than 110 respondents to answer three pages of the questionnaires. Some of them do not have interest and just randomly answer the questions consequently ten questionnaires are disqualified and not reliable, hence, consuming a lot of time to complete 110 sets of questionnaires. Only 100 questionnaires were responded used in this study as valid samples. In terms of financial problem, the researchers have to travel several times from Kuala Lumpur to Perak have an accurate data collection of questionnaires from three separate times increasing money spending on commute costing.

RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

This research consists of five chapters which are introduction, literature review, methodology, data finding and analysis, finally summarized by conclusion and recommendation. Chapter One: Introduction consists of preliminary study and theoretical study of this research topic based on the past studies and secondary data

from the local authority. In this section, the researcher identifies the issues and problems relating to tourist and tourist destination, thus, connecting the significance of tourist satisfaction towards facilities provided in the study area, Ipoh. Also, this chapter discusses the objectives, limitations and research organization by setting the flow of the research process. While, Chapter Two: Literature Review is reviewing and analyzing different views from other researchers relating to the research topic. The literature review on the tourist satisfaction in relation to tourism facilities is done based on the problem statement rise in Chapter One; also, a detailed explanation of significant terms is discussed by referring to the secondary data. Next, Chapter Three: Methodology consists of detail explanation on gathering and analyzing the data to achieve the main objectives and purposes of the study, including data collection from primary data and secondary data. Continuously, Chapter Four: Finding and Analysis embarking on the data collection from the distributed questionnaires to the domestic and international tourist done in the study area, then, the data are analyzed and organized by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, Measurement of Central Tendency, Relative Importance Index (RII) and Spearman Rho's Correlation test for analyzing the data. The summary of all discussions discusses in Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendation in which conclude the whole research based on the outcome of the data collected and analyzed, then, recommending the best solution to overcome the shortcoming.

The development of this research encompasses three stages starting from topic selection in stage one, data collection and finding in stage two, and concludes by result, recommendation and conclusion in stage three. The research consists five chapters which are preliminary studied, literature review, research methodology,