

COMMUNITY ATTITUDE TOWARDS TOURISM IMPACTS: DEVELOPING A STANDARD INSTRUMENT IN THE MALAYSIAN CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a study on developing a standard instrument in measuring the community attitude towards tourism impacts in Malaysia named as MACTIAS (Malaysian Community Tourism Impacts Attitudinal Scale). The scale had followed several standard procedures and suggested a restructuring of the stages involved. The procedure involved five major stages beginning with the identification of 68 items represented tourism impacts. It was then followed by 50 items tested for validity and verification by the panel experts. The next procedure involved a test of scale purification on the remaining 49 items. Finally, the last step of the procedure derived with 36 items and six new tourism impact domains presented in the instrument. The domains were named accordingly to the Malaysian community perceptions on the impacts such as; Amenity Service, Economic & Socio-Cultural Impact, Negative Socio-Cultural Impact, Financial & Socio-Economic Impact, Historical & Cultural Impact, Socio-Cultural & Community Impact and Service Impact. The findings eventually indicate new attitudinal instrument development in a different cultural context of tourism destination research which in this case referred to Malaysia.

Field of Research: *Tourism Impacts, Community Attitude, Instrument Development.*

1. Introduction

The tourism industry in Malaysia is expanding quite rapidly as in any other developing countries. This fact can be seen in terms of the contribution to the gross domestic product growth (GDP), foreign exchange earner, services account of the balance of payments and furthermore to the investment and employment opportunities (Jalis, Zahari, Izzat and Othman, 2009). As noted by Ibrahim (2010), tourism is widely perceived as a promising basic industry in Malaysia particularly in providing local employment opportunities, maximizing tax revenues, and diversifying economic opportunities to rural communities. In fact, the community's involvement in tourism planning has started to play an important role in order to ensure long-term acceptance and social sustainability of the industry (Din, 1997). A recent study on Langkawi Islands, Malaysia also supports this fact based on the findings that tourism has provided entrepreneurial opportunities to the community (Marzuki, 2011).

The Malaysian community consists of different racial backgrounds with different cultures and beliefs, thus in order to determine community's attitudes, it is important to develop a standard measurement tool which is reliable and valid by taking into account the diversity of races in the community. Several studies have been conducted to understand the community's attitudes toward tourism in Malaysia (Ahmad & Jusoh; Hin, 2010; Ibrahim, 2010; Mapjabil & Din, 2008) but none have studied on the development of a standard measurement instrument. A study in Langkawi however was considered as a first step to expand the study in a much broader area. Thus, the main objective of the study is to develop a standard measurement instrument to examine community's attitudes towards tourism impacts in Malaysia.

2. Related Literature

Many studies and literature have indicated that several positive outcomes derived from the economic impacts of tourism are generating more employment opportunities, attracting more investment and improving development and infrastructure (Belisle and Hoy, 1980; Hin, 2010; Ibrahim, 2010; Liu and Var, 1986; McCool and Martin, 1994). In addition, Mathieson and Wall (1993) found that contribution to foreign exchange is also a positive impact due to tourism development of the community. Studies have also noted that the impacts of tourism have been found to contribute towards income and improved standard of living. The issues of socio-cultural impacts of tourism have appeared to be more problematic in the Malaysian community due to the fact that they are related to values, ethics and religion whilst cultural impacts are more toward artistic and craft (Din, 1997). In fact study has also found that creation of a phony folk culture and heightened tension among the community (Rothman, 1978) as negative socio-cultural impacts of tourism.

In the case of Malaysia, the environment is considered as something to be preserved and restored. According to Khalifah and Tahir (1997), Malaysia's tropical rainforests are among the oldest and most diverse ecosystems in the world. In addition, the government has also planned to promote and target ecotourism and 'green' environment as an intensive tourism development strategy in the Seventh Malaysia Plan 1996-2000 (Economic Planning Unit, 2011). In the State of Sarawak, Malaysia, environmental preservation is based on ecotourism which is being demonstrated through the concepts of time-sharing, interval ownership and holiday ownership (Edmonds and Leposky, 2000). Researches on community's attitudes towards tourism seriously conducted due to the fact that community plays an important role in determining the future development of tourism at the destination (Ahmad & Jusoh, 2008; Ap, 1990; Lankford, 1994; Liu and Var, 1986; Shariff, 2002, Shariff and Tahir, 2003).

It has been noted that even though there are many studies on attitudes toward impacts of tourism, only a few studies have concentrated on the development of a standard measurement tool to examine the community's attitude. The first tool was developed by Lankford and Howard (1994) and named Tourism Impact Attitude Scale (TIAS). However, it has also been considered that the tool was developed for the purpose of understanding community's attitude from the Western perspective. The second tool was developed by Ap and Crompton (1998) and consisted of 147 items. Dalamere (1998) has also developed a tool for measuring attitude which is known as FSIAS (Festival Social Impact Analysis Scale). The tool has been developed for the purpose of measuring resident attitudes towards the social impacts of community festivals and was tested on the Cloverdale of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada and the Edmonton Folk Music Festival.

Furthermore, a study on the residents of Langkawi (Shariff, 2002) has been adopted as a basic theory towards understanding the Malaysian community's attitudes. In accordance, they represent Malaysian

culture, beliefs and values which eventually lead to consistency in the items derived and specific tourism impacts domains constructed. LATIAS (Langkawi Tourism Impact Attitude Scale) has been tested on 145 residents of Langkawi and the results have ended with 13 items and five specific tourism impacts domains. Even though the instrument allows for greater understanding of resident attitudes towards tourism, another study to further verify the tool particularly in a similar context is recommended in order to substantiate it.

3. Methodology

The study followed a procedure in developing LATIAS based on the fact that the previous study was also carried out in Malaysia. All the tourism impacts items were identified and presented in a survey questionnaire. In addition, an interview was also undertaken which involved several individual for the purpose of gaining further information on tourism impact items. For the purpose of exploring and understanding tourism impacts, 15 tourism experts were identified and helped to determine the validity of the measurement instrument. They were represented by both academic institutions and tourism sectors. However, only 10 experts agreed to participate in the study due to several personal constraints.

A pre-test study to confirm the validity and reliability of the questionnaire was conducted in January 2011 which involved 220 residences of UUM. To fulfill the objective of the study in developing a standard tool, 350 questionnaires were distributed within two months, starting from February 2011 to March 2011. The data was then analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) Software 2007. Two main techniques of analysis were used to evaluate the items in the questionnaire, namely factor analysis and reliability test. In this study, factor analysis was used to test for tool purification. The first stage of factor analysis in this study involved calculating an item-to-item correlation matrix. This was done by using a principal component analysis where the items in the questionnaire are transformed into a new set of items which are not correlated with each other. Consequently, the combinations are known as factors and are accounted for the variance in the whole data.

The second stage was to redefine the factors namely known as factor rotation. This study used varimax rotation due to the fact that the factors are unrelated to or independent of one another. Items which failed to meet the criterion as suggested by Tinsley and Tinsley (1987) that is .3 or loaded on more than one factor were eliminated from the questionnaire. This study used reliability test to estimate the degree to which a measurement is free of error. A high internal consistency is indicated by alpha value of 1 and above. Thus, item-to-item correlation below .5 was eliminated from the scale.

4. Finding & Discussion

4.1 Generation of Item Pool

Table 1 depicts the summary of the stages in developing MACTIAS which stands for Malaysian Community Tourism Impact Attitude Scale. The first stage involved the generation of items or also known as development of an item pool. As a result, 68 tourism impacts items were compiled and listed in the first round of determining the validity and clarity of the scale. From the total of 68 items gained in the first stage of tourism impacts items generation, 18 items were eliminated from the scale thus only 50 items remained in the pre-tested instrument.

The items were then tested on the pre-test sample. Data gained from the pre-test sample were factor analyzed using the principal components methods with varimax rotation. Seven factors with eigenvalues

above 1 derived from the analysis. However, only three factors were confirmed. All the 50 items had factor loadings above .3 and loaded cleanly onto one factors. The factors were then analyzed for internal consistency using Cronbach’s coefficient alpha and the results indicated alpha value ranged from .500 to .945. Four items were found to be loaded onto one factor solution. Two of the items which were expected to load saliently into the environmental impact did not instead they loaded into two different factors. Same goes with the other two items which were expected to load saliently into the community impact. These items loaded into two different factors namely Factor 6: Community Pride Impact and Factor 7: Community Spirit Impact.

Furthermore, the results also indicated that several economic and socio-cultural items loaded into one factor solution named as Factor 1: Amenity Services, Economic and Socio-cultural Impact. Five items which loaded saliently into Factor 2 were named as Negative Socio-cultural Impact since all items represent negative impact to the community. However, one item which was expected to load into the environmental impact did not but instead it loaded into this factor. Factor 3 derived from the scale was named as Financial and Economic Impact since the two items loaded represent both the financial and economic aspects and not just totally economic.

Table 1: Procedures in Developing MACTIAS

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Procedures</i>	<i>Number of Items</i>	<i>Factors Named</i>	<i>Number of Items</i>
1	Generation of item pool from literature and interviews session.	68		
2	Assessment of content validity from a panel of tourism expert involving 10 judges.	50		
3	Scale verification from pre-test sample (50 respondents) – factor analysis and reliability test: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven factors derived but only three were confirmed. • Coefficient alpha value ranged from .500 – .945. 	50	Factor 1: Amenity Services, Economic and Socio-cultural Impact Factor 2: Negative Socio-cultural Impact Factor 3: Financial and Economic Impact Factor 4: Positive Environmental Impact Factor 5: Negative Environmental Impact Factor 6: Community Pride Impact Factor 7: Community Spirit Impact	39 5 2 1 1 1 1
4	Scale purification from sample respondents (301 respondents) – factor analysis and reliability test: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight factors derived but only seven were confirmed. • Factor 8 was eliminated since it consisted of only one item, thus 49 items were retained. • Coefficient alpha value ranged from .479 – .904. • 13 items were eliminated. 	49	Factor 1: Amenity Services, Economic and Socio-cultural Impact Factor 2: Negative Socio-cultural Impact Factor 3: Financial and Socio-economic Impact Factor 4: Historical and Cultural Impact Factor 5: Socio-cultural and Community Impact Factor 6: Service and Safety Impact	16 12 6 5 5 3

			Factor 7: Environmental Impact	2
			Factor 8: Community Pride Impact	1
5	Final scale – six factors were confirmed with coefficient alpha value ranged from .673 - .907.	36	Factor 1: Amenity Services, Economic and Socio-cultural Impact	12
			Factor 2: Negative Socio-cultural Impact	9
			Factor 3: Financial and Socio-economic Impact	5
			Factor 4: Historical and Cultural Impact	5
			Factor 5: Socio-cultural and Community Impact	3
			Factor 6: Service Impact	2

4.2 The Instrument Verification

The final items in the instrument were factor analyzed and the results indicated all the items loaded above .3 and cleanly onto one factor solution (Table 2). The results also indicated that eight factors with eigenvalues above 1 derived from the scale. However, one item was eliminated since it had no alpha value. Thus, this final scale consisted of 49 items. Out of these seven factors, two factors were retained as in the pre-test sample. They were Factor 1: Amenity Services, Economic and Socio-cultural Impact and Factor 2: Negative Socio-cultural Impact. One factor was renamed as Factor 3: Financial and Socio-economic Impact. In addition four new factors derived from the scale and were named as Factor 4: Historical and Cultural Impact, Factor 5: Socio-cultural and Community Impact, Factor 6: Service and Safety Impact and finally Factor 7: Environmental Impact. All the seven factors were further tested for internal consistent reliability. The results indicated that 38 items had strong Cornbach's alpha value with strong levels of item-to-total correlations ranged from .479 to .904 whilst another 11 items had alpha value less than .5 Thus, all 11 items were eliminated from the scale. In addition, one item had a very low alpha value of .190 and was also eliminated from the instrument. The final scale therefore consisted of 36 items.

Table 2: Factor Analysis Results with Varimax Rotation of Tourism Impact Items – Final Test Sample (n = 301)

<i>Items</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>
Factor 1: Amenity Services, Economic and Socio-cultural Impact								
Job opportunities in tourism sector.	.746							
Opportunities for businesses in the community' area.	.730							
Varieties of shopping facilities.	.684							
Opportunities to meet other tourists.	.654							
Demand for accommodation sector.	.622							
Demand for restaurants sector.	.599							

Awareness of tourism image.	.547
Understanding of different cultures among community and tourists.	.547
Improvement of public transportation.	.546
Distribution of income to local businesses.	.515
Better community's standard of living.	.503
Revenue generated by the economy.	.445
Opportunities to learn about other cultures.	.441
Opportunities for cultural exchange between communities and tourists.	.441
Investment spending in the community's area.	.440
Urbanization in the community's area.	.409

Factor 2: Negative Socio-cultural Impact

Drug abused in the community's area.	.854
Vandalism in the community's area.	.854
Crime in the community's area.	.794
Alcohol abused in the community's area.	.750
Prostitution in the community's area.	.712
Materialistic values among the community.	.591
Imitation of tourists' behavior.	.598
Changes in price of goods.	.590
Adoption of unhealthy lifestyle among community.	.586
Higher cost of living in the community's area.	.572
Driving hazards by tourists.	.570
Destroy of the wildlife.	.467

Factor 3: Financial and Socio-economic Impact

Traffic congestion in the community's area.	.566.
The noise level in the community's area.	.548
Taxes collected for community's assets.	.541
Varieties of entertainment.	.535
Taxes collected for businesses run by community.	.445
Size of crowds affected community's activities.	.429

Factor 4: Historical and Cultural Impact

Demand for the historical activities.	.836
Demand for the cultural activities.	.687
Preservation of historical structures.	.583
Awareness of the local culture among community.	.562
Restoration of historical structure.	.505

Factor 5: Socio-cultural and Community Impact

Awareness of living in a society.	.658
Community spirit among the local people.	.647
Awareness towards ethnic identity.	.599
Recognition of local culture.	.551
Varieties of cultural activities in the community's area.	.431

Factor 6: Service and Safety Impact

Quality of local services such as police, medical etc.	.713
Financial resources of local services such as police, medical etc.	.645
Awareness of safety in the community's area.	.409

Factor 7: Environmental Impact

Destroy of the natural environment.	.901
Preservation of the wildlife.	.470

Factor 8: Community Pride Impact

Creates pride among the community.	.987
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Factor	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8
Eigenvalue	7.000	6.756	3.280	3.239	3.206	2.625	1.510	-
% of Variance	14.001	13.513	6.561	6.478	6.412	5.249	3.020	-
Cumulative Variance %	14.001	27.513	34.074	40.552	46.964	52.213	55.232	-
Cronbach's Alpha	.904	.857	.781	.741	.742	.642	.479	-
Number of Items (50)	16	12	6	5	5	3	2	1

Several items were still found to be loaded into different factors as they were not supposed to be. Two items which were expected to load into Factor 1: Amenity Services, Economic and Socio-cultural Impact

also did not but instead loaded into Factor 2: Negative Socio-cultural Impact. This probably indicates that the Malaysian community has different point of views regarding the issue of prostitution in Malaysia. The findings are in line with the study by Haralambopoulos and Pizam (1996) and previously by Rothman (1978). A similar perception can be seen with the item changes of price. As found in studies by Pizam (1978) and Var, Kendall and Tarakcioglu (1985), for certain community particularly the one who run businesses, the increased in price may create positive economic impact whilst for others such as the local people it may be perceived as negative economic impact.

New factors derived from the instrument named as Factor 4: Historical and Cultural Impact and Factor 5: Socio-cultural and Community Impact. The factors eventually would indicate community awareness and concerns toward the historical structure, cultural value and community spirit in the society. Thus, these items represent factors which they were expected to load into just as suggested by Belisle and Hoy (1980) and Liu and Var (1986). Verification of these new factors has probably led to the understanding that Malaysian community has shared special value towards living in the society and they are really concerned about preservation and restoration of the historical and cultural value.

Four items were eliminated from Factor 1: Amenity Services, Economic and Socio-cultural Impact. These items probably perceive by the Malaysian community as less important impacts of tourism. The improvement of public transportation may not be because of tourism development but it may be due to the demand from the local people themselves to the authorities. Three items were eliminated from Factor 2: Negative Socio-cultural Impact. Eventually the community probably perceives all these items as negative impacts but not because of tourism development. Vandalism may be caused by the local people themselves particularly the youngsters and destroy of wildlife has become major issue to Malaysia due to other development such as industrial and housing.

Furthermore, one item was eliminated from Factor 3: Financial and Socio-economic Impact which in fact should not load into this factor in the first place. The results also indicated that Factor 5: Socio-cultural and Community Impact had eliminated two items on community. Community probably perceives the item community spirit as tourism impact item which has low effect to them. The spirit may be shared due to other aspects particularly when they have to work together to achieve some benefits. Finally, Factor 7: Environmental Impact eliminated two items which may not be reliable probably because the community has different perceptions towards the level of impacts they affected the area. Moreover, community probably perceives wildlife and natural environment as items which are not caused by tourism development. The findings significantly support the study by Edmonds and Leposky (2000). MACTIAS is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Results of MACTIAS

<i>Factors/Items</i>	<i>Item-total correlation</i>	<i>Total items</i>	<i>Coefficient alpha</i>
Factor 1: Amenity Services, Economic and Socio-cultural Impact		12	.907
Demand for accommodation sector.	.741		
Job opportunities in tourism sector.	.723		
Demand for restaurants sector.	.656		
Opportunities for businesses in the community' area.	.653		
Opportunities to learn about other cultures.	.644		
Opportunities to meet other tourists.	.643		
Understanding of different cultures among community and tourists.	.620		
Varieties of shopping facilities.	.607		
Investment spending in the community's area.	.596		
Opportunities for cultural exchange between communities and tourists.	.582		
Revenue generated by the economy.	.573		
Awareness of tourism image.	.549		
Factor 2: Negative Socio-cultural Impact		9	.897
Changes in price of goods.	.660		
Adoption of unhealthy lifestyle among community	.651		
Materialistic values among the community.	.637		
Drug abused in the community's area.	.629		
Alcohol abused in the community's area.	.625		
Prostitution in the community's area.	.623		
Driving hazards by tourists.	.615		
Crime in the community's area.	.599		
Imitation of tourists' behavior.	.566		
Factor 3: Financial and Socio-economic Impact		5	.805
Taxes collected for businesses run by community.	.630		
Varieties of entertainment.	.594		
Taxes collected for community's assets.	.580		
Traffic congestion in the community's area.	.566		
Size of crowds affected community's activities.	.492		
Factor 4: Historical and Cultural Impact		5	.741
Demand for the historical activities.	.644		
Demand for the cultural activities.	.562		
Awareness of the local culture among community.	.552		
Preservation of historical structures.	.532		
Restoration of historical structure.	.524		
Factor 5: Socio-cultural and Community Impact		3	.673
Awareness of living in a society.	.603		
Recognition of local culture.	.597		
Varieties of cultural activities in the community's area.	.523		
Factor 6: Service Impact		2	.731
Quality of local services such as police, medical etc.	.560		
Financial resources of local services such as police, medical etc.	.496		

5. Conclusion and Future Recommendation

Theoretically, the study contributes toward the understanding of tourism impact items in the case of Malaysian tourism development. It also points out the most reliable item which represents tourism impact as perceived by the community. The results of the study also contribute to the body of knowledge generally in the field of tourism impact and specifically in the development of a standard measurement instrument. The study majorly utilizes LATIAS procedure in developing a standard measurement instrument and the findings indicated significant restructuring of the stages involved. As for the body of literature, the identification of new tourism impact items give indication on the measurement of community attitude. In other words, new tourism impact items should be taken into consideration when one intend to measure different community attitudes even in a similar tourism destination.

New factors derived in the case of Malaysian community attitudes toward tourism impact represent actual and strong perspectives among the community particularly toward tourism development. The factors such as economic, environmental and socio-cultural are no longer considered as major tourism impact factors in Malaysia. The combination of other tourism impact items in those factors eventually represents new dimensions for tourism development. Most importantly, the study provides tourism planners, decision makers and marketers with greater confidence that it will effectively measure all aspects of the community's attitudes towards tourism impacts in Malaysia. Finally, the study could be utilized by the tourism marketers in providing tool of measurement which eventually can be used to segment the community support toward tourism development.

Even though the respondents specifically involved the Northern part of Malaysia, the findings generally represent significant items of tourism impacts for the whole country. Overall, this explains that the Malaysian community has strong awareness towards tourism development. Moreover, they really have strong value toward historical and cultural aspects of their life. This is determined in the way they perceived the socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Such further study would encourage more awareness and understanding among the community towards impacts of tourism development. This consequently is expected to create positive impacts and brought more benefits to the local community in line with the growth of tourism development in Malaysia.

The study has achieved the purpose of developing a standard instrument to measure community attitudes towards impact of tourism development in Malaysia. The scale has gone through several stages as suggested by Lankford and Howard (1994) and Ap and Crompton (1998). In fact, the procedures have also taken into account the development of LATIAS by Shariff (2002). MACTIAS involves five major stages and consists of 36 tourism impact items within six factors namely Factor 1: Amenity Services, Economic and Socio-cultural Impact, Factor 2: Negative Socio-cultural Impact, Factor 3: Financial and Socio-economic Impact, Factor 4: Historical and Cultural Impact, Factor 5: Socio-cultural and Community Impact and Factor 6: Service Impact. Even though these factors are named differently comparing to other studies, all items in the instrument strongly represent the overall tourism impact items in the case of Malaysia particularly covering the economic, environmental and socio-cultural aspects.

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