Rural Tourism Sustainable Management and Destination Marketing Efforts: Key Factors from Communities’ Perspective

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Abstract
Rural tourism is seen as a potential sector in promoting country to the world and at the same time generates incomes to local communities. However, due to the lucrative economic benefits, tourism destination’s sustainability and quality of services is often being ignored. Thus, this study highlights the importance of sustainable management and destination marketing efforts in rural tourism destinations with identified significant contributively factors from local communities’ perspective. A total of 168 respondents comprising of local communities from Kampung Telaga Air and Kampung Semadang, Kuching, Sarawak took part voluntarily in this study. To assess the developed model, SmartPLS 2.0 (M3) is applied based on path modelling and bootstrapping. Interestingly, the findings revealed that local communities believed factors like climate change, carrying capacity of a destination, and environmental education are significantly affect both tourism destination sustainable management and destination marketing efforts. Furthermore, community support is also found to be important too for tourism destination marketing efforts. Surprisingly, community support was found no relation with destination sustainable management from local communities’ point of view. This study further discussed on the implications of the findings, limitations, and direction for future research.

Keywords: rural tourism destination, sustainable management, destination marketing efforts, community’s perspective, Malaysia

1. Introduction
In the modern era, tourism is recognized as a fast growing industry and significantly contributes to the country’s economic growth (Kabote, 2015; Ramjit, 2015), apart from playing the role for the exchange of ideas, culture, and values throughout the world (Samantaray, 2016). Tourism industry has been progressively increased in the previous decades. This is proven by both positive statistical results and good projection for the year of 2016 by UNWTO (2016). Accordingly, the international tourist arrivals grew by 4.4% in 2015 (equivalent to 50 million more tourists travelled to international destinations in 2015 as compared to 2014), and in 2016, the international tourist arrivals is projected to grow for another 4% worldwide (UNWTO, 2016). Undeniably, the tourism industry has been long recognized as the service sector that can simultaneously meet the needs of tourists and also a community’s intention to gain economic growth, improved quality of life, and sustainable environmental quality (Eagles, McCool, & Haynes, 2002; Sebele, 2010).

Tourism’s positive impacts on a local community, proposed by Godfrey (1998), include economic benefits, employment opportunities, increased quality of life, and more tourism facilities and amenities is to be provided (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004). Moreover, the ownership of tourism products can help strengthen local economic resources for community development in terms of tourism facilities improvement and also increase quality of life (Aref, Redzuan, & Gill, 2010; Wang, Yang, Chen, Yang, & Li, 2010). In addition, as for the recent decline of traditional industries such as fishing, and aboriginal tribe industries forced rural community to seeks for alternative means to sustain their economic resources in the long run (Teh & Cabanban, 2007; Lee, 2013). In contrast, Jackson (2008) inferred negative impacts of tourism to a local community are degradation of the natural environment, traffic congestion, noise and air pollution, and over-crowding, which were supported by Vargas-Sanchez et al (2009) and Marzuki (2011). Hence, it is believed that tourism can bring