

The Impact of the Rural Environment and Environmental Conservation on Poverty Alleviation: The Moderating Effect of Tourism Resources

(Impak Persekitaran Luar Bandar dan Pemuliharaan Alam Sekitar ke atas Pembasmian Kemiskinan: Kesan Sumber Pelancongan sebagai Moderator)

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ABSTRACT

The rural environment adds value to the countryside that provides socio-economic development while environmental conservation draws attention to the locals protecting the environment from deforestation. In line with the Stakeholder Theory, this study examines the impact of the rural environment and environmental conservation on poverty alleviation; tourism resources are used as a moderator to measure the strength of endogenous and exogenous variables. Data was collected from 520 respondents in Kuching and Miri, Sarawak, Malaysia. Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse the hypotheses. The results of the study indicate that tourism contributes to an increase in the household income of locals; however, there is a negative relationship between rural environment, tourism resources and poverty alleviation due to the high cost of private transportation to the rural areas. The results imply that the improvement inaccessibility of public transportation to the rural areas would increase the use of tourism resources and tourist arrivals, and enhance the well-being of local communities. This study also contributes to the literature on rural environment, environmental conservation, tourism resources, poverty alleviation and Stakeholder Theory.

Keywords: Environmental impact; tourism resources; poverty alleviation; tourism development; stakeholder theory

ABSTRAK

Persekitaran luar bandar memberi nilai tambah sosio-ekonomi penduduk di kawasan desa, sementara pemuliharaan alam sekitar menarik perhatian penduduk tempatan dalam melindungi alam sekitar dari penebangan hutan. Selaras dengan teori pemangku kepentingan, kajian ini mengkaji kesan persekitaran luar bandar dan pemuliharaan alam sekitar terhadap pembasmian kemiskinan serta sumber pelancongan yang digunakan sebagai moderator untuk mengukur kekuatan pembolehubah endogen and eksogen. Data dikumpul daripada 520 responden dari Kuching dan Miri, Sarawak, Malaysia. Perisian PLS-SEM telah digunakan untuk menganalisis hasil hipotesis. Hasil kajian menunjukkan pelancongan menyumbang kepada penduduk tempatan dalam meningkatkan pendapatan isi rumah. Walaubagaimanapun, terdapat hubungan negatif terhadap pembasmian kemiskinan akibat kos pengangkutan swasta ke kawasan luar bandar adalah tinggi. Kajian ini memberi implikasi bahawa perkhidmatan pengangkutan awam ke kawasan luar bandar dapat meningkatkan penggunaan sumber pelancongan, ketibaan pelancong dan membasmi kemiskinan. Kajian ini juga memberi sumbangan kepada teori pemangku kepentingan dan kesusasteraan pro-miskin pelancongan.