

**TOURIST SATISFACTION INDEX: A PRELIMINARY CASE STUDY ON CAMERON
HIGHLANDS, PAHANG**



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5. Report

5.1 Proposed Executive Summary

The economic growth of a particular tourism destination is generated from the number of tourists visiting the destination. This growth becomes a source of income for countries which rely on tourism as their main economic factor. A lot of studies have been done to identify the factors that attract tourists to visit a tourism destination. Most of the studies have found that tourist satisfaction is the dominant factor in determining the number of tourists in a tourism destination (Patricia et.al, 2006). Satisfaction in tourism generally refers to the feelings of good, satisfied and happy as a result of achieved wants and desires from an activity. It is a psychological concept that occurs when a product or services one hopes for is as expected or beyond expectation (WTO, 1985). The study conducted by Joaquin and Jaime (2009) have also supported the notion that tourist satisfaction as the main factor which has positive effects toward the number of tourists visiting a tourism destination. This study uses the same concept which is analyzing the tourist satisfaction towards tourism destination in Cameron Highlands. This study aims to examine the strength and weaknesses of Cameron Highlands and estimate the total tourist satisfaction. Information on the strength and weaknesses and total tourist satisfaction will enable recommendations to be made in improving the quality, service and image of Cameron Highlands. Improvements are vital so as to enable Cameron Highlands to compete with other highland tourism destinations such as Genting Highlands, Bukit Fraser, Bukit Bendera, Bukit Larut, Gunung Jerai, Gunung Mat Chincang, Taman Negara Mulu dan Taman Negara Sabah. The findings of this paper will also contribute to its sustainability.

5.3 Introduction

Tourism is a multidimensional phenomenon and it is rather complex to be defined (Zenaida, 2006). Professor Hunziker and Krapf of Berne University, Switzerland define tourism as a sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, in which they do not cause permanent residence and are not related to any earning activity. Central Department of Tourism (2006) delineates tourism as an activity performed by an entity or a group of individuals, which leads to movement from a place to another. It is also defined as a motion from a country to another in order to perform a specific task or to pay a visit to a place or several places in the purpose of entertaining, which leads to the awareness of other civilizations and cultures, and also increasing the knowledge of countries, traditions, and history.

Of late, the global economy is driven by three major service industries: technology, telecommunications and tourism (Bindra, 2010). Tourism is one of the world's highest earning sectors in this century, which is expected to seize the global market and become the largest industry around the world. From 70 million international tourist arrivals in the year 1960, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has estimated that the international tourist arrivals worldwide would be 1.5 billion by the year 2020.

In Malaysia, tourism industry has become the second largest industry that contributes to the national income after manufacturing industry. In 1990, tourist arrivals were recorded at 7.4 million and RM4.5 billion in revenue. This number increased to 22 million tourists in 2008 with total revenue of RM49.6 billion. The number increased and marked at 24.7 million number of tourist arrivals with RM58.3 billion total revenue in 2011. The tourism industry is expected to contribute RM115 billion to GDP and will provide employment to 2 million people in 2015 in accordance to the Tenth Malaysia Plan. In terms of growth, approximately within two decades (1990-2010), the tourism industry has experienced annual average growth of around 19.6 percent and 13.5 percent respectively in terms of arrivals and tourism receipts. This growth is outpacing the growth in international tourism industry average growth around 4 percent and 6.6 percent respectively for arrivals and tourism receipts (UNWTO Tourism Highlight, 2010).

Drastic development in this industry is mainly resulted from implicit and explicit involvement of the government and private sector through an allocation of