

IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE CONCEPT IN HOMESTAY PROGRAM

By

NUR LIYANA BINTI ISHAK (2011487522)

NURULHUDA BINTI YUNUS (2010156169)

AHMAD SAUFEE BIN HARON (2011237462)

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ABSTRACT

Tourism in Malaysia is the second largest industry after manufacturing. The development of the tourism industry can be seen starting in 1970 until today. The growth of tourism projects and tourist arrivals in Malaysia during this 30-year period corrects this statement. Even Malaysia facing some bad situation in the tourism industry caused by several matters like economic recession, unsafe global condition and disease attacks, the government had launched several efforts to overcome it. For example, Visit Malaysia Year 1990 has affected Malaysia tourism positively through increasing in tourist arrivals.

One of the tourism products in Malaysia is homestay. Homestay accommodation gives focus on traditional life style, local culture and customs to attract the tourists. The present study examines the implementation of the three elements which are known as sustainable concepts in their homestay program. Both primary and secondary data have been used in the study. A total of 30 homestay operators are selected from Kampung Pulau, Malacca for collecting primary data. The sample size has been determined based on probability convenience sampling design. Purposive sampling technique is used to select the respondent while we use descriptive analysis to attain the objectives.

The study reveals on how far the service providers implement the sustainable concept in their homestay program. The elements that have been chosen to be included in the sustainable concept are traditional lifestyle, local people culture and local community participations. It also reveals on the effects and the benefits that they gained throughout this program.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

As a second largest economic contributor in Malaysia that 22.05 million tourist arrivals recorded in 2008 and resulted in RM 49.6 billion (USD 13.4 billion) in revenue, tourism has numerous of product and services that they provide and make it as a unique characteristics and different from other industries (Abdul Rasid, Mohd Yusop, Mohd Zaid, Amran Hamzah, Zainab Khalifah, Nor Haniza, 2011). One of the new tourism products in Malaysia is the homestay program, a combination of tourism and recreation and provide cultural and heritage attraction including cultural performance, games, religious practice and handicraft. This program is acknowledged as a potential for the development of rural areas besides its contribution to a sustainable environment. Adopted as one of the tourism niches in the Seventh Malaysia Plan, this program will enable overseas visitors to experience the daily life of the ordinary people of this country. Through homestay, Malaysian can show more on their unique lifestyle and culture. Homestay program is a specific form of community based tourism that is being aggressively promoted by the Malaysian government (Abdul Rasid et al, 2011).

Homestay program gives tourists the opportunity to stay with a chosen family, interact and experience the daily life of their comfortable welcoming homestay family and learn the culture and lifestyle of the rural community in Malaysia. For example, they will enjoy homemade traditional delicacies and also learn how to prepare the food. Interesting traditional games will also be seen and played by the guest who stayed with them. A homestay program cannot be classified as a lodging facility. It focuses more on lifestyle and experience, including cultural and economic activities. Each homestay program offers different types of activities, depending on the culture, food, economic activity as well as location. Every state in Malaysia has its own