The Effectiveness of Government Programmes in the Family Business Accommodations in Port Dickson, Malaysia



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1 Introduction

Tourism refers to the activity of travelling to another place above 50 miles (83 km) from a place of residence for not more than 1 year for recreation or to fill leisure time. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), which is one of the affiliated bodies of the United Nations, tourism refers to service activities related to service activities to tourists. Tourism has become a popular leisure activity around the world. In 2004, over 763 million tourists worldwide (WTO 2005). Sustainable (sustainable) development has been adopted in all economic activities, including the services sector such as tourism. The concept of sustainable development was first introduced by the Brundtland Commission, also known as the "World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED)", in 1983. The Brundtland report entitled "Our Common Future", published in 1987, became a general reference on sustainable

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development (Abdul Ghani and Aziah 2007). Thus, sustainable tourism carries the meaning of natural, cultural, and other tourism resources that are conserved for continued use in the future and at the same time still bring benefits to the society of today. Sustainable tourism is a tourism activity that continues to conserve, providing various facilities in areas with tourist attractions, whether related to the environment or culture.

Tourists have their perceptions of sustainable tourism. Tourist perception describes a tourist's experience of a tourist area visited. According to Morrison and King (2002), a tourist's perception generally involves five senses of taste: sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell to evaluate the hospitality and service of tourism products. The phrase perception is more than reality describes the diversity of tourist behaviours (Sousa et al. 2021). The description drawn by a tourist about a tourist centre is made based on his perception and experience. Often pleasurable experiences give birth to perceptions that go beyond reality (Deb et al. 2022; Abdullah et al. 2022).

Similarly, when a tourist experiences something unpleasant while travelling, the perception is usually worse than reality. Although not an acceptable view, the perception of a tourist helps give an idea of the advantages or disadvantages of a tourist centre (Santos et al. 2021a). This is important in developing the tourism sector of a country like Malaysia.

In Malaysia, the growth of the tourism sector can be considered slow. In the early 1970s, activities related to the tourism sector were placed under the Department of Tourism, Ministry of Trade and Industry Management. At that time, the tourism sector's contribution was small and less focused. On August 10, 1972, the Malaysian government established the Tourism Development Corporation (TDC) to develop the tourism sector further and increase its contribution to the national economy. Since its inception, TDC has become one of the critical agencies shaping the country's socio-economic situation and, in turn, contributing to its economic development. As a result of the success achieved by the Malaysian Tourism Development Corporation, on May 20, 1987, a new ministry was established by the government, namely the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism. Directly Perbadanan Kemajuan Pelancongan Malaysia has been transferred from the Ministry of Trade and Industry to this new Ministry (Mohmadisa and Mohamad Suhaily 2010).

In line with the development of the global tourism industry, in May 1992, the PKPM Act 1972 was repealed and replaced by the LPPM Act 1992 to strengthen the functions and scope of PKPM to be more relevant and competitive. The Malaysian Tourism Promotion Board has been established, better known for short Tourism Malaysia. The development and enforcement functions previously placed under the PKPM have now been abolished. This enables Tourism Malaysia to focus on marketing Malaysia programmes locally and internationally effectively. The Tourism Malaysia name is used widely to create a consistent corporate brand. This method was inspired by YB Dato Paduka Abdul Kadir bin Haji Sheikh Fadzir (now Tan Sri), the Chairman of LPPM and the Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism Malaysia. The tourism industry in the country was further strengthened through a cabinet reshuffle on March 27, 2004, which saw the creation of a specialised

ministry known as the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia. From then on, the Tourism Malaysia Board (Tourism Malaysia) is now officially under the auspices of this ministry.

Today, the tourism industry acts as a catalyst for growth and is one of the major contributors to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment opportunities. Tourism Malaysia informed that the country's revenue rate from the tourism sector also dropped 85.3%. It reached only RM12.69 billion last year compared to RM86.14 billion in 2019. He said the average per capita expenditure for the tourism sector recorded by Malaysia last year was RM2928, a decrease of 11.3% compared to RM3300 in 2019. "The significant drop in foreign tourist arrivals to Malaysia is due to the closure of the country's borders since March 18 last year, following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic", Tourism Malaysia said in a statement today. "Malaysia's neighbouring countries in the ASEAN region also recorded a significant decline in the number of tourists, including Thailand (-83.2%), Singapore (-85.7%), Vietnam (-78.7%) and Indonesia (-75%)". However, he said, tourists from ASEAN countries or the short-haul market remained the main contributor to foreign tourist arrivals to Malaysia, involving 2.9 million or 68.1% of the total foreign tourists last year.

Taking into account the tourism activities implemented in Malaysia today that must be linked to sustainable development, various efforts have been undertaken to preserve the country's tourism products. Today, the principle of sustainable tourism is not only limited to the preservation and conservation of the environment and its resources, but also includes the management of human resources, culture, finance, and physical development (Santos et al. 2021b). Recently, it has been observed that a new dimension of sustainable development has emerged, namely the generation-based dimension. This is due to the increasing public appreciation of the benefits gained through sustainable development efforts (Chamhuri 2004).

In connection with the above introduction, this article aims to analyse the pattern of tourists' perceptions of sustainable tourism development in the Port Dickson district. The focus of the discussion of this article is given to the level of awareness of tourists on choosing family business accommodation for sustainable tourism development planning in the state.

2 Sustainable Tourism in Port Dickson District

Some tourists come to the Port Dickson district because they want to visit various relics and historical heritage sites, whether local or foreign. At the same time, some other tourists visit the state because they want to shop. Therefore, various products on historical heritage and various facilities in the form of shopping malls have been developed. The effort is one of the essential strategies to promote tourism in the Port Dickson district. For promotional purposes, the state government and the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia will continue to help foster intelligent partnerships between the government, tourism organisations, and the private sector.

Malaysia has formed global strategic alliances and regional cooperation at the international level to promote inter-country tourism through meetings and conferences. Various stakeholders, including travel and tour service providers, transportation service providers, MICE organisations, hotel operators and operators in tourist destinations, are encouraged to work together to provide convenience and comfort to tourists. In addition, with increased liberalisation in tourism services under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services, vigorous efforts will be made to promote Malaysia, particularly the Port Dickson district, as a significant destination and stopover destination among ASEAN countries and the Asia Pacific region (Rancangan Malaysia Kesembilan 2006–2010).

Apart from cooperation, efforts are also being made to increase access to the Port Dickson district (9th Malaysia Plan, 2006–2010). Accordingly, transportation services at the entrance, transportation network between the city and resorts, and access to communication services, especially Internet facilities, have been enhanced. Air, land, and sea transport infrastructure and facilities were upgraded to assist the growth of the tourism industry. Service improvements were also made, including the introduction of online visa applications. The preparation of multiple entry permits will continue to help smooth travel. This is because the Port Dickson district is known as one of the best tourist destinations in Malaysia with its unique cultural heritage.

For promotional purposes, the state government has put up a slogan. The slogan of the Port Dickson district, "Visiting Port Dickson Means Visiting Malaysia", has briefly described the tourism products presented to tourists, namely tourism themed on the historical and cultural heritage of the community. Port Dickson district's multiracial and multicultural population also gives a difference, and this places the Port Dickson district as one of the top tourist destinations in the Asian Region.

Heritage and cultural tourism activities in Port Dickson have now been overgrown. Apart from history and cultural heritage products, products based on natural resources such as beaches, *Cape Rachado Lighthouse*, Army Museum, PD Ostrich & Pets Show Farm, Teluk Kemang Observatory, Wan Loong Chinese Temple, Lukut Fort & Museum, and *Port Dickson art gallery* are also offered. In addition to accommodation in international standard hotels, food courts and quality restaurants were also built. However, the rapid development of tourism activities does not guarantee its level of sustainability. The supply of many and varied tourism products and services can affect the quality of the environment and the destruction of natural resources (Kumar et al. 2021).

The issue of sustainable tourism activities in Port Dickson is also challenged because there is a tendency that most tourists who visit the state are only temporary. Not many repeat tourists, i.e. tourists who repeatedly visit this city. The Ministry of Tourism Malaysia aims to increase the number of repeat tourists. Tourists visiting Port Dickson are also unbalanced between local tourists and foreign tourists. To ensure the sustainability of tourism activities, apart from encouraging local tourists, the number of tourists from abroad also needs to be increased.

3 Area and Method of Study

This study was conducted around the city of Port Dickson, which is the area that houses most of the tourist centres in Negeri Sembilan. *Cape Rachado Lighthouse*, Army Museum, PD Ostrich & Pets Show Farm, Teluk Kemang Observatory, Wan Loong Chinese Temple, Lukut Fort & Museum, and *Port Dickson art gallery*.

The data of this study were obtained from various primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected through surveys supported by observations by researchers in the field. The survey was conducted on 300 domestic and foreign tourists at random. Survey forms were administered to respondents to obtain their perceptions of experience, product satisfaction, environmental status, and involvement of residents. Observation methods are used to obtain information on the behaviour of tourists at tourist sites, the condition and level of infrastructure provision and other tourist facilities, architectural patterns of heritage buildings, and cultural practices. Interviews with entrepreneurs and the local community were also conducted to get views on the tourism activities, their impact on local communities, and their problems. Secondary data were obtained from various sources, including those obtained through the Ministry of Tourism, Local Authorities website, and records and documents from tourism centre operators in the three places.

4 Findings and Discussion

Background of tourists and reasons for travelling to Port Dickson is the origin of respondents who travel to Port Dickson. Based on the study findings, tourists from Port Dickson are the most tourists compared to tourists from other countries. The percentage of tourists from Port Dickson is 32.1%. Tourists who come to Port Dickson can be divided into domestic and foreign tourists. 93.6% of domestic tourists are tourists who come from states within Malaysia. Meanwhile, only 6.4% of foreign tourists are tourists who come from outside Malaysia.

Apart from Port Dickson itself, where most visitors are, tourists in this country come from the states of Johor, Kedah, Kelantan, Kuala Lumpur, Melaka, and Pahang, Perak, Penang, Sabah, Sarawak, Selangor, and Terengganu. Tourists abroad are from neighbouring countries, namely Singapore, the Netherlands, and Australia. For tourism activities such as migration, distance significantly affects the destination. The distance to the nearest destination will attract a large number of tourists. This explains why more domestic tourists than foreign tourists visit Port Dickson. Tourists' motives for visiting tourist centres around Port Dickson. Most tourists choose Port Dickson as a holiday destination. This is because this area is a Heritage City famous for its various historical sites. This can be seen through the observations made because historical places such as the Stadthuys building and the Port Dickson focus on many tourists compared to other locations. Port Dickson is a state rich in

historical sites. Therefore, the place is most suitable to visit to know the history (Swarbrooke 1995). Apart from visiting historical places, another part (41.4%) visited Port Dickson because they wanted to shop at department stores, especially those located around Bandar Seremban. Most of them are residents of Port Dickson itself

4.1 Tourists' Perceptions of the Conservation of the Physical Environment of Tourist Areas

Based on the statistic, 86.43% of tourists think the Port Dickson River is continuously conserved. Only 7.14% of respondents felt that the Port Dickson River was not preserved, and 6.43% were unaware and did not know about this (Kementerian Pelancongan Malaysia (2007), Statistik Kedatangan Pelancong). A similar opinion can be traced to the conservation of the shores of the Port Dickson River. The majority of tourists (68.57%) think that the environment on the shores of the Port Dickson River is well cared for and preserved on an ongoing basis through various cleaning measures, bank care, and the planting of ornamental trees. This is proven when the Seremban State Government implemented efforts to clean the Port Dickson River along 4.5 km. This care and conservation are essential to enable River Cruise activities. River Cruise is a popular tourism product in the area (Melaka JASN 2000). Observations also show that tourists who visit the place do not miss the opportunity to experience a boat ride down the beautiful Port Dickson River. Tourists are willing to wait in long lines for their turn to board the boat.

Although most thought Port Dickson's riverbanks and beaches were well maintained, 22.14% of tourists disagreed, while 9.29% others did not know. Based on the researcher's observation, Port Dickson, such as Sungai Linggi, is generally maintained continuously. However, a small number of tourists, especially tourists from Singapore, feel that the condition of the beach is still not well maintained. This is because coastal areas have been reclaimed and are pretty dirty and narrow, with less vegetation and fewer facilities.

In terms of overall cleanliness, tourists view Port Dickson as clean. This is because most respondents (84.3%) are of the same view, and only a small number of respondents (15.7%) state otherwise. The Port Dickson Municipal Council (MPPD) is a local authority that actively conducts clean-up operations in the city, especially in tourist areas. Researchers show that employees are always in strategic places around the city to monitor and maintain the area's cleanliness. Garbage disposal facilities such as bins and garbage disposal systems, especially trucks equipped with garbage crushers, are in good condition.

Tourist views on the care of In *Cape Rachado Lighthouse*, Army Museum, PD Ostrich & Pets Show Farm, Teluk Kemang Observatory, Wan Loong Chinese Temple, Lukut Fort & Museum, and *Port Dickson art gallery*. Tourists feel Port Dickson's existing religious buildings, especially temples, are still well preserved.

There are signs that sustainable conservation efforts are being made on the buildings. However, as many as 5.0% of tourist respondents felt that there were still abandoned religious buildings that did not seem to be preserved sustainably. The remaining 4.3% are tourists who do not know whether these religious buildings are sustainable.

The results also show that the buildings in traditional business areas, ancient shop houses, are well preserved. 84.3% of visitors admitted that the old traditional shophouses in Port Dickson are still preserved sustainably. Meanwhile, 8.6% of tourist respondents felt that the shophouses were not preserved sustainably. They were followed by 7.1% of tourist respondents who do not know. Through the observation, the researcher found that this traditional shophouse at Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock, Jalan Tukang Besi, and Jalan Hang Jebat still retains the characteristics of the old tradition, especially in terms of building shape, shop appearance, decoration and more significantly the function. The traders here are of the Chinese community, and they manage traditional businesses inherited from their ancestors as well as their parents. Among the businesses they do are tailors, shoemakers, coffin makers, and blacksmiths. For tourists who replied that they did not know about the existence of this traditional shophouse, it may be because they could not see it. After all, the location of this traditional shophouse is quite hidden, and tourists only know its existence if they go through these areas.

Some of the shophouse buildings in the traditional alleys have been transformed into boutiques and hotels in addition to restaurants or eateries. Tourists believe that in line with its new function, the shop house, which was previously a grocery store and a residential house on the top floor, is more preserved. 61.4% of respondents agreed that traditional shophouses that have transformed their functions into hotels and boutiques appear more sustainable. Meanwhile, 17.1% of respondents denied this, followed by 21.4% who did not know. At the same time, 56.4% of respondents agreed that traditional shophouses converted into restaurants/eateries are preserved sustainably. As a result of the findings of this study, among the six buildings mentioned, the buildings that are preserved sustainably are religious buildings, namely temples and churches, as stated by 90.7% of respondents.

4.2 Maintenance of Basic Facilities

Basic facilities are an essential element of a tourist area. A reasonable provision and management of basic facilities can help the continuity of tourist arrivals to an area. Transportation that uses the road mode is easier to offer because it is widely used nowadays, and the cost of use is also cheap. So, roads are used more often than other means of transportation (Choy 2013). The study found that 60% of tourists agreed that the condition of the Port Dickson Monorail infrastructure is preserved sustainably. While 20% each answered no and do not know. The sustainability of the monorail system can be traced based on the absence of smoke emitted by the vehicle that can pollute the air.

For improvement, many new roads in the tourist areas around Port Dickson have been built or upgraded. This is noticed by tourists who visit the area. 67.1% of respondents agreed that the newly built roads have sustainable features, while the other 32.9% disagreed or were unsure/knew. These new roads look good because the condition of the road structure is still good and not damaged. The existing transportation terminal in Port Dickson, namely in Port Dickson Sentral with the main route to Kuala Lumpur, Johor Bahru, and other major cities in Peninsular Malaysia, is also good condition the system is running smoothly. The same goes for tourist routes to other tourist centres via the Port Dickson-KL Highway. Although many agree the number is relatively modest regarding public bus services. Only 55.5% of respondents agreed that public bus services are well provided and have sustainability characteristics. At the same time, the other 44.5% do not agree or do not know/are sure. Public transport, especially buses, contributes to sustainable tourism if it succeeds in reducing the use of private vehicles, thereby reducing the emission of carbon monoxide, which is smoke from vehicles.

4.3 Conservation of Traditional Cultural Heritage

Based on the observation, some traditional villages still exhibit traditional features that can be considered the historical heritage of Port Dickson. For example, the houses in Morten Village have traditional features with elongated roofs and tiled stone stairs. The people here are 100% ethnic Malays and still practice Malay customs and culture. The location of Kampung Morten is very strategic because it is right on the banks of the Port Dickson River. The view of this village at night is breathtaking because the lights are installed on every roof of the house. This adds to the beauty of the village.

On top of that, many tourists (87.1%) agree that the traditional cultural heritage of Port Dickson is still preserved for tourism purposes. Only 12.9% stated otherwise. A total of 78.6% of respondents agreed that the tradition of Port Dickson is still preserved for tourism purposes. Only 21.5% disagreed or did not know. This traditional dance is usually the official entertainment of the state government, whether it is a domestic or foreign event. It is also displayed in large hotels and restaurants around Port Dickson.

The same goes for other arts, especially traditional music. A total of 70.7% of respondents agreed that the traditional music of Negeri Sembilan is still preserved for tourism purposes. While 29.3% stated otherwise. The type of Tumbak Kalang is *Negeri Sembilan's* original *musical* instrument consisting of Batang lesung (long wooden sticks), producing rhythmic sounds simultaneously. It is pretty challenging to see in other states, but in *Negeri Sembilan*, it is still played to this day. This Tumbak Kalang requires verse skills. No less popular is the traditional culture of the Puppet Show and batik art that is still preserved for tourism purposes. This was agreed by 71.4% of respondents, while the other 28.6% either disagreed or did not know/sure. According to Abdul Rahman (1997: 35), Baggio and Valeri (2020),

Valeri and Baggio (2020), visitors will usually be glued to the performance of art culture, especially if presented in the form of light, dialogue, music, and drama.

4.4 Involvement of Local Communities

The involvement of local people is also an essential component of sustainable tourism for Port Dickson. The analysis of this study shows that 80% of respondents agree with the evidence of active involvement of local communities in tourism activities around Port Dickson. Only 20% are unsure or don't know. The local community is actively involved in tourism activities as food entrepreneurs, tour guides, and homestay operators. The study also found that the average visitor described that the local community is highly courteous and friendly, so it is very pleasing to tourists. Locals are seen to accept the presence of tourists from a positive angle as the presence of tourists contributes to the improvement of their economy. This opinion is shared by many previous researchers, including Ibrahim (2002). However, a handful of locals are less proficient in communicating, especially in English, which makes it difficult for them to communicate with tourists.

Overall, the local community is involved either directly as entrepreneurs and traders or indirectly as hosts who always welcome the presence of visitors to their state, greatly contributing to the development of tourism in the state. Their pride in the unique historical and traditional cultural heritage and their cooperation in maintaining the house's architecture, the condition of the village, and the performance of dance art is quite crucial for preserving tourism activities in Port Dickson. Without their involvement, sustainable tourism activities in the state would not have been possible.

5 Conclusion

This study found that most tourists choose Port Dickson as a holiday destination. Therefore, the heritage treasures here must be preserved to be sustainable. The facilities here need to be improved to make it easier for tourists to visit. Most tourists agree that the status of the physical environment around the tourist area in Port Dickson is sustainable. However, a few residents are disappointed with the government's action.

Heritage buildings such as Kota Lukut are generally preserved sustainably as they still retain the aesthetic value inherent in the building. According to the respondents, monorail infrastructure is sustainable because they see the sustainability angle from the environmental aspect. However, regarding social and economic aspects, it is not sustainable because it has technical problems while operating and has had to stop its use.

The existing roads and bus transportation system need to be further improved to accommodate the increasing number of visitors to Port Dickson. This bus transportation should be comfortable so that tourists can reduce the use of private cars to reduce traffic congestion and vehicle smoke. Cultural traditions such as the Port Dickson beachside house printmaking need to be promoted and expanded beyond Port Dickson. This is because researchers found that visitors from outside are less familiar with this art unless they visit Port Dickson, stay in hotels and restaurants, and visit the area where it is displayed. The locals are also actively involved in tourism activities as many are traders, homestay operators, and tour guides.

The friendliness of the residents, as well as their willingness to help tourists, is greatly appreciated. However, their communication in English needs to be further improved to attract international tourists. Cleanliness around Port Dickson is also good but needs to be improved in some areas because a few tourists are still dissatisfied with the current level of cleanliness. The Port Dickson Municipal Council (MPPD), the surrounding residents, and the tourists themselves must work together to maintain the cleanliness of the Port Dickson to maintain the excellent image of this city in the eyes of the world.

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