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How Satisfaction Disabled People Engaging in Tourism Activities? A Case Study of Disability Tourism in Kuala Lumpur City

Ang Kean Hua[1, 2]

[1]School of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Science and Technology, Quest International University Perak (QUIP), Malaysia

[2]Department of Environmental Sciences, Faculty of Environmental Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)

Correspondence: Ang Kean Hua (angkeanhua@yahoo.com)

Abstract

Accessible tourism is considered new-partially conceptual that being implemented in the tourism industry. This study carry out to investigate and to determine disabled people in engage with the tourism activities in Kuala Lumpur City. This study uses qualitative of face-to-face interview and quantitative of questionnaire survey. Five domains had been set for interview purposes, while questionnaire survey involved with two main parts, namely demographic profile and the experienced of disabled people in expose to tourism activities in Kuala Lumpur city. This questionnaire uses Thurstone scale and Likert scale. Complete collection data will be input using SPSS v.23 for analysis. The result indicates majority participants are positively agreed that infrastructure or services, as well as information map should be prepared in appropriated ways would increase the accessible tourism. The education also plays an important role that able to sustain the accessible tourism industry for longer term. Nevertheless, most of participants are partially disagreed in the facilities provided, which likely to refer to the public toilets and transportations, as well as hotels management that should serve specialty to disabled people. They do opinion that public facilities should be upgrade, as well as comment on the hotel staffs should undergo for training and behave friendlier attitude, which important to provide comfortable condition towards the disabled people. This study suggests disabled people have self-encouraged in engage with the tourism activities in Kuala Lumpur. At the same time, further study in exploratory, understandable, and predictable on accessible tourism are required, especially involved in the sub-urban and rural area that provide facilities and services for the tourism industry.

Keywords: qualitative, quantitative, facilities and services, hotel management

Introduction

Tourism industry had been listed as main development for economic, politic and social-culture in the developing country like Malaysia. Based on the statistic for economic contributors in the country, there are 22.05 million of tourists arrivals with 49.6 billion of receipts in year 2008; and this number is continue to increase for another 5 year in 2012 for 25.03 million of tourists arrivals with 60.6 billion of receipts; including the last year of 2016 with 26.76 million of tourist arrivals and 82.1 billion of receipts (Tourism Malaysia, 2016). Regarding to this matter, the Tourism Malaysia of promotion board through the campaigns of 'Malaysia Truly Asia' is successfully to promote the country's tourism activities. Therefore, the target vision of 2020 for 36 million tourists' arrivals and 168 billion tourist receipts is subjected to achieve in the coming years. This condition highlighted disabled people should

be included and given opportunities to engage in the tourism activities, which concern on conceptual of this 'tourism industry for all'.

Literature Review

According to World Health Organization (WHO) (1980), a disability can be defined as 'any restriction or lack (resulting from any impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being'. The studies of tourism experience of people with disabilities data back to the late 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s (Poria et al, 2011). The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) proposed a resolution in 2005 to enhance the 'accessible tourism for all', which is considered as a key reference document for guiding the improvement of the tourism industry by the path of greater accessibility (IITTM, 2010). Nowadays individuals with disabilities and aged people represent a growing cluster of consumers of travel, sports activities, and other kind of leisure-oriented products and services. However, concerning the physical access, the families with young children are considered a part of this tourism market due to the fact that they have similar needs to people with disabilities and older individuals (ESCAP, 2000).

Generally, there are various definitions for accessible tourism; however, this definition can only be referred as…

> '*…the one that allows all people, regardless of having a disability or not, to travel to another country, within the country and to any places, attraction or event they wish to visit*'
>
> -Nordiska Handikappolitiska Radet (2002, p.17)

Therefore, it is axiomatic that any individual with disabilities is still rising and they have more money to spend than is regularly assumed (Ray and Ryder, 2003). The market share of disability tourism has reached more than US $ 117 billion per year (Bizjak et al, 2011).

In the context of Malaysia, the policies and programs for the disabled citizens of the country are guided by the strategic goals of the National Welfare Policy, which emphasizes on the attainment of self-reliance, equalization of opportunities for the less fortunate and fostering of the spirit of mutual help and support towards enhancing a culture of caring (Ismail, 2003). In additional, the Malaysian government has signed the 'Proclamation for Full Participation and Equal Opportunities for the Disabled Persons in the Asia & Pacific Region' in 1994 and also agreed to implement the 'Biwako Millennium Framework For Action: Towards An Inclusive, Barrier-Free And Rights- Based Society For Persons With Disabilities In Asia And The Pacific' (2003–2012) (UN ESCAP, 2007) as guidelines for the development of the 'Person with Disabilities' (PWDs) in Malaysia. Therefore, according to Malaysian Standard MS 1184:2002, Code of Practice on Access for Disabled Persons to Public Buildings, can be define as;

i. **Access for Disabled Persons**: A continuous unobstructed path of travel to or within a building capable of being negotiated by a person using a wheelchair or otherwise with limited mobility.
ii. **Disabled Persons**: People with a physical, hearing or visual impairment or any combination thereof, which affects their mobility or their use of buildings and related amenities.
iii. **Wheelchair Users**: Persons who depend on a wheelchair for mobility. These include attendant-propelled wheelchairs, powered wheelchairs and self-propelled wheelchairs.

Recently, researcher have shown an increased interest in the issue of disability in Malaysia (Sanmargaraja and Wee, 2015; Mothiravally et al, 2014; Dort et al, 2013; Hua et al, 2013; Sanmargaraja and Seow, 2013; Yaacob and Hashim, 2007). Despite the significance of these studies to develop the status of disability or accessible tourism, this study carry out to investigate and to determine disabled people in engage with the tourism activities in Kuala Lumpur City.

Methods and Materials

Qualitative of face-to-face interview and quantitative of questionnaire survey methods was used in this study to collect the data. In quantitative approach, the questionnaire survey is divided into two parts, which is demographic profile and the experienced of disabled people in expose to tourism activities in Kuala Lumpur city. These questionnaires involved with Thurstone scale and Likert scale. In Likert scale, the five point Likert-categories was used, which ranged from '1' with 'strongly disagree' to '5' with 'strongly agree' (Hua, 2016). Meanwhile, qualitative approach is involved with face-to-face interview that focuses on '*tourism facilities for disabled people*', '*the past experiences on tourism activities*', '*the staff (including hotels and trainers) attitudes in tourism industry*', '*accessible requirement (which focuses only in hotel facilities) provided appropriately*' and '*did workshop/focus group helps in expressed satisfaction on accessible tourism in Kuala Lumpur city*'. Complete collected data from the convenience samples was entered into software package SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 23) and analysis the result is performed.

Result and Discussions

Quantitative Approach

According to Table 1, the analysis of demographic profile indicate majority involve in participate for questionnaire survey is female (n=54, 57.4%), followed by male (n=40, 42.6%); which is the highest of single status with 49 people (52.1%), followed by married status with 43 people (45.7%) and divorced status with 2 people (2.2%). Most of them are studied until university with 81.9% (n=77), while only small percentage are studied until secondary and pre-university with 10.7% and 7.4%, respectively; which ages between 21 to 30 with 41 people (43.6%), continue by 31 to 40 with 25 people (26.6%), 41 to 50 with 11 people (11.7%), and more than 51 with 17 people (18.1%). Meanwhile, their household income are expected to be more than RM 5001 is about 39.4%, while others are less than RM 3000 with 36.2%, RM 3001 to RM 4000 are 17%, and RM 4001 to RM 5000 are 7.4%. Based on the information of questionnaire survey, majority participants are physical impaired, continue by visual impaired, mature age, and hearing impaired (Table 1). Most of them do opinion that tourism can be defined as travel (n=45, 47.9%), while others opinion as food and beverages (n=29, 30.9%), as well as recreational and entertainment activities (n=20, 21.2%). Based on the perception on the tourism definition, most of the participant traveling to Kuala Lumpur city with monthly, followed by quarterly, annually, half year, and the least are weekly and every two month (Table 1).

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Participant

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	40	42.6
Female	54	57.4
Marital Status		
Single	49	52.1
Married	43	45.7
Divorced	2	2.2
Education		
Secondary	10	10.7
Pre-University	7	7.4
University	77	81.9
Ages		
21-30	41	43.6
31-40	25	26.6
41-50	11	11.7
>51	17	18.1
Household Income (RM)		

<3000	34	36.2
3001-4000	16	17
4001-5000	7	7.4
>5001	37	39.4
Disabilities Characteristic		
Physical Challenged	24	25.5
Hearing Impaired	9	9.6
Visually Impaired	19	20.2
Mature Age	12	12.8
Others	30	31.9
Tourism Definition		
Travel	45	47.9
Food and Beverages	29	30.9
Recreational and Entertainment Activities	20	21.2
Traveling to K.L.		
Weekly	12	12.8
Monthly	26	27.7
Every Two Month	12	12.8
Quarterly	17	18.1
Annually	14	14.9
Half Year	13	13.7

Continuously, the experienced of disabled people in expose to tourism activities in Kuala Lumpur city involved with awareness on accessible tourism, infrastructure or services, information map, and education on accessible tourism (Table 2). In overall, majority participants are positively agree that accessible tourism is being implemented and adapted in the city, which enable most of disabled people to have great opportunities in expose with the tourism industry. However, only the information map are considered unsatisfied by the minority of disabled people due to the valuable information is not shared in comprehensively. In other words, the information provided to disabled tourists is suspected to have minor confusing that might cause misunderstanding. For example, public toilets should allocate specialty for disabled people, and should not be usable for all.

Table 2: The experienced of disabled people in tourism activities in Kuala Lumpur city

Category	Frequency (Percentage)				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I am aware about accessible tourism.	-	4 (4.3)	8 (8.5)	52 (55.3)	30 (31.9)
Infrastructure or services should add to make more accessible for disabled tourists.	- -	- -	2 (2.1)	26 (27.7)	66 (70.2)
The venue information map in the interned including information of popular destination and marked as accessible places helps a disabled person.	2 (2.2)	12 (12.8)	16 (17.0)	21 (22.3)	43 (45.7)
The education on accessible tourism is essential for all the people related to tourism industry.	- -	1 (1.1)	2 (2.1)	24 (25.5)	67 (71.3)

*SD=Strongly Disagree; D=Disagree; N=Normal; A=Agree; SA=Strongly Agree

Qualitative Approach

In qualitative approach, the comment and opinion is given by the participants that based on five domains question, namely '*tourism facilities for disabled people*', '*the past experiences on tourism activities*', '*the staff (including hotels and trainers) attitudes in tourism industry*', '*accessible requirement (which focuses only in hotel facilities) provided appropriately*' and '*did workshop/focus group helps in expressed satisfaction on accessible tourism in Kuala Lumpur city*'.

Based on the results indicating participants are very experienced in engage with accessible tourism in Kuala Lumpur city. In other word, they positively agree that the past experiences on tourism activities in the city can be used to determine the quality of facilities and services provided which based on their satisfaction level. This comment and opinion are given by several groups of disabled people on the accessible tourism in Kuala Lumpur city;

> 'Overall, I think Kuala Lumpur city have excellent in providing the facilities to the disabled people, and the stakeholders including the government should focuses and concern on upgrading the facilities to increase the possible accessible tourism….'
>
> [Women with hearing impairment in 36 ages]

> 'For me, I don't think they provide excellent facilities, since majority public toilets for disabled people are seems to be still in basic facilities, and they need an upgrade…'
>
> [Women with physical challenged in 29 ages]

> 'I would like to suggest an upgrade in public transport, involve with bus facilities. For example, waiting area for disabled people, should be prepared in more comfortable. It is better if the waiting area is separated from the general waiting area…'
>
> [Men with physical challenged in 31 age]

> 'In my opinion, bus services provided should be in time when they picked up the customer, and should not let the customer like me waiting in a long time…'
>
> [Women with physical challenged in 47 ages]

Therefore, majority disabled tourists are satisfied, but required major upgrading in the facilities and services provided to the tourists. They also added that hotels with four to five stars in Kuala Lumpur city are seem to be well prepared on the facilities and services to promote the accessible tourism. However, high percentage of uncomfortable perception towards the three to one stars hotels, due to poor services provided to the tourists especially involve with disabled people. This matter creates a discriminate attitude towards the disabled people. On the other hands, unprepared facilities are also detected in several hotels that cause various misunderstanding between the staff hotels with the disabled tourists.

> 'I dislike several hotels in Kuala Lumpur, especially they are two or three stars hotels. They don't even welcoming us when we are arrived in front of their office. How rude they are, and the company should alert on this matter if they want to promote the accessible tourism…'
>
> [Men with physical challenged in 49 ages]

> 'Lack of knowledge, training and friendly behavior cause the staff hotels misunderstand on us. When I arrive at the hotels, their first impression is we coming for begging? Please, I'm a well-educated person and work having a professional working, why am I couldn't stay at your hotel? Please…..the attitude must change…..'
>
> [Women with physical challenged in 48 ages]

> 'Staff training and friendly behavior play an important role to sustain the accessible tourism. If they implemented this, I'm sure that the concept to apply accessible tourism will be success. However, focuses in facilities should also be concerned, since we are much required in special care.'
>
> [Men with hearing impairment in 35 ages]

Conclusion

This study highlighted disabled people in engage with tourism activities in Kuala Lumpur city. Majority participants are exposed and experiences as tourists in the city, which positively agreed that infrastructure or services, as well as information map should be prepared in appropriated ways would increase the accessible tourism. They also agreed that education plays an important role that able to sustain the accessible tourism industry for longer term. Nevertheless, most of participants are partially disagreed in the facilities provided, which likely to refer to the public toilets and transportations, as well as hotels management that should serve specialty to disabled people. They do opinion that public facilities should be upgrade into more advanced, and not only depend on basic facilities for the disabled people. They also comment on the hotel staffs that should undergo for training and behave friendlier attitude, which important to provide comfortable condition towards the disabled people.

This study suggests disabled people have self-encouraged in engage with the tourism activities in Kuala Lumpur. At the same time, further study in exploratory, understandable, and predictable on accessible tourism are required, especially involved in the sub-urban and rural area that provide facilities and services for the tourism industry.

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