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Island Tourism and Impacts on Physical Environment

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Abstract: Island based tourism is a unique tourism that has spectrums of natural resources and physical development components. The natural resources components consist of renewable and non-renewable resources such as fresh water, beaches, land, fresh air, visual beauty and biodiversity. At the same time, in line with natural attractions, physical development comes hand in hand to accommodate the needs of accommodation, infrastructure provision such as roads and transportation, sewerage, telecommunication and others. This paper describes four main impacts of island tourism towards the physical environment in Pangkor Island. The study was based on a cross-sectional quantitative study of self-administered questionnaire survey, conducted using a convenient sampling of 100 respondents. The results showed a strong correlation between physical environmental impacts of island tourism in Pangkor Island with the four domains of infrastructure development, biodiversity, traffic management and solid waste management.

Keywords: Island Tourism, Physical Environment, Environmental Impacts

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INTRODUCTION

Islands are special places with a natural attraction for tourists and a unique test to sustainability. The exclusiveness of islands is contributed by a mix of various ways of life, indigenous cultures, unique land formations, flora and fauna, and ocean and coastal resources. To keep that exclusivity, islands must implement sustainable tourism policies in all areas including the environment, economy and socio-culture. Numerous researchers of tourism believe that tourism has become an instrumental and an important vehicle for island development.

Taking into consideration the importance of tourism, Riley (1995) identified some main issues regarding the development of tourism on islands. First, the question of tourist demand versus protection of the environment. Tourism is one of the main contributors to the economy in Malaysia and is gradually developing. At the initial stage, in 1972 to 1985, the tourism industry has managed to grow at a rate of fifteen percent per annum (Rosniza, 2011).

This study examines the physical environmental impacts of tourism in Pangkor Island. The increased intensity of tourism development in small islands in Malaysia is expected to have adverse impact on its environments (Mastura Jaafar & Siti Aishah Maideen, 2012). According to reports, the islands in Malaysia is said to have produced 400 tonnes of solid waste a day. Of this amount, 60 percent is collected and disposed of in landfills, 35 percent was burned and dumped into the sea five percent (Agamuthu & Nagendran 2014). There had been a forest fire spread over two hectares in Teluk Ketapang, Pangkor Island due to overheating (Bernama, 2013).

METHODOLOGY

The study was based on a cross-sectional quantitative study of self-administered questionnaire survey, conducted using a convenient sampling of 100 respondents. The questionnaires were distributed at tourism spots throughout the Pangkor Island. The questionnaires were divided into; respondent’s profile; impacts of tourism development on infrastructure; impacts of tourism development on biodiversity; impacts of tourism development on traffic management; impacts of tourism development on solid waste management; Overall Perspectives; and Opinions and Suggestions.
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis focused on the impacts of tourism development on the physical and environmental factors in Pangkor Island. The correlation between physical environmental impacts and infrastructure showed the Chi Square value is 110.936. This proved that there is relationship between physical environmental impacts and infrastructure. The r value or Pearson correlation value is 0.835, indicating that there is very strong relationship between respondents’ perspectives on overall physical environmental impacts and infrastructure (Chi Square = 110.94, df = 8, p < 0.001).

The relationship between physical environmental impacts and biodiversity was well established. The Chi Square value of 79.23 means that these two items is related to one another. The r value is 0.740. It shows that there is very strong relationship between respondents’ perspectives on overall physical environmental impacts and biodiversity (Chi Square = 79.23, df = 8, p < 0.001).

Analysis also proved that there was a relationship between physical environmental impacts and traffic management with a Chi Square value of 139.72. The r value of 0.684 shows that there is very strong evidence of relationship between respondents’ perspectives on overall physical environmental impacts and environmental management (Chi Square = 139.72, df = 8, p < 0.001).

With a Chi Square value of 90.842, the correlation analysis also showed there is a relationship between physical environmental impacts and solid management. The r value is 0.806 indicates a very strong between respondents’ perspectives on overall physical environmental impacts and management (Chi Square = 90.842, df = 8, p < 0.001).

The Correlation analysis showed the four domains of physical impacts of Island tourism was proven and significant. The highest r value .835 for infrastructure development, followed by solid waste management with r value of .806, then biodiversity. The least but significantly high was .684 for traffic management. These findings showed the elements which the respondents regarded as important impacts.

CONCLUSION

Island tourism as illustrated in the case study of Pangkor Island portrayed the concern of the respondents. The magnitude of change on the island as the exploration of the island assets continued for tourism development did brought in economic benefits. However the physical environmental impacts of increasing tourism activities require human capacity building and sustainable management from all levels of stakeholders.

REFERENCES


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