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CRITICAL SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS HOMESTAY PROGRAMME: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Muhamad Azhari Wahid¹, and Khairul Anuar Rusli²

¹Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia

²Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman

E-mail (azhariwahid@usim.edu.my)

1. Introduction

Tourism industry is the second largest contributor to the national income after manufacturing sector. This is evidenced by the number of tourists coming to Malaysia that reached 25.9 million people in 2017 (Tourism Malaysia, 2018). In order to increase the number of tourists in the future, Malaysia has planned several initiatives such as medical tourism, sports, and rural tourism.

In the case of rural tourism, an initiative under the banner of homestay has been introduced since 1995. Homestay is a community-based tourism whereby the community in rural areas manage the homestay program themselves. The program offers the beauty of rural area, its flora and fauna, and lifestyle and traditions of rural people to the tourist (Mapjabil et al., 2011). The uniqueness of the program is that the tourist is given chances to stay together in the host's house (Aminudin & A. Jamal, 2006).

Besides attracting tourist to experience the life and tradition of Malaysian people, the objective of homestay is to increase the quality of life especially in term of economy, social, and environment (Che Lah & Hamzah, 2012). Despite the successful of the homestay, it is observed that numbers of homestay are facing challenges and difficulties in achieving the objective of its establishment. Hence, understanding the critical sustainability factors of homestay is important so that proper measures could be taken to help the homestay operators maintain its business.

A systematic review is an examination of a clearly formulated question that uses systematic and explicit methods to identify, select and critically appraise relevant research and to collect and analyse data from studies that are included in the review. Statistical methods may or may not be used to analyze and summarize the results of the included studies (Higgins et al., 2011). Via a systematic review, authors' claims of rigor in their research can be justified, allowing for the identification of gaps and needed directions for future research.

Despite abundance of studies on sustainability factors of homestay rural tourism, effort to systematically review these studies are still lacking. This article attempts to fill the gap in understanding, identifies and characterizes sustainability factors of homestay among Malaysia's homestay entrepreneur.

2. Materials And Methods

In this section, the method used to retrieve articles related to sustainability factors of Malaysia's homestay is discussed. The reviewer used the method called PRISMA, which includes resources (Scopus and Google Scholar) used to run the systematic review, eligibility and exclusion

criteria, steps of the review process (identification, screening, eligibility) and data abstraction and analysis.

The review was guided by the PRISMA Statement (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analysis). According to Sierra-Correa and Cantera Kintz (2015), it offers three unique advantages which are 1) defining clear research questions that permits a systematic research, 2) it identifies inclusion and exclusion criteria, and 3) it attempts to examine large database of scientific literature in a defined time.

The review relied on two main journal databases – Scopus and GoogleScholar. Scopus is one of the largest abstract and citation databases of peer-reviewed literature with >22,800 journals from 5000 publishers worldwide. Scopus consists of diverse subject areas such as environmental sciences, social sciences, and agriculture and biological sciences. Whereby, Google Scholar is a freely accessible web search engine that indexes the full text or metadata of scholarly literature across an array of publishing formats and disciplines.

The review process was performed on April 2019. There are three (3) stages involved in systematic review process. Those stages are identification, screening, and eligibility.

3.1 Identification

The first stage identified keywords used for the search process. Relying on previous studies and thesaurus, keywords similar and related to homestay, rural tourism, and sustainability were used (Table 1). At this stage, after careful screening, two duplicated articles were removed.

Table 1. Keywords and searching information strategy.

Databases	Keywords used
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY ((homestay OR "rural tourism") AND (sustainability OR competitive*) AND (malaysia))
Google Scholar	allintitle: (homestay OR "rural tourism") AND (sustainability OR competitive OR competitiveness) AND (Malaysia)

3.2 Screening

Several eligibility and exclusion criterion are determined as tabulated in Table 2. First, with regard to literature type, only article journals are selected which means book series, book, chapter in book and conference proceeding are all excluded. Second, in order to avoid any confusion and difficulty in translating, the searching efforts excluded the non-English publication and focused only on articles published in English. Thirdly, regarding timeline, a period of nine (9) years are selected (between 2011 and 2019) as this is the only period where article journal being published based on the keyword. Lastly, in line with its objective which focuses on Malaysia, only articles focused in Malaysian territories are selected.

Table 2. The inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Criterion	Eligibility	Exclusion
Literature type	Journal (research articles)	Journals (systematic review), book series, book, chapter in book, conference proceeding
Language	English	Non-english
Time line	Between 2011-2019	<2011
Countries and territories	Malaysia	Other than Malaysia

3. Results And Discussion

Regarding years published, one article was published in each year 2019, 2012, and 2011, two articles were published in 2018, five articles were published in 2017, six articles were published in

(Amin & Ibrahim, 2015)						√	√	√			√		√						
(Ebrahimi & Khalifah, 2014)						√		√	√										√
(M.-C. Lo, Ramayah, & Hui Hui, 2014)						√	√												
(Ahmad, Jabeen, & Khan, 2014)	√	√						√				√							√
(Ponnan, 2013)						√													√
(Jaafar, Kayat, Tangit, & Yacob, 2013)																			√
(Bhuiyan, Siwar, Ismail, & Islam, 2012)		√	√															√	√
(Ling, Abidin, Nair, Ramachandran, & Shuib, 2011)	√				√	√		√										√	
Total	7	8	2	2	6	5	2	16	3	2	7	2	2	2	2	6	6		
Details: 1a. Quality of accommodation, 1b. Quality of infrastructure, 2a. Range of activities, 2b. Special events, 2c. Nature/natural resources, 2d. Culture, 2e. Ethnicity, 3a. Community support, 3b. Formal education, 3c. Entrepreneurial skill, 4a. Good leader, 4b. Strategic planning, 4c. Monitoring, 4d. Promotional, 5a. Capital invested, 5b. Income generated.																			

Based on thematic review from previous studies, it is found that there are at least eight themes which can be considered as critical sustainability factors for homestay programme. Those are community support (highlighted in 16 studies), quality of infrastructure (highlighted in eight studies), quality of accommodation (highlighted in seven studies), good leader (highlighted in seven studies), nature/natural resources (highlighted in six studies), capital invested (highlighted in six studies), income generated (highlighted in six studies), and culture (highlighted in five studies).

Conclusion

The primary objective of this study is to conduct a systematic literature review on sustainability factors of homestay among Malaysia's homestay entrepreneur. To achieve the objective of this study, we used the method called PRISMA, which includes reviewing of articles from resources (Scopus and Google Scholar).

The results revealed that community support, quality of infrastructure and accommodation, good leader, nature/natural resources, capital invested, income generated, and culture are critical sustainability factors for homestay programme. Understanding on these critical sustainability factors are important not only to the homestay entrepreneur, but also relevant government agencies.

Future research on this area could address the establish relationship among critical sustainability factors. In addition, a field study can be conducted to test the usefulness of these critical sustainability factors for homestay.

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