

The Roles of Tourism System towards Development of Tourist Friendly Destination Concept

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Abstract

Tourism destination has seen as a consolidation of products and experience which influencing tourists to travel. Even though there are many studies in various aspects of tourism destination, the shift of “mass tourism” to “alternative tourism”, the changes of tourist tastes as well as an increasing of travel capabilities, have called for a tourism destination to be more creative in offering niche tourism or more importantly, “Tourist Friendly Destination”. Since there are no specific theories, concepts, frameworks and indicators in tourist friendly destination usage, thus leaving a gap of knowledge and misunderstanding about the formation of tourist friendly destination. Therefore, the aim of this study is to develop a tourist friendly destination concept by using a tourism system approached. The main objective of this study is to identify the roles of tourism system, which influence of the element of activity, product and space towards the development of tourist friendly destination concept. Through this study, it is an attempt to provide a relevant tourist friendly destination concept and to be as a benchmark for tourism destination, which using this concept.

Keywords: macro level, tourism destination, tourism system, tourist friendly destination

1. Introduction

Recently, the tourism industry has shown a rapid development and obvious change wherein tourism has brought in a large amount of income to the economy of a country. Changes and developments have seen since in late of 90th and early twentieth century when the previous tourism only involved the elites' classes, has turned to the concept of mass tourism and alternative tourism, which are customer-oriented. It has created a new phenomenon in the development of hotels, infrastructure as well as other facilities, which used by tourists (Rojek & Urry, 1997; Desmond, 1999; Gottdiener, 2000; Urry, 2002). Through the previous studies have shown that the developments of tourism are resulted from the changes in the “mass tourism” concept whereby the rigid travel package which later moved to the “alternative tourism” concept which has led to more interest and strong economic opportunities (Sleight, 1993; Weinstein, 1994; Buhalis, 2000). The development and changes are due to the changes in the global economy (resulting from globalization and rising oil prices) as well as the invention of new technology. In fact, this condition is also influenced by the changes of tourist behavior, attitude and style which is considered as a customer in a tourism destination, have been changed due to the influence of elements activity, product and space offered at the tourism destination, which are considered as archaic as well as creating a feeling bored and would give a negative perception of a tourism destination. According to Jawardena (2002), a tourism destination would need to manage the changes in accordance with the changes in taste, needs, desires and wants of the tourists. Therefore, a tourism destination needed to be more creative and unique in offering niche tourism or more importantly a customer-oriented branding. Although there are many studies focusing on tourism destination such as destination image (Milman & Pizam, 1995), location of destination (Gartner, 1989;

Chako, 1997; Walmsley & Young, 1998; Botha et al., 1999), personality of destination (Yuksel Ekinci & Sameer Hosany, 2006), destination branding (Morgan, Pritchard & Pride, 2003), destination competitiveness (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003), analysis on choice of destinations (Hsu et al., 2009), attributes and destination products (Crompton & Love, 1995; Spreng et al., 1996; Cho, 1998; Baker & Crompton, 2000), factors that effect of choice destinations (Walmsley & Jenkins, 1993; Baloglu, 1997) and evaluation on destinations (Pizam & Milman, 1993; Weber, 1997; Weaver et al., 2007), however research on a tourist friendly destination concept is quite limited and leaving a gap of knowledge. Since there are no specific theories, concepts, frameworks and indicators in tourist friendly destination usage, thus make misunderstanding about the formation and development of tourist friendly destination. The tourism providers will therefore offer what they assumed to be friendly while on the other hand, the tourists feel it may be not. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to identify the roles of tourism system, which influence of the element of activity, product and space towards the development of tourist friendly destination concept.

2. Tourism System as Mechanism in Development of Tourist Friendly Destination Concept

Tourism can be regarded as an industry, although there are researchers who agree and disagree with this view (Christie Mill & Morrison, 1985). It is because there is no universal definition regarding the terminology of tourism, and the tourism scholars have a various perception or perspectives towards the understanding of tourism. However, tourism can be regarded as a system where it can be defined, analyzed, planned and organized integrative (Inskeep, 1991). An approach through this system will enable the stakeholders to identify the drawbacks, and the long-term effect of each decision made. The system has various meanings based on context and methods. According to Bertalanffy (1968) and Chadwick (1978), the system can be termed as an element, which is correlated to each other. Based on the system theory in global overview, organization is a system where each of components interacted with each other, including humans and processes (Scott, 1961; Thompson, 1967; Katz & Kahn, 1978) and the purpose of the interaction is to achieve a specific objective (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972). In previous studies, tourism can be classified as a system, which elements are closely correlated and linked to each other. Gunn (1988; 1994) and Leiper (1989) stated that the tourism system consisted of the supply and demand aspects of tourist, transportation, tourist attraction, facilities, services, information and traveling promotion offered. While, Christie Mill & Morrison (1985) described the system in tourism has four parts, which are marketed, travel, destination and marketing, and to them, the system is considered as a spider's web in which all parts will vibrate if have a part of it is touched. Different approaches are discussed by Le Pelley & Laws (1998) when defining the tourism system consist of input component (which includes tourist expectation, investment, local authority planning), a component of primary and secondary elements, and lastly, a component that existed from effect. In addition, from the previous studies shows that the tourism systems consist of three elements are essential and interconnected with each other: element of activity (Jenkins, 1980; Christie Mill & Morrison, 1985), the element of space (Urry, 2002; Clarke, 2005) and element of the product (Clarke, 2005). Walsh-Heron & Stevens (1990) stated that the combination element of place, activity and product are vital to produce a good tourism destination. Leiper (1990) stated that, the tourism system will provide a significant impact on tourism destination and Inskeep (1991) described that a tourism destination has to be planned in detail via the tourism system technique. According to Murphly (1985), the use of a tourism system is flexible, and it can be used in any phase of the study, types and perspectives (Tosun & Jenkins, 1998) and understanding of clear issues (Kapsar & Laesser, 1994). Therefore, according to the previous studies, it is clear that every tourism destination will be influenced by the tourism system, which each element in the tourism system is interrelated with each other. Through this study, researcher will adopt a tourism system which consisting elements of activity, space and product to development of tourist friendly destination concept.

3. The Roles of Tourism System towards Development of Tourist Friendly Destination Concept

Leiper (1989) stated that a tourism system will influence the tourism destination, and every destination needs to plan cautiously on using the tourism system technique (Inskeep, 1991). Tourism destination is seen as unique and a complex combination in the tourism system that includes services, resources (environment, nature, man-made: consists of sun, sea, landscape, culture and amenity), infrastructure, facilities and experience. Through previous research, clearly show a multiple and various perspectives pertaining of tourism destination's terminology based on the areas of those researchers. For example, Hall (2000) defines the destination is related to geographical condition such as country, island or city, and this terminology is similar to Vukonic (1997) that described destination is the synonym to location, zone, district, state or city of tourism. According to Swarbrooke (1995), tourism destination is a large area that comprises of various attractions combined with the services required by the tourists, while Kim (1998) describes the destination is a package of tourism facilities and services, which combined with attributes to identify the destination effectiveness to tourist. However, Gunn (1994) explained the destination is a travel marketing area while Medlik (1993) described the destination is a place visited by tourists

in whom the local people would utilize the amenities at the place and the tourists each year. In fact, tourism destination will also influence by the three factors, which are attraction, amenities and transportation network whereby some researchers defined it as a quality tourism destination (Medlik, 1993). Principally, the word of destination is taken from the Latin word *destinatio, onis* means place or the end of the journey (Vukonic, 1997). This terminology has been in use until at present. However, the terminology of destination usually changes according to scientific research or a tourism development. Tourists prefer to travel at a tourist friendly destination where product, space and activity can be used without any burden from one place to another. With the changing of concepts (mass tourism to alternative tourism) and the development of tourism, tourists considered as the customers and therefore, product, space and activity need to be designed to suit the customers' preferences (customer oriented branding). According to Swarbrooke (1995), tourists have a tendency to respond to a friendly destination where the facilities and services are easily accessible. Friendly destination is a destination, which everything is easily accessible and time can save entirely without any interruption starts from residence until they choose of tourism destination (Swarbrooke, 1995). As a result, tourist friendly destination is a comprehensive tourism destination, which gives full satisfaction to tourists through relationship and connection of three elements: activity, space and product without any interruption from the residence to the tourism destination.

3.1 The Role of Space in the Development of Tourist Friendly Destination

In clarifying the relationship between the roles of space in a tourist friendly destination, obviously the element of space influenced the development of tourism destination mainly a tourist friendly destination. Most of the tourism scholars had agreed on defining the tourism destination as a part of space segment or known as tourist destination zone or tourist destination area (Vukonic, 1997). According to Hitrec (1995), destination as a place of attraction which is facilitated by space that meets the requirements of tourists, whereas Kaiser & Helber (1978) stated that space should fulfill the primary motivation of tourists who makes them feel satisfied and will spend more time in that tourism destination. It is unique that at these tourism destinations, building was built not just for a tourist attraction but in fact, have been there over the years and the longer building is built the more tourist will arrive (Vukonic, 1997). Even Vukonic (1997) stated that the more space would be used, it will be increased a satisfaction and attendance of tourist to the tourism destination. In addition, Hudson (1998) stated that a space, which is equipped with required facilities and infrastructures needed by tourists in tourism destination, especially in tourist friendly destination concept (customer-oriented branding). In fact, Hudson (1998) also pointed out that facilities and services, which satisfy the tourist need and want such as food and accommodation, are vital in extending a stay of the tourist in tourism destination. It shows that a space, which is equipped with an infrastructure, facilities, accommodation, attraction and others, is essential to ensure a tourist friendly destination fulfills the supply and demand of tourist. Although there are many studies focusing on space element through multidisciplinary perspectives such as politics economy (Asworth & Voogd, 1990), strategic development perspective (Bradley et al., 2002), geography (Hagget, 2001) and strategic marketing (Kotler et al., 1999), but space is not only seen as of country, state or district perspective, but it can be seen from a smaller perspective (Asworth & Voogd, 1994) such as shopping complex, zoo, museum, theme park or playground owned by the possession of different stakeholders; government sector and private sector. In the development of tourist friendly destination, each space has its belongings either by the government, private sector or even by the local community. Tourists and local community expect tourist friendly destination may include components of friendly public space and a maximum usage of space that can be utilized by them in tourism destination.

3.2 The Role of Activity in the Development of Tourist Friendly Destination

The role of activity is vital in the development of tourist friendly destination. Even Gunn (1994) also stated element of activity in his tourism terminology. According to Gunn (1994) tourism as the movement of people to a specific destination, this is out of normality of work and home, to perform activities at these destinations by using facilities that fulfill their needs while Mathieson & Wall (1982) also stated the role of activity in affected development of tourism destination. Hence, the role of activity is significant in the development of tourist friendly destination concept. Thus, Ritchie & Crouch (1999) described that the role of activity is not influenced by physiographic and culture, but it requires the creativity and initiative at all levels, especially among the stakeholders. It is because an element of activity will be influencing to the effectiveness of tourism attraction, especially a tourist friendly destination concept. Ritchie & Crouch (1999) stated that for developing activity, stakeholders need to play their role in grabbing on the strength of the resources, which offered at a destination. For example, a destination, which focused on the environment and nature, needs to take an advantage to learn its strength and values, while a cultural destination will need to be more creative in identifying an appropriate activity to suit the theme of the specific destination. Similarly, the same situation must be appropriate in tourist friendly destination concept. Proposed activities for a tourist should take into account in the tourist friendly

destination concept. To ensure the activities in the tourist friendly destination is satisfactory, the stakeholders must consider the aspects of tourist perceptions, expectations and attitudes in order produce a high-quality tourist friendly destination.

3.3 The Role of Product in the Development of Tourist Friendly Destination

Previous studies have looked at the destination as a product (McIntosh & Goeldner, 1990; Kozak, 2002; Yoon & Uysal, 2005) that forms a tourism destination. For example, Van Raaij (1986) state products in the tourism destination comprise of nature and man-made creations. The scenery, beaches, mountains, places and historical buildings can illustrate as a nature. Meanwhile, man-made creations can illustrate as an accommodation, transportation, infrastructure and others. Furthermore, Swarbrooke (1995) stated that products in a tourism destination can be categorised into four parts, namely (i) nature, (ii) man-made building structure (a base designed to attract tourists like the theme park, safari park, entertainment complex and others) (iii) man-made building structure (a location which is not designed as tourist attraction like the mosque, archeological historical buildings) and lastly (iv) major events like sports and festivals. According to Hudson (1998), a destination character consists of environment or culture or both, which have to be combined with facilities and services. Product can be defined as one that can be offered in the market that meets the supply and demand. It includes physical objects, services, places, organizations and so on (Kotler, 1994). In fact, according to Swarbrooke (1995) product is a combination of tangible goods and intangible services. On the other hand, Renaghan (1981) stated that termed of product as a combination of products and facilities as well as services while Kim (1998) explained that products in tourism include services and others like accommodation, food, transportation, local goods and entertainment. Meanwhile from the marketing perspective, Bakar (2003) explained that the related products are classified into three levels. The first level is a Core Benefit which every stakeholder has to identify what is the product benefit for tourist and whether the products fulfill the needs and requirements of the tourists. Then, Actual Product is the second level that every stakeholder has to develop the products and finally, the Augmented Product, which offers additional products to tourists at the destination. In addition, the product is an influence by the life cycle theory. Even though many researchers questioned and challenged this theory, but most of them still believe the potential of this theory as a tool of product's measurement. Bakar (2003) and Butler (1980) stated that the life cycle is a concept that affects levels of supplies from the starting point to the declining point. It moves through four levels: introduction, development, maturity and decline (Butler, 1980; Bakar, 2003; Kurtz, 2010). Bakar (2003) also pointed that there are two challenges affecting the life cycle. Firstly, every product will go through a decline, and thus the stakeholder has to replace it or introduce a new product. Secondly, the stakeholder has to understand the product life cycle and change to a new strategy to avoid the product decline and identify the problem. This means the stakeholders need to develop the new products while managing the emerging problem alongside the life cycle. In tourism, a product consists of several elements like activities, services, accommodations, food, transportation, local goods and entertainment. On the other hand, a tourist friendly destination is a combination of tourism resources added with facilities and services that will not burden the tourists to ensure the products are accepted by tourists.

Based on previous studies, product attributes are also important. According to Swanson & Bridge (2006), product attributes related to the item characteristic that can affect the tourists. A different tourist destination usually has different product attributes and therefore, analysis on the product attribute is needed (Haahti, 1986; Gartner, 1989) and tourists will make decisions based on these product attributes (Swanson & Horridge, 2002). The acceptance of the product attributes is occasionally influenced by a tourist attitude towards the characteristic products (DeVecchio, 2001). In addition, most researchers will look at several criteria in analyzing the product attributes (i) the overall favorite products, (ii) favorite product in specific (iii) how the product attributes influence a tourist acceptance (Popper et al., 2004). Meanwhile according to Turner & Reisinger (2001), the three important factors in a product attribute is valued, character and uniqueness. From the previous studies, it shows that the product attributes to be able to influence the tourists to travel at tourism destination (refer Table 1). The strength of a product depends on the uniqueness and a variety of product attributes offered at a tourist destination. In Table 1, it can be seen that many of the tourists choose a friendliness concept as the highest product attribute during choose a tourism destination. Even in the earlier studies, Haahti (1986) has identified Finland as the most chosen destination by respondents compared to ten other destinations in Europe. In the survey, most respondents from the Netherlands have chosen Finland and Norway as countries with the highest friendliness level compared to other's European countries (Haahti, 1986). Similarly, studies by Kim (1998), Kozak & Rammington (1999), Orth & Tureckova (2002) and Hsu et al. (2009) which shows that friendliness attribute is the most chosen attribute when the tourists plan to travel. With a uniqueness and creativity of a product in a tourist friendly destination, it will transform a destination from a low yield to a high yield.

Table 1. Research on product attribute at tourism destination

Researcher	Product Attributes
Ferrario (1979)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lanscape and scenery • Zoo and wild life • Natural vegetation • Sun and beaches • Historical monuments • Sports amenities • Shopping and visits to city • Participation in local life • Night life entertainment
Haahti (1986)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good value for money • Accessibility • Sports facilities and activities • Night life and entertainment • A peaceful and quiet environment • Friendly and hospitable people • Cultural experience • Beautiful scenery
Middleton (1989)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination attraction • Image • Destination Facilities • Price • Accessibility
Gartner (1989)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor life • Sightseeing • Natural environment • Historical sites • Cultural places • Night life • Receptiveness • Liquor
Pysarchik (1989)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Accessibility • Parking facilities • Accommodation
Um & Crompton (1990)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of fun • Travel costs • Others' recommendation • Climate • Outdoor Recreation • Wide variety • Meet people with different life • Good to relax • Safety • Attractiveness of natural environment • Feeling of well being • Time spent
Fakeye & Crompton (1991)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social opportunities and attractions • Natural and cultural amenities • Accommodation and transportation • Infrastructure, food and friendly people • Physical activity and recreational facilities • Bar and evening entertainment
Hu & Ritchie (1993)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of accommodations • Recreational Opportunities • Scenery • Climate • Food • Entertainment • Historical attraction • Uniqueness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural attraction • Accessibility • Festival/special events • Shopping • Local transportation • Price levels
Milman & Pizam (1995)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good value for money • Price • Suitable for families with children • Shopping bargains • Scenery • Weather • Hotels • Hospitable residents • Safety
Thang & Tan (2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for money • Accessibility • Easy to travel • Time to travel

4. Conclusion

Tourist friendly destination is a concept that has been used by the stakeholder to promote a tourism destination. Nevertheless, a study based on a tourist friendly destination is quite limited and there is no specific research has been done specifically in literature, theory, concept, frames and indicators, thus leaving a gap of knowledge and confusion to the users. Through this study, although it is a preliminary study but has seen a significance and relationship at a macro level between tourism system comprising the elements of activities, space and products towards the development of a tourist friendly destination (refer Figure 1). Meanwhile, although this study has not been tested by empirical research, the interaction of elements in the tourism system (activity, space and product) shows continuity in the development of tourist friendly destination concept, and it is as a fundamental regarding a tourist friendly destination study. In addition, the discussion in this study will enable the stakeholders to manage a tourism destination according to the tourist friendly destination mechanism (the three elements in a tourism system) wherein this concept concern to meet the demands and needs of tourists as a customer in tourism destination (customer-oriented branding).

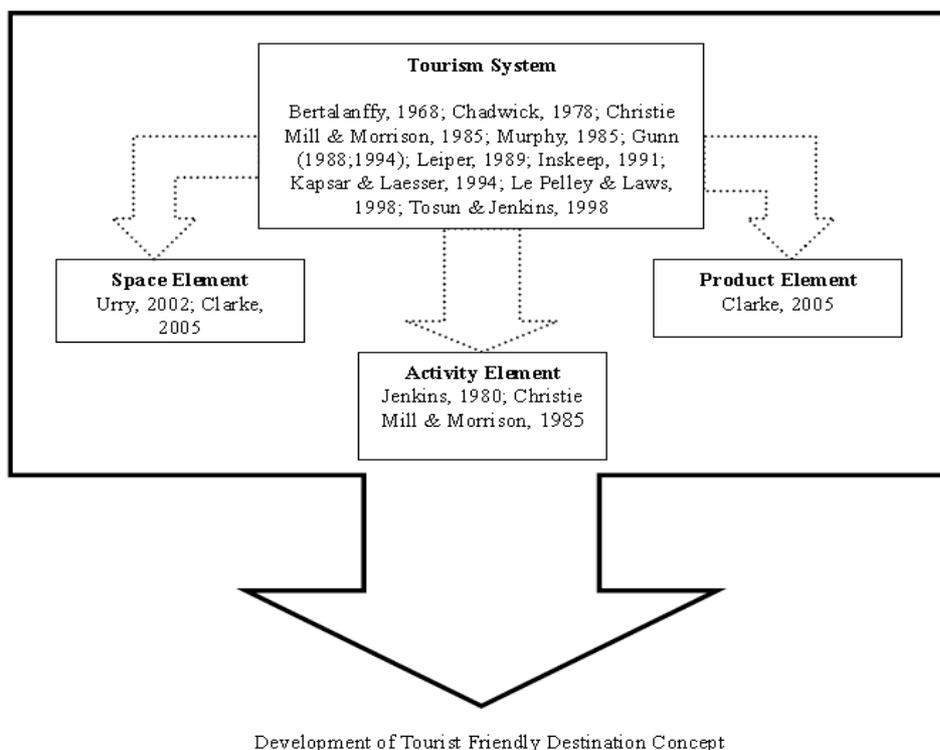


Figure 1. Conceptual framework the roles of tourism system towards development of tourist friendly destination

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