

Discovering Hidden Gems: Unraveling the Natural and Community Assets in Kampung Sungai Terap, Kuala Selangor

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Abstract

This paper delves into the prospective products that can be developed for a rural tourism destination, utilizing the available natural, site, and community resources in Kampung Sungai Terap, Hujung Permatang Sub-District, Kuala Selangor. The data were gathered through observations, unstructured interviews, and the collection of secondary data. The study's findings are categorized into three sections: natural resources, community analysis, and site analysis. The research highlights that Kampung Sungai Terap has nurtured numerous potential village entrepreneurs who have introduced a variety of products and services, ripe for further commercialization as distinctive offerings in rural tourism product development. The village boasts favorable attributes within its resources—be they natural, communal, or situational—requiring only some refinement and enhancement for sustained success in the area and for establishing it as a thriving rural tourism destination.

Keywords: Rural Tourism, Tourism Product Development, Natural Resources, Community Analysis, Site Analysis, Rural Entrepreneurship.

Introduction

As the most developed and industrialized state of the country, Selangor may not be a major tourist destination in Malaysia, yet it is centrally located on the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia and surrounds the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya, which may help to draw the attention of potential number of tourists in the future. According to Tourism Selangor, Selangor registered 6.04 million visitors last year, showing an increase from 5.83 million in 2010 and the state was targeting to attract some 6.2 million visitors for 2012 (Selangor Times). Being the home to the largest population (over 5 million people) and highly developed infrastructure, Selangor is still preserving some of the finest nature reserves, lifestyles, and cultures. Selangor consists of 9 districts namely, Gombak, Klang, Kuala Selangor, Hulu Kelang, Hulu Selangor, Kuala Langat, Petaling, Sepang, and Sabak Bernam.

Named after the river confluence, Kuala Selangor is the second largest district, and it is located on the west coast of Selangor. Kuala Selangor is an old royal capital of Selangor and loaded with interesting places and historical stories at the district that has been developed since the

16th century. Kuala Selangor consists of 9 sub-districts namely, Api-Api, Bestari Jaya, Hujung Permatang, Hulu Tinggi, Ijok, Jeram, Kuala Selangor, Pasangan and Tanjong Karang.

Hujung Permatang is situated on the north-west coast of Kuala Selangor, bordering Tanjong Karang on the north. There are 6 areas under the sub-district of Hujung Permatang namely, Kampung Sungai Yu, Kampung Sungai Terap, Kampung Permatang, Kampung Ujong Permatang, Kampung Parit Serong and Kampung Sungai Gulang-Gulang. This research focuses on 1 village area of Hujung Permatang which is Kampung Sungai Terap.

Named after from a type of tree which used to be existed along the river of the fisherman village long time ago, Kampung Sungai Terap is surrounded by a few other villages such as Kampung Ujong permatang, Kampung Sungai Yu and Kampung Sungai Gulang-Gulang.

The objectives of this study were to explore the resources of Kampung Sungai Terap and to investigate the availability and conditions of the resources and infrastructures of the area. Further, the significance of this study is to develop the existing resources of Kampung Sungai Terap in contributing to a new rural tourism destination.

Literature Review

The development of new tourist destinations is obtained from the resources available in the area. Despite this, tourism products can be defined in many ways. A product is any offering that can satisfy a need or want of consumers and as people perceived experience in travelling, it may consist of one or a combination of components, including physical goods, services, experiences, events, persons, places, properties, organizations, information, and ideas (Kotler, 2001). This can be assumed tourism products internationally or domestically, rural, or urban includes one or more combination of those components that may contribute to the satisfaction of tourists. Smith (2001) point out in demand to identify tourism product development opportunities, a good understanding of both demand and supply can help destinations like rural areas to determine the expectations of tourists, suggest how products may be improved and indicate whether there are any other potential products to be developed.

The extant literature, Brass (1997) indicates that tourism products can be classified into two main components: attractions and facilities. These two components consist of (i) natural and human-made features and (ii) events that promote people to visit a destination. As an example, a place with picturesque value may act as the key attraction for naturalists to the destination. On the other hand, facilities provide sufficient necessities to both residents and tourists, and include roads, railway, airports, parking areas, hospitals, police station, water and power services and accommodation will attract tourist to visit and experience the area. Differently for the rural areas, the product force to intricate attractions like farm or agricultural tourism, cultural tourism, nature tourism, sports or adventure tourism and eco-tourism (Ramakumar, 2008), while the facilities they might use are the roads, restaurants, campgrounds and other basic services (Smith, 2001). Asero, V., Gozzo, S., & Tomaselli, V. (2016), tourist mobility affects the shape, the dimension, and the structure of the networks, where tourists are different for characteristics, trip-related behaviours, and type of holiday chosen. The general framework of these elements is dynamic. The outcome can be used to plan travel routes, build tourism infrastructure, and construct destination management strategies in the real world.

Ngah (2009) indicates the various rural development strategies had been undertaken by the Malaysia government since independence and make a broad assessment of its impact. It shows that preserving and sustaining the rural destination can be part of the promoting to

generic income for tourism industry in Malaysia. The intimate connection between the communities and their natural environment is the central axis of the social organization, and it reinforces the sense of belonging to the territory (Farah et al. 2012). The sale of goods and services related to tourism activity as the multiplier effects which can increase the income of a community which has a dependency on a limited number of activities and sources (Saaidin, M. 2012). Thus, tourism product development in rural areas appears to improve living conditions of its people, through improvement of rural economic activities, poverty eradication, provision of infrastructure and amenities. In a nutshell, any form of tourism that showcases the rural life either real or recreated, and that which involves rural folk at such locations creates value from opportunities and benefit the local community economically and socially, as well as enabling interactions between the visitors and locals for a more enriching tourism experience (Ramakumar, 2008).

Research Framework

The investigation provides a conceptual framework focused on the procedure of identifying accessible resources within a rural area to direct the development of new tourist destinations. This approach intends to comprehensively evaluate rural areas' development potential for tourism. This framework provides a structured strategy to promote sustainable rural tourist growth by strategically analyzing environmental, social, and site-based resources, such as those found in Kampung Sungai Terap, Hujung Permatang Sub-District, Kuala Selangor. This structured model, which emphasizes the importance of resource recognition and evaluation, offers a road map for converting rural communities into prosperous tourist hotspots.

Structured model for the study

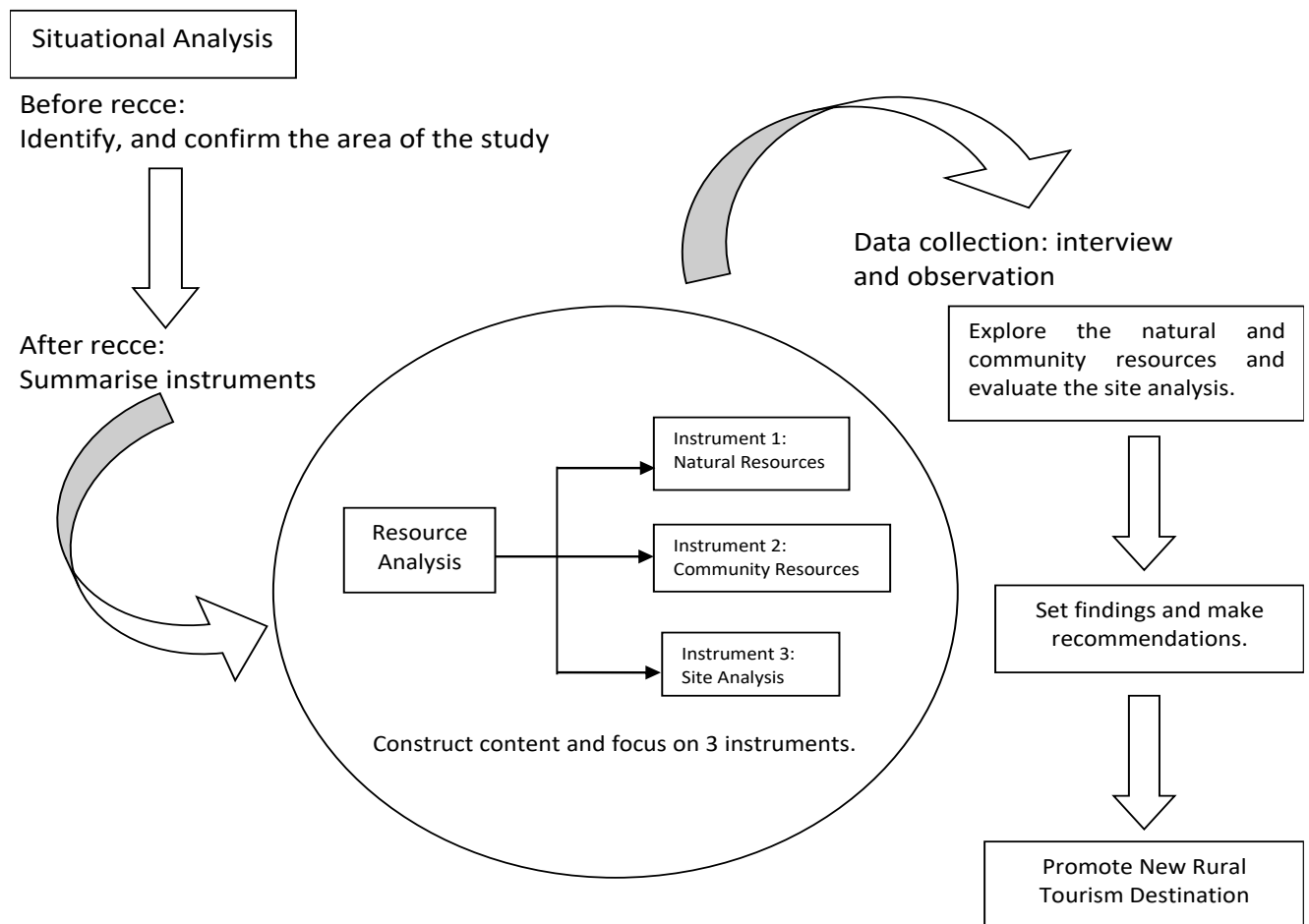


Figure 1: A structured model for identifying available resources within a rural area, thereby facilitating their promotion as a new tourism destination.

Methodology

Two primary methods of data gathering were employed in this study: (1) Interviews with members of the local community, state and local government officials, and town councils. Given most of the respondents were locals and fluent in the national language (Bahasa Melayu), the interviews had been done in the relevant language. (2) Natural resource observation, community analysis, and site analysis. The second principle was applied to gather attainable and trustworthy content about what was seen at the place as well as cross-sectional data on why, who, and when people were interviewed.

Instruments development

Three (3) instruments for analysis were adopted in this study.

Instrument 1: Natural Resources Analysis.

The content of the checklist consists of 11 items. (1) Beaches, (2) Coral Reefs, (3) Mountains, (4) Forest Reserves, (5) Waterfalls, (6) Lakes, (7) Rivers, (8) Caves, (9) Wildlife, (10) Springs, and (11) Others.

The assessment for this instrument is to observe on the overall condition of the resources, the size of the area, the types of activities carried out at the site, the types of tourists who visited the area (if any) and the economic or business activities carried out.

Instrument 2: Community Analysis.

The content of the checklist consists of 9 dimensions: (1) Community size/population density of the area, (2) Perception on the rate of growth of the community, (3) Community surroundings, (4) Community ethnic background, Household/Family size, (5) Average age of the head of household, (6) Major source of household income, (7) Economic activities around residence, (8) Social status of community, (9) Recreational activities around the residence, and Major household.

Instrument 3: Site Analysis

The content of the checklist consists of 6 dimensions and the corresponding items to be evaluated: (1) Area Economics – Type of business activities, transport availability from outside the area, within site transport availability, special features or attractions, and distance to tourism attractions; (2) Physical characteristics – drainage system and solid waste disposal system; (3) Area shape – Area size and Parking space availability; (4) Availability of utilities – water and electricity; (5) Street patterns – Overall condition and Accessibility to the area, (6) Positional characteristics (Traffic flow, People traffic information, visibility of the area) – Distance/Driving time, estimation on number/type of vehicles, road signage, and area map/contour/landscape.

Results and Discussion

From the observation and interviewed at the field and collecting the data from the secondary sources, there are three (3) findings that been discussed: (1) natural resources, (2) community resources and (3) site analysis.

Natural Resources Analysis

According to Delgado-Serrano. M, et al. (2015), community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) has developed as a conceptual strategy since the mid-1980s, providing a counterargument to top-down approaches in natural resource management. According to this strategy, Kampung Sungai Terap's natural resources have the potential to be turned into a brand-new domestic tourist attraction because they closely resemble the rural settings of typical Malay villages in Malaysia. Notably, the forest reserve areas continue to be in a respectable state thanks to careful sustainable agricultural methods.

The ability of farmers to effectively oversee their farms, orchards, and gardens allows a sizeable segment of the village community to use natural resources to meet their requirements and maintain their way of life. The study region is home to numerous plantations, including those for bananas, coconuts, palm, and oil palm.

Table 1:
Types of Plantations

No	Name of tree	Uses
1	Oil Palm Tree ' <i>Pokok Kelapa Sawit</i> '	Can be processed as cooking oil and low cholesterol coconut milk, can be exported worldwide to increase economic growth
2	Coconut Tree ' <i>Pokok Kelapa</i> '	Can be produced as drinks and coconut milk, the wood can be made into firewood and furniture
3	Banana Tree ' <i>Pokok Pisang</i> '	The leaves can be used to wrap Nasi Lemak and Lemang making process, the fruits can be fried and processed into snacks, the heart can be served as Ulam or in dishes
4	Palm Tree ' <i>Pokok Pinang</i> '	The fruit can be eaten with Sirih leaves which is nutritious and good for health
5	Papaya Tree ' <i>Pokok Betik</i> '	The fruit is rich in nutrients, can be served with dishes and as desserts
6	Mango Tree ' <i>Pokok Mangga</i> '	The fruit is rich in nutrients, can be served with salads and as desserts, can be processed into juice and jam
7	Cassava Tree ' <i>Pokok Ubi Kayu</i> '	The fruit can be cooked and fried, can be processed into snacks, The shoot can be served as Ulam or in dishes
8	Yam Tree ' <i>Pokok Keledek</i> '	The tree can be as a decorative plant at house, the fruit can be eaten and served with dishes

Community Resources Analysis

The population in Kampung Sungai Terap is dominant by the Malay, followed by Chinese and Indian. Most of the Malay community is Javanese who still lives in the village area and there are also some who live in the new residential area called Taman Nilam along with the Chinese community. There are also foreigners from Indonesia, Bangladesh and Myanmar living at the Kuala Selangor Group of Estates along with the Indian community and involved in oil palm plantation. The Indian community living in the estate, and they migrated from Kampung Permatang to Kampung Sungai Terap because of the Japanese colonization era of Malaya during the 1940s.

The major sources of household income are farming, oil palm planting, retailing, manufacturing such as furniture manufacturer of Yusia Jaya Sdn Bhd and food packaging and labeling factory of FAMA, government or private sectors, SMEs, and self-employment. The Giat Mara Centre had attracted the participation of many of the village community by providing entrepreneurship and skills training to improve technical literacy and to encourage the sense of independence within the rural community. Some of the programs offered are motorcycle technology, vehicle maintenance and painting technology, foundry technology, fashion, and dressmaking.

From the observation, it has been found that the main activities of the locals are recreational activities. They play futsal, sepak takraw and even go fishing. Further, the community activities like 'gotong-royong' events and socializing and religious activities have been part of the activities that tide them together. As for mobility modes, the major household transportation for the residence are motorbike, car, and bicycle.

Most of the village community of Kampung Sungai Terap were satisfied with their way of life, yet when questioning about tourism development at the site of their villages, most of them

were uncertain about the potential in bringing their village to be developed as a new tourism destination. Community is described as a place-oriented process of interrelated actions through which members of a local population express a shared sense of identity while engaging in the common concerns of life. This definition is a grounded philosophy from Kaufman (1959) and Kenneth, P., Wilkinson (1991). According to the village community, they have lack of special attraction or criteria to be developed as a successful tourism destination unlike other neighboring villages such as Kampung Ujong Permatang which is rich of historical, cultural and heritage appeals and the famous fishermen village of Kampung Sungai Yu, which they believed most of the tourist nowadays are more attracted in that area of interest.

Site Analysis

Zillinger (2008), the selection of tourist sites is dependent on personal, editorial, geographical, economic, and tourism-sociological factors. Based on the observation, 50% of its land usage is for plantation, 40% for residential areas and 10% for factories and commercials. The local economy activities in Kampung Sungai Terap comprises of agriculture, retail, manufacturing, food and beverage and SME products. As for the physical facilities there are community halls, recreational areas, playgrounds, clinics, police department, rows of groceries shops, and schools existed for the purpose of serving the community. Another important facility that can be found in Kampung Sungai Terap is the mosque since most of the residents are Malay Muslims.

There is no public transport within the Hujung Permatang area. Residents must go to Bandar Malawati Bus Terminal (about 1 km of the town centre) to take buses for link Kuala Selangor to Kuala Lumpur and Sabak Bernam. To go further into the chosen destination, taxis are available to facilitate the residents and visitors to their destinations.

In terms of availability of utilities, the areas are providing electricity, water, and telecommunication to the community. Besides, the main road and residential roads in the research area were tarred but in average condition. Uneven narrow road surface may cause problems especially to the heavy vehicles that frequently pass on the main road and even residential roads. With no footpath at the roadside, it is quite dangerous for pedestrians to walk on the roads. Some road signs and signage do not exist, and some are too unclear to be read.

Conclusion

Kampung Sungai Terap can be developed to be a successful tourist destination through the participation of the local community, use of the domestic products and the location of the area. For the tourism activities, implementation, and development of all these elements will ensure benefits to the local community at Kampung Sungai Terap, thus, later will support the local economy, generation of employment and business opportunities. This study has explored some aspects of the resources to generate income, and inevitably increase the economy of the local community and conferring the place as rural tourism destination.

Natural Resources – the domestic products

The potential of Kampung Sungai Terap as a new domestic's tourism destination could create new trends for the tourist by educating the tourist through the trail of food from farm to the table. Based on the findings found, the village community at the Kampung Sungai Terap, had started and managed their own orchards and farms. According to Albu & David, 2012, when the tourist experience between knowledge and physical appearance at the location it will

create agitations excitement in their visit. The combination of tourism and orchard culture will create a memoir of the visit for the tourist at the destination with knowledge and adventures. This comprehensive concept integrates sightseeing, recreation, ecology, the local economy, and science popularization. Moving towards to this era, these new activities possibly will give new experience to the tourist and other sectors such as education and agriculture to collaborate and assist local to generate income of the local people. The existence of natural resources in the village presents an opportunity for the local community to create their own products. Further from Albu & David (2012), the development of tourist orchards combines development of the fruit industry, expansion of leisure time activities in rural areas for urban citizens, and the promotion of the local tourist industry. Therefore, with its incredible multiplier effect in Kampung Sungai Terap, it can boost the affluence of local economies.

Community involvements

The involvement of local communities plays a vital role for the development of Kampung Sungai Terap as a new rural tourism destination. The community in Kampung Sungai Terap does have a good knot of being together. Therefore, by having the right attitude of togetherness, their products (vegetables, fruits, furniture, food packaging) to be promoted as new tourism destinations by offering tour packages to the tourist. The tour package could offer tourists recreational activities at Kampung Sungai Terap and supplement with education programme on agriculture. This not only allows those without income to generate earnings but also provides an additional source of income for others within the community. Furthermore, this exposure may bring recognition to the village among foreigners, indirectly marketing local products to tourists and external individuals.

Further, government and local authorities may possibly support and create insight to the local community by sharing appropriate information and facilities. This is because most of them were uncertain and unsure about the potential in bringing their village to be developed as a new rural tourism destination. Hence, the local authority can support the villagers by organizing relevant workshops or exploring platforms to expand the reach of local products to a wider audience. Receiving support from the local authorities instills confidence and a sense of pride, enabling the promotion of local products to the broader tourists.

Site and accessibility

As for new tourist destinations, the route to reaching the place is important. It is a potential appearance for types of tourist and types of attractions. By putting the proper signage for the routes, it will make it easy for the outsiders to have clear expectations and easy to have expectations that mismatch about the place before reaching at the village. Nonetheless, there is still a need for some enhancement and improvement in the aspects of roads, drainage system, signage, accessibility, facilities and services and involvement of community. The condition of roads, whether main road and residential roads, should be upgraded for the safety and convenience of road users as there are many heavy vehicles like big trucks that frequently passing through the area. Moreover, footpaths should be considered for the safety of pedestrians who walk on the roadside. Kampung Sungai Terap requires a better drainage system as most of the 'Parit' were polluted with dried leaves and it was also noticed that some rubbish dumping and various waste into drains.

Public transport has become more than necessary now. Therefore, the accessibility of the study areas needs improvement because based on the findings, there is no public transport

within the Hujung Permatang district, thus residents or visitors have to go to Bandar Malawati Bus Terminal to take buses or they have to pay more for taxis to go to their chosen destinations. Buses with various routes within the area should be established to facilitate the local community as well as an increasing number of visitors. Explicitly in the tourism sector, the transportation systems contribute to the major passage for making the move of the people and goods and help promote social presence and balanced urban expansion (Gudmundsson, 2004; Elias and Shiftan, 2012; Miranda and Rodrigues da Silva, 2012). The availability of reliable transportation is crucial as it simplifies access to a destination for tourists. Consequently, this can draw in a larger number of tourists to this area.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare. All co-authors have seen and agree with the contents of the manuscript and there is no financial interest to report. We certify that the submission is original work and is not under review at any other publication.

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