

# Faizan Ali / Kashif Hussain / Vikneswaran Nair / Pradeep Kumar Nair

## Stakeholders' perceptions & attitudes towards tourism development in a mature destination

### Abstract

Stakeholders' perceptions towards tourism development within destinations have been emphasized by researchers and practitioners. However, literature has only focused local residents' role in tourism development, leaving a gap in knowledge on stakeholders' engagement in tourism development process. This study investigates stakeholders' perceptions, attitudes and involvement in tourism development for a mature Malaysian beach resort destination. Using a survey, 231 responses from different stakeholders in the destination were collected and used for statistical analysis. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to get tourism development factors including attachment to community, involvement of government, inclination towards tourism development, and attitude towards tourism development. It was followed by cluster analysis, which revealed three groups, including Optimists, Favorers and Nay-Sayers representing different levels of perceptions, attitudes and involvement towards tourism development. The findings of this study reiterated the importance of developing a tourism development strategy that is in line with the needs and wants of the stakeholders. These findings and conclusions may be beneficial for tourism policymakers in Malaysia and elsewhere where critical need for stakeholder management exists.

**Key words:** stakeholders; perception; attitudes; tourism development; beach destination; Malaysia

### Introduction

The main aims and objectives of tourism development are normally grounded in the fact that tourism enhances the community quality of life by improving the infrastructure systems and economic conditions (Presenza, Chiappa & Sheehan, 2013). International organizations such as World Tourism Organization have stated that tourism development activities have to be planned, managed and developed so as to be in line with the needs and attitudes of the stakeholders towards tourism development (Gursoy, Chi & Dyer, 2010; Sdrail, Goussia-Rizou & Kiourtidou, 2015). In other words, to achieve sustainable tourism development, a collaborative policymaking is needed where stakeholders, including local authorities, government agencies, businesses and host communities, must work together in planning and regulating tourism development (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000; Presenza et al., 2013). In this context, Del Chiappa (2012) highlighted the importance of understanding the groups of stakeholders and how their perceptions, attitudes and involvement can influence tourism development.

---

**Faizan Ali**, Ph.D., College of Hospitality & Technology Leadership, University of South Florida, Sarasota-Manatee, USA;  
E-mail: faizanali7@hotmail.co.uk; faizanali@sar.usf.edu

**Kashif Hussain**, Ph.D., Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management, UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia;  
E-mail: kashif.hussain@msn.com

**Vikneswaran Nair**, Ph.D., School of Hospitality, Tourism and Culinary Arts Taylor's University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia;  
E-mail: vicky.nair@taylors.edu.my

**Pradeep Kumar Nair**, Ph.D., Taylor's University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia;  
E-mail: pradeep.n@taylors.edu.my

Following the suggestion of Lankford (2001), Presenza et al (2013) assessed residents' engagement and involvement in tourism development at Termoli, Italy. In their study, they insisted that research on resident attitudes and perceptions towards tourism development is an essential springboard for tourism planning. Furthermore, residents' attitude towards tourism development has gained much attention from tourism researchers because of its significance for the success and sustainability of tourism development (Chen & Raab, 2012; Deccio & Baloglu, 2002; Gursoy, Chi & Dyer, 2010). Conversely, this argument is contended by McGahey (2012) who supports studying attitudes of all the stakeholders and not only the residents. Understanding the stakeholders' perspective can facilitate policies which minimize the potential negative impacts of tourism development and maximize its benefits, leading to community development and greater support for tourism (Timur & Getz, 2008). However, Ellis and Sheridan (2014) have concurred that to date there has been too little consideration of the role stakeholders play in the concept of tourism development and its practice in the field.

Considering the stakeholders' attitude is a moral and democratic approach to tourism development because of its significant influence on their stakes as well as the success and sustainability of tourism in a particular destination (Ven, 2015). In the same line, Ellis and Sheridan (2014) stated that stakeholders' positive attitude point towards their favorable behavior towards tourism development. Their argument is reinforced by the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) which states that attitude influences behavioral intention leading to particular behaviors. Moreover, as per the social exchange theory, if stakeholders perceive that the benefits of tourism development are higher than the costs, they will be more inclined to support it (Ap, 1992). However, to gain or maintain support for tourism development, it is important to assess stakeholders' perceptions of tourism development and potential directions of new development (Presenza et al., 2013).

Ven (2015) suggested that initially stakeholders' have homogenous attitude towards tourism development and with the passage of time this attitude becomes heterogeneous. Hence, it is necessary to assess stakeholders' attitude towards mature destinations. In this context, some of the scholars have adopted segmentation approaches to assess stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes towards tourism development because this approach generates important information for tourism policy-makers (Oviedo-Garcia, Castellanos-Verdugo & Martin-Ruiz, 2008; Presenza et al., 2013; Ven, 2015). Cluster analysis is one of the mostly used techniques to classify respondents into groups of people within the community having different attitudes and perceptions towards tourism development (Brida, Osti & Faccioli, 2011; Brida, Del Chiappa, Meleddu & Pulina, 2014; Del Chiappa, 2012; Pulina, Meleddu & Del Chiappa, 2013). The increasing importance given to these studies may also be applied in Malaysian context, where a famous beach destination - Port Dickson - is in a maturing stage of development and is lagging behind in revitalizing its product.

Considering the preceding discussion, this study investigates stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes towards tourism development in Port Dickson, Malaysia. This study also intends to examine factors that influence stakeholders' behavior and adopts cluster analysis to recognize coherent groups with common perceptions towards tourism development. The specific objective of this study is to highlight the factors that affect perceptions and attitudes of stakeholders towards tourism development and discuss the divergent characteristics of the identified clusters. In general, this study discusses the significance of stakeholders' engagement in the process of tourism development. More specifically, this study provides an in-depth analysis of tourism competitiveness and attractiveness of Port Dickson, Malaysia making this study relevant not only for Malaysian tourism authorities but also to the practitioners from other mature tourist destinations.

## Historical background of Port Dickson beach

In recent years, Malaysia has experienced a consistent growth in both international and domestic tourism. In 2014, international tourist arrivals are reported to be 27.44 million with MYR 72 (US\$ 16.7) billion tourism receipts (Tourism Malaysia, 2016). On the other hand, domestic visitors were reported to be 169.44 million with MYR 55.5 (US\$ 13) million visitor spending (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2016). This has resulted in development of tourism at a large number of destinations within Malaysia. However, in certain cases, these over-development has resulted in negative impact for some destinations. Port Dickson is one of these destinations which has experienced an overall loss of tourism competitiveness relative to both historical competitors and emerging destinations.

Port Dickson is a beach and holiday destination (costal district) in the State of Negeri Sembilan. It is about 90 kilometers from Kuala Lumpur, capital of Malaysia and is the closest beach for the residents of Kuala Lumpur. It is 450 kilometers from Penang (approximately 4.5 hours' drive), and 314 kilometers from Singapore (approximately 4 hours' drive). From Lido Beach in Johor Bahru up to Pangkor Island in Perak, Port Dickson is regarded as the only beachfront suitable for tourism activities ([www.tourismmalaysia.com.my](http://www.tourismmalaysia.com.my)). Port Dickson District is divided into five mukims or districts, which are namely Jimah, Linggi, Pasir Panjang, Port Dickson and Si Rusa. In 2002, PD Municipal Council (PDMC) has been proclaimed as Municipal Council. The Municipal Council of PD consist of 140.32 km square (54.18 nautical) areas. The organization of the PDMC consist of 13 divisions under the purview of the President. They include the division of Corporate and Tourism; Innovation and Action Special Unit; Administration and Human Resources; Information Technology; Enforcement; Treasury; Town and Country Planning; Evaluation and Management of Property; Landscape; Urban Services Environment; Legal and Building. Thus, all these divisions have their enforcement unit to ensure the systems and processes are in order and are complied.

In the 1990s, Port Dickson boomed with new hotels and resorts being planned and constructed. Due to the Asian financial crisis of 1997, however, many of these projects stalled. Many of these projects were revived and completed with the improving economy of the 2000s. In addition, hotels and condominiums displaced much of the natural surroundings resulting in higher air and water pollution. However, recently hotels in collaboration with civil authorities have started a number of projects to clean up Port Dickson and rehabilitate the beach and sea waters. However, there is still a need for efforts to be done for tourism development in Port Dickson, which is a mature beach resort destination.

In Port Dickson and surrounding areas, there are only five 5-star, five 4-star and thirteen 3-star registered accommodations available beside few legal homestays. Based on the statistics of tourists in Port Dickson as outlined in the Blueprint Port Dickson 2011-2020, there was a steady increase in the tourist arrivals to this beach resort destination until 2013. During 2012 and 2013 a large number of tourists (international and domestic) visited Port Dickson owing to events such as Port Dickson International Triathlon, Port Dickson Malaysia Water Festival, and 49<sup>th</sup> PD Open Tennis Tournament etc. Therefore, Port Dickson's strategic location, the proximity to important international and national markets (primarily, Kuala Lumpur and the surrounding region) and the provision of tourism infrastructure, have allowed it to enjoy significant benefits from tourism. However, recently with the decrease in inbound tourism by international tourists, there are growing concerns for PD over the ability to maintain market share. Based on Butler's model of tourism evolution, the destination appears to be in the stagnation stage (Presenza et al., 2013). Moreover, decreased tourist inflow in Port Dickson represents a weakness but at the same time an opportunity if it is possible to capitalize on significant natural resources that are of growing interest to the international tourism market (Formica & Uysal, 1996).

Destination in itself is an evolving concept. While Sainaghi (2006) described destination as a tourism district, Baggio, Scott and Cooper (2010) described it as a social network. Moreover, Baggio and Sainaghi (2011) stated that destination are complex systems and organizations operating in a destination take on the features of co-producers of services. Consequently, Port Dickson is a destination consisting of a system of fragmented services delivered by many actors (stakeholders) (Murphy, 1985) which usually is an integral part of the visitor experience. This presents a great opportunity to capitalize on the growing interest in experiences that permit tourists to rediscover the sense of identity of places through contact with these stakeholders. However, this opportunity is jeopardized if stakeholders adopt a hostile attitude towards tourism. This hostile attitude can have a very deleterious effect on the local tourism industry and damage the destination's reputation especially in relation to experiencing its 'people' and 'culture' (Leiper, 2004).

## Literature review

### Stakeholders and tourism development

Recently studies related to destination governance have focused on understanding the associations established between various stakeholders including government, businesses and the local community towards tourism development (Brida et al., 2014; Del Chiappa, 2012; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Pulina et al., 2013). These studies argue that the concept of governance is not limited to the only the government. Rather, it involves other stakeholders (business, community and voluntary sectors) because they may use their own resources (Presenza et al., 2013). For instance, Baramwell and Lane (2011) postulated that "*the processes of tourism governance are likely to involve various mechanisms for governing, steering, regulating and mobilizing action, such as institutions, decision-making rules and established practices*" (p. 412). March and Wilkinson (2009) further argued that the complex interrelationships between stakeholders is important to consider because the level of cohesion among them is directly related to the performance of a tourism destination. Ritchie and Inkari (2006) also advocated the understanding of stakeholders' attitudes and perceptions towards any plans of tourism development.

Not many scholars have considered the involvement of various stakeholders in tourism development processes. Some of the studies have been conducted where only the residents are considered (Del Chiappa, 2012; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Presenza et al., 2013). This is in contradiction with the belief that stakeholders should ensure their support and a favorable attitude towards tourism activities by playing a cohesive and active role and participate in tourism management and development in destinations (Simpson & Bretherton, 2009). In this context, Ven (2015) specified that stakeholders' participation in tourism development is necessary because they form an essential ingredient in the 'hospitality atmosphere' of any destination. Hence, involving local stakeholders becomes obviously important for sustainability of tourism development at destinations.

A number of studies conducted on tourism development focus on the importance of planning for delivering significant benefits (Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003; Del Chiappa, 2012; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Presenza et al., 2013). This argument is supported by Kibicho (2008) who furthers it by saying that if properly planned, tourism development can benefit all of the stakeholders stating from generation of employment opportunities, improvement of income levels, generation of revenues and development of institutions. Nonetheless, if tourism planning goes wrong, it can have negative impacts towards destinations (Easterling, 2004), resulting in a hostile attitude by some stakeholders towards tourists and tourism (Murphy & Murphy, 2004). Contextually, Presenza et al., (2013) postulated that the more stakeholders are consulted and engaged in the tourism development planning, the more they will show acceptance and support for tourism development.

## Segmenting stakeholders based on their perceptions and attitudes

A careful review of the literature shows two approaches related to stakeholders' engagement in tourism development at destinations. The first one emphasizes on the identification and assessment of aspects that shape stakeholders' attitudes towards tourism development (Oviedo-Garcia et al., 2008; Presenza et al., 2013; Ven, 2015). The second approach focuses on the positive and negative impacts of tourism development on the stakeholders at a destination (Aguilo & Rossello, 2005; Dwyer, Edwards, Mistilis, Roman & Scott, 2009; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011; Stronza & Gordillo, 2008). Some studies have considered as the major stakeholder and their support for tourism development based on their assessment of the benefits and costs of tourism development Yoon, Gursoy & Chen, 2000).

Moreover, some scholars have combined both these approaches to analyses how residents/stakeholders can be classified into various segments based on their attitudes and perceptions towards tourism. For instance Fredline and Faulkner (2000) stated that identifying segments of stakeholders is an effective tool to understand reactions to tourism development at a destination. They adopted this approach to classify residents in five segments based on their reactions towards conducting major events in Gold Coast Indy in Australia i.e., ambivalent supporters, cautious romantics, haters, lovers, realists, and concerned. In another study, Andriotis and Vaughan (2003) identified three segments of residents based on their attitudes toward impacts of tourism development in Crete. These segments were named as advocates, socially and environmentally concerned and economic skeptics. They observed that segmentation is an effective procedure that can help to identify the varying degrees of perceptions toward tourism development and its impacts.

To summarize, residents and stakeholders have been classified into clusters on the basis of different factors such as geographical proximity to the destination (Amuquandoh, 2010), community attachment (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004), socio-demographic characteristics (Brida et al., 2010), positive and negative impacts (Smith & Krannich, 1998) and distinct opinions (Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003). This study emphasizes on the understanding of stakeholders' attitudes and perceptions and classifies them into various clusters based on their opinions towards tourism development at Port Dickson.

## Methodology

### Research instrument

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that affect perceptions and attitudes of stakeholders towards tourism development and discuss the divergent characteristics of the identified clusters. The instrument used to collect data included demographic questions and 19 statements to assess stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes towards tourism development. These statements were all derived from previous literature (Del Chiappa, 2012; Diedrich & Garcia-Buades, 2009; Dyer, Gursoy, Sharma & Carter, 2007; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Presenza et al., 2013). A five-point Likert scale was employed in this study starting from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

### Sample and sampling technique

The target population for this study was limited to stakeholders (hotel managers, resort managers, golf club and yacht club managers, museums and theme park managers, super markets & shop owners, taxi drivers and other business community etc.) over the age of 18 years living in Port Dickson. The survey questionnaire was distributed and collected by the Port Dickson Polytechnic students during a period of six months (February to July 2015). These students were trained for data collection and

research methods. A purposive sample was drawn for the survey where it was ensured that a proper representation from different stakeholders can be achieved. In order to reduce the referrals to participate, the purpose of the research was explained to them. A total of 250 questionnaires were returned back and of these, 19 were discarded due to missing data, which would have negatively affected the cluster analysis. The final result was 231 usable (completed in full) questionnaires. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

## Data analysis

For this study, firstly descriptive statistics were employed to assess perceptions of stakeholders (see Table 2). This results indicate that the majority of the respondents have pessimistic view regarding the economic future of Port Dickson (mean = 4.08). Most are relatively neutral about their appreciation for living in Port Dickson (mean = 3.52) and being satisfied with their life in the community (mean = 4.04). With respect to tourism development, the study reveals a generally positive opinion of the benefits that this sector can bring to Port Dickson. It was followed by an exploratory factor analysis (EFA), conducted to derive factors related to stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes towards tourism development. Validity of these factors were examined by using Cronbach's Alpha index. Using these factors, cluster analysis was then consulted to identify homogeneous groups based on degree of similarity in responses. The analysis shows mutual interest patterns across the factors developed in the EFA. Each pattern shows a segment of respondents with similar agreement level towards the statements used in the questionnaire.

Table 1  
Demographic characteristics of stakeholders

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	120	51.9%
Female	111	48.1%
<b>Age group</b>		
18-25 years old	73	31.6%
26-35 years old	49	21.2%
36-45 years old	57	24.7%
Above 45 years old	52	22.5%
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	95	41.1%
Married	136	58.9%
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Malay	163	70.6%
Chinese	21	9.1%
Indian	41	17.7%
Others	6	2.6%
<b>Education</b>		
Non formal	2	0.9%
Primary	12	5.2%
Secondary	140	60.6%
Tertiary	72	31.2%
Others	5	2.2%
Non formal	2	0.9%

Table 1 Continued

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Native to Port-Dickson</b>		
Yes	154	66.7%
No	77	33.3%
<b>Business type</b>		
Accommodation	38	16.5%
Transport	18	7.8%
Tourism services	23	10.0%
F&B	58	25.1%
Entertainment	10	4.3%
Sports	3	1.3%
Tourist attraction	19	8.2%
Others	62	26.8%
<b>Business class</b>		
Small	72	31.2%
Medium	126	54.5%
Large	33	14.3%
<b>Type of business setup</b>		
Sole proprietorship	136	58.9%
Partnership	74	32.0%
Cooperative	7	3.0%
Others	14	6.1%

Table 2  
Descriptive statistics

Statements	Mean	SD
The economic future of this area seems to me healthy and bright	4.08	0.81
I feel at home in this community	4.08	0.71
If I had to live in another community I would be displeased	3.52	1.03
It is important to maintain the traditions/culture of this community	4.13	0.69
Belonging to this community is important to me	4.04	0.74
I am generally satisfied with life in my community	4.03	0.80
The relationships between residents in this community are friendly and cordial	4.10	0.75
Overall I feel very "attached" to my community	3.98	0.77
Overall, government should promote and encourage community participation in tourism planning	4.40	0.67
Overall I feel involved and listened in the process of tourism development at Port Dickson	3.63	1.00
Local authorities are able to strike a fair balance between protecting the needs and interests of the residents with the need to increase tourist visitation	3.85	0.94
The local authorities promote tourism that enhances the identity and values expressed by the local community	3.79	0.94
The local authorities are able to effectively communicate the identity and cultural elements of my community to the tourist market	3.73	0.95
I am willing to support the tourism development at Port Dickson with financial contributions	3.85	1.03
I am willing to support the tourism development at Port Dickson personally by investing in tourism activity	3.84	0.94
I would encourage my children to undertake training and a profession in the tourism sector	3.94	0.83

Table 2 Continued

Statements	Mean	SD
Overall, the economic benefits generated by tourism development are greater than the negative ones	3.99	0.82
Overall, the positive socio-cultural impacts generated by the tourism development are greater than the negative ones	3.94	0.76
Overall, the positive environmental effects generated by tourism development are greater than the negative ones	3.93	0.88

## Results

### Exploratory factor analysis

Exploratory factor analysis was conducted by employing Principal Components Analysis (PCA) to transform the 19 items into a set of distinct factors. This was done with the intention to summarize the information related to the items into principal components for easier interpretation. All the items were subjected to PCA and only factors with eigenvalues higher than 1 were retained. As per the findings, four components were extracted and all of these accounted for 59.8% percent of the total variance in the original data set. The most important factor was named as 'Attachment to the community' which represents 38.3% of the total data variance. This factor includes items related to stakeholders' attachment to the community and related satisfaction. Second most important factor was named as 'Involvement of government' which represents 8.75% of the total data variance. This factor includes items related to the behavior of the government in tourism development and management as perceived by the stakeholders. Moreover, third factor was named as 'Inclination towards tourism development' which represents 6.95% of the total data variance. This factor includes items related to support and involvement of stakeholders towards tourism development. The last factor was named as 'Attitude towards tourism development' which represents 5.79% of the total data variance. This factor includes items related to perceived impacts of tourism development. Table 3 depicts all the four factors with their respective items, loadings and variance explained. These factors were used as the input for cluster analysis as explained in the next section.

Table 3  
Exploratory factor analysis

Statements	Attachment to community	Involvement of government	Inclination towards tourism development	Attitude towards tourism development
The economic future of this area seems to me healthy and bright	0.761			
I feel at home in this community	0.770			
If I had to live in another community I would be displeased	0.566			
It is important to maintain the traditions/culture of this community	0.563			
Belonging to this community is important to me	0.650			
I am generally satisfied with life in my community	0.623			
The relationships between residents in this community are friendly and cordial	0.761			
Overall I feel very "attached" to my community	0.806			
Overall, government should promote and encourage community participation in tourism planning		0.771		



Table 3 Continued

Statements	Attachment to community	Involvement of government	Inclination towards tourism development	Attitude towards tourism development
Overall I feel involved and listened in the process of tourism development at Port Dickson		0.625		
Local authorities are able to strike a fair balance between protecting the needs and interests of the residents with the need to increase tourist visitation		0.792		
The local authorities promote tourism that enhances the identity and values expressed by the local community		0.842		
The local authorities are able to effectively communicate the identity and cultural elements of my community to the tourist market		0.780		
I am willing to support the tourism development at Port Dickson with financial contributions			0.642	
I am willing to support the tourism development at Port Dickson personally by investing in tourism activity			0.733	
I would encourage my children to undertake training and a profession in the tourism sector			0.629	
Overall, the economic benefits generated by tourism development are greater than the negative ones				0.741
Overall, the positive socio-cultural impacts generated by the tourism development are greater than the negative ones				0.805
Overall, the positive environmental effects generated by tourism development are greater than the negative ones				0.728
Eigenvalues	7.284	1.664	1.332	1.101
Variance explained	38.3%	8.75%	6.95%	5.79%
Cumulative variance	38.3%	47.0%	54.0%	59.8%
Cronbach's alpha	0.843	0.806	0.737	0.797

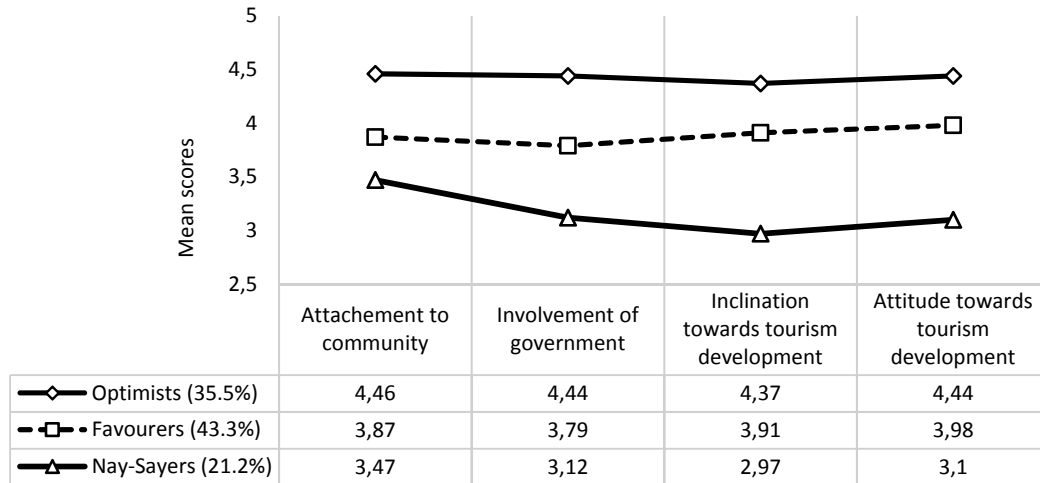
## Cluster analysis

The four factors generated were the input for the cluster analysis to classify the stakeholders in different categories. The findings showed three distinct clusters of stakeholders including Optimists (Cluster 1), Favorers (Cluster 2) and Nay-Sayers (Cluster 3). A useful statistical method to describe these clusters is to compare the mean scores of the variables for each cluster identified. Analysis of the main results provides insights about the main differences among the three groups, including Optimists, Favorers and Nay-Sayers (Figure 1). Following is a description of these three clusters.

- **Optimists:** This group is comprised of the 35.5% of the stakeholders in Port Dickson. It can be described as having the most positivity amongst all the stakeholders. They are having highest attachment to their community, higher perceptions of the involvement of government in the community, positive inclination and attitude towards tourism development at Port Dickson.
- **Favorers:** This group is the largest comprised of 43.3% of all the stakeholders in Port Dickson. It can be described as having neutral yet positive attitudes. This group feel that they are somewhat attached to their community, have neutral perceptions of the involvement of government in the community and somewhat positive inclination and attitude towards tourism development at Port Dickson. It shows that while they have neutral perceptions towards governments' involvement, they still favor the tourism development at Port Dickson.

- **Nay-Sayers:** This group is the smallest comprised of 21.2% of all the stakeholders in Port Dickson. It can be described as having negative attitudes and perceptions. This group also shows some attachment to their community but have negative perceptions about the governments' involvement in the community and negative inclination and attitude towards tourism development at Port Dickson.

Figure 1  
Clusters of stakeholders across factors



## Conclusion and implications

This study intended to investigate stakeholders' perceptions and attitudes towards tourism development in Port Dickson, Malaysia. As per the findings, four components were extracted including (i) attachment to the community, (ii) involvement of government, (iii) inclination towards tourism development and (iv) attitude towards tourism development. These findings indicate that for all the stakeholders, tourism development must be closely attached to the community. All the projects related to tourism development in Port Dickson should portray the sense of belonging to the community. Hence, the community have high expectation on the role and involvement of government agencies in assisting the community the economically, socio-culturally and environmentally. Only then, the inclination and support in terms of their attitude towards tourism development will be positive. Failing to adhering to these will result in lack of support by the stakeholders in any tourism developmental projects in Port Dickson.

Moreover, the findings from this study also reiterated the importance of developing a tourism development strategy that is in line with the needs and wants of the stakeholders so that they can benefit from it, rather than feeling like its victims. These findings also confirm the suggestions by Presenza et al. (2013) to replace the top-down planning approach with an embedded governance approach. Contextually, Go and Trunfio (2011) discussed that embedded governance is a flexible and contextually sensitive approach where the collaboration between various stakeholders i.e., government, residents and entrepreneurs is mobilized to reach a common ground. Moreover, this concept also emphasizes on developing trust between stakeholders through knowledge sharing and communication; hence, showing similarities with the concept of social capital (Inkpen & Tsang, 2005). Scholars have also stressed on the fact that local community and their traditions, culture, and authenticity, are integral part of tourism experience and main pull factors for travelers. Similarly, the role of entrepreneurs in developing destination attributes cannot be ignored too. Contrariwise, findings highlight an inconsistency

between the diffuse positive stakeholders' attitude towards tourism development and the government's concern to involve and engage the stakeholders in tourism planning.

Moreover, the results also show stakeholders' dissatisfaction towards government. With the exception of Optimists, all the other stakeholders showed their disagreement towards the statements related to the factor, 'Involvement of government'. Port Dickson is one of those Malaysian tourism destinations where the stakeholders, particularly the private sector investors, can redesign the destination in terms of space and place to be more sustainable if given power and due involvement in tourism development. However, the findings imply that in the context of Port Dickson, government has not been successful in involving the local communities and stakeholders within the process of tourism development. This is a dangerous trend especially in the case of Malaysia, where the government is considering tourism as one of the National Key Economic Areas to focus in order to become a developed nation by year 2020. Hence, as postulated by Vernon, Essex, Pinder and Curry (2005), government and other concerned leaders should also deliver vision and strategic direction. Moreover, government should become more legitimate by acting as a convener and encourage collaboration between the stakeholders (Presenza et al., 2013). In addition, governments should also work on identifying profiles of different stakeholders, monitoring their attitude and behaviour and employ different strategies to engage them in all the tourism redevelopment at a particular destination.

In general, this study highlighted the differences in the attitudes and perceptions of stakeholders towards tourism development. Based on their opinions and perceptions, stakeholders can be practically clustered into three groups including Optimists, Favorers and Nay-Sayers. All these three clusters are comprehensive for the case of Malaysian beach resort destination of Port Dickson. These findings and conclusion can be beneficial for the governments and policymakers in Malaysia and other mature tourism destinations to understand the support and concerns of stakeholders towards tourism development. Analytical tools such as cluster analysis can help governments and policymakers to take a better overview and understand the concerns of different clusters of stakeholders. This information can then be used to develop strategies for responding appropriately.

Moreover, this study also highlighted that different stakeholders have difference of opinions and perceptions towards tourism development, its economic, environmental, and socio-cultural benefits and support for tourism development. This implies a low integration level between stakeholders, hence, governments should take measures to develop and enhance stakeholders' involvement and commitment to tourism planning and branding. Stakeholders in mature destinations may show less enthusiastic as compared to those in new and growing tourism destinations (Presenza et al., 2013); hence, governments should consistently engage all the stakeholders at mature destinations in tourism development. Moreover, since stakeholders share tangible and intangible resources in a destination, involving them can improve the effectiveness of tourism development initiatives. These findings are in line with the previous studies. For instance, Zahra (2011) stated that "*tourism collaboration stems from the notion of communicative action, which assumes that unimpeded communication between tourism actors will deliver shared understanding, negotiation of trade-offs and thus consensus*" (p. 536). Having an on-board and intra-stakeholders representation of all the stakeholders can result in their true participation and involvement. Hence, all the relevant groups must be identified, represented, and involved for tourism development.

Stakeholder participation in tourism development implies the change of traditional top-down governance method towards a more decentralized approach. Hall (2011, p.442) commented that "*the development of an appropriate typology of governance is not based on a haphazard shopping list but dependent on the relationships that exist between the different actors and the modes of steering development and initiatives that range from hierarchical top-down steering to non-hierarchical approaches*". While the

top-down governance method results in benefits such as compensation and employment, the decentralized approach results in proper involvement and empowerment of stakeholders. This empowerment of stakeholders is in the sense that they have control over the tourism management and development at destinations (Hall & Lew, 1998; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Recent scholars have also discussed various implications of empowering the stakeholders such as having a sense of ownership and belonging and significant economic and cultural developments (Vargas-Sanchez, Porras-Bueno & Plaza-Mejia, 2011).

However, owing to a number of constraints, it is not always possible to have a meaningful involvement of all the stakeholders in tourism planning. Examples of these constraints include lower levels of awareness and competencies, lack of financial support and investment capital, lack of government support and apathy of different actors etc. (Hanafiah, Hemdi & Ahmad, 2016; Nyaupane, Morais & Dowler, 2006; Presenza et al., 2013). Similar to any other destination, these constraints may also prove to be significant in the case of Port Dickson, Malaysia. Hence, the local government and District Office should facilitate the negotiations among the stakeholders and make suitable arrangements i.e., meetings and focus group discussions to motivate them towards involvement and participation in tourism development.

Similar to any other studies, this study also has some limitations which may act as a springboard for further research. Firstly, this study was focused on a mature beach resort destination in Malaysia i.e., Port Dickson. Hence, the findings may be generalized with caution. Using the factorial structure and clusters developed, further studies may be conducted on similar beach destinations to compare the findings. Moreover, further studies may also propose and evaluate different methods to encourage stakeholders' participation and support towards tourism development.

## References

- Aguilo, E. & Rossello, J. (2005). Host community perceptions. A cluster analysis. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(4), 925-941.
- Ajzen, I. & Fishbein, M. (1980). *Understanding attitudes and predicting social behaviour*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Amuquandoh, F. E. (2010). Residents' perceptions of the environmental impacts of tourism in the Lake Bosomtwe Basin, Ghana. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 18(2), 223-238.
- Andriotis, K. & Vaughan, D. R. (2003). Urban residents' attitudes towards tourism development: The case of Crete. *Journal of Travel Research*, 42(2), 172-185.
- Ap, J. (1992). Residents' perceptions of tourism impacts. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 19(1), 665-690.
- Baggio, R. & Sainaghi, R. (2011). Complex and chaotic tourism systems: towards a quantitative approach. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 23(6), 840-861.
- Baggio, R., Scott, N. & Cooper, C. (2010). Network science - a review focused on tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37(3), 802-827.
- Bramwell, B. & Lane, B. (2011). Critical research on the governance of tourism and sustainability. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 19(4-5), 411-421.
- Brida, J. G., Osti, L. & Faccioli, M. (2011). Residents' perception and attitudes towards tourism impacts: A case study of the small rural community of Folgaria (Trentino-Italy). *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 18(3), 359-385.
- Brida, J.G., Del Chiappa, G., Meleddu, M. & Pulina, M. (2014). A comparison of residents' perceptions in two cruise ports in the Mediterranean. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 16(2), 180-190.
- Brida, J.G., Osti, L. & Barquet, A. (2010). Segmenting resident perceptions towards tourism—a cluster analysis with a multinomial logit model of a mountain community. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 12(5), 591-602.
- Chen, S. & Raab, C. (2012). Predicting resident intentions to support community tourism: Toward and integration of two theories. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 21(3), 270-294.

- Deccio, C. & Baloglu, S. (2002). Non-host community resident reactions to the 2002 Winter Olympics: The spillover impacts. *Journal of Travel Research*, 41(1), 46-56.
- Del Chiappa, G. (2012). Community integration: a case study of Costa Smeralda, Italy. In: E. Fayos-Sola, J. Silva & J. Jafari (Eds.), *Knowledge management in tourism: Policy and governance applications bridging tourism theory and practice* (pp. 243-263). Bingley: Emerald.
- Department of Statistics Malaysia. (2016). *Domestic Tourism Survey Report 2014, Malaysia*. Retrieved 08 Jan 2016, from <https://www.statistics.gov.my>.
- Diedrich, A. & Garcia-Buades, E. (2009). Local perceptions of tourism as indicators of destination decline. *Tourism Management*, 30(4), 512-521.
- Dwyer, L., Edwards, D., Mistilis, N., Roman, C. & Scott, N. (2009). Destination and enterprise management for a tourism future. *Tourism Management*, 30(1), 63-74.
- Dyer, P., Gursoy, D., Sharma, B. & Carter, J. (2007). Structural modeling of resident perceptions of tourism and associated development on the Sunshine Coast, Australia. *Tourism Management*, 28(2), 409-422.
- Easterling, D. (2004). The residents' perspective in tourism research: A review and synthesis. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 17(4), 45-62.
- Ellis, S. & Sheridan, L. (2015). The role of resident perceptions in achieving effective community-based tourism for least developed countries. *Anatolia*, 26(2), 244-257.
- Formica, S. & Uysal, M. (1996). The revitalization of Italy as a tourist destination. *Tourism Management*, 17(5), 32-331.
- Fredline, E. & Faulkner, B. (2000). Host community reactions: a cluster analysis. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27(3), 763-784.
- Go, F. M. & Trunfo, M. (2011). Twenty years of tourism development research: A strategic market forces perspective. In P. Keller & T. Bieger (Eds.), *Tourism development after the crisis* (pp. 229-242). Sant Gallen: AIEST.
- Gursoy, D. & Rutherford, D. (2004). Host attitudes toward tourism. An improved structural model. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(3), 495-516.
- Gursoy, D., Chi, C. G. & Dyer, P. (2010). Locals' attitudes toward mass and alternative tourism: The case of Sunshine Coast, Australia. *Journal of Travel Research*, 49(3), 381-394.
- Hall, C. M. (2011). A typology of governance and its implications for tourism policy analysis. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 19(4-5), 437-457.
- Hall, C. M. & Lew, A. (1998). *Sustainable tourism development: Geographical perspectives*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Hanafiah, M. H., Hemdi, M. A. & Ahmad, I. (2016). Does tourism destination competitiveness lead to performance? A case of ASEAN region. *Tourism: An International Journal*, 64(3), 251-260.
- Inkpen, A. C. & Tsang, E. W. K. (2005). Social capital, networks, and knowledge transfer. *Academy of Management Review*, 30(1), 111-165.
- Kibicho, W. (2008). Community-based tourism: A factor-cluster segmentation approach. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 16(2), 211-231.
- Lankford, S. V. (2001). A comment concerning: Developing and testing a tourism impact scale. *Journal of Travel Research*, 39(3), 315-316.
- Leiper, N. (2004). *Tourism management*. Frenchs Forest: Pearson Education Australia.
- March, R. & Wilkinson, I. (2009). Conceptual tools for evaluating tourism partnerships. *Tourism Management*, 30(3), 455-462.
- McGahey, S. (2012). The ethics, obligations, and stakeholders of ecotourism marketing. *Intellectual Economics*, 6(2), 75-88.
- Murphy, P. E. (1985). *Tourism: A community approach*. New York: Routledge.
- Murphy, P. E. & Murphy, A. E. (2004). *Strategic management for tourism communities: bridging the gaps*. Clevedon: Channel View Publications.
- Nunkoo, R. & Gursoy, D. (2012). Residents' support for tourism: An identity perspective. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(1), 243-268.

- Nunkoo, R. & Ramkissoon, H. (2011). Developing a community support model for tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(3), 964-988.
- Nyaupane, G. P., Morais, D. B. & Dowler, L. (2006). The role of community involvement and number/type of visitors on tourism impacts: a controlled comparison of Annapurna, Nepal and Northwest Yunnan, China. *Tourism Management*, 27(6), 1373-1385.
- Oviedo-Garcia, M. A., Castellanos-Verdugo, M. & Martin-Ruiz, D. (2008). Gaining residents' support for tourism and planning. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 10(2), 95-109.
- Presenza, A., Del Chiappa, G. & Sheehan, L. (2013). Residents' engagement and local tourism governance in maturing beach destinations: Evidence from an Italian case study. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 2(1), 23-30.
- Pulina, M., Meleddu, M. & Del Chiappa, G. (2013). Residents' choice probability and tourism development. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 5, 57-67.
- Ritchie, B. & Inkari, M. (2006). Host Community attitudes toward tourism and cultural tourism development: the case of the Lewes district Southern England. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 8(1), 27-44.
- Ritchie, J. R. B. & Crouch, G. I. (2003). *The competitive destination: A sustainable tourism perspective*. Wallingford (UK): CABI Publishing.
- Sainaghi, R. (2006). From contents to processes: versus a dynamic destination management model (DDMM). *Tourism Management*, 27(5), 1053-1063.
- Sdrail, D., Goussia-Rizou, M. & Kiourtidou, P. (2015). Residents' perception of tourism development as a vital step for participatory tourism plan: A research in a Greek protected area. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 17(4), 923-939.
- Secretariat PWT Port Dickson (2011). *Blueprint: Beach Resort Destination, Wellness Zone and Army Town of Port Dickson*. State Government, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.
- Simpson, K. & Bretherton, P. (2009). The impact of community attachment on host society attitudes and behaviors towards visitors. *Tourism and Hospitality Planning and Development*, 6(3), 235-246.
- Smith, M. & Krannich, R. (1998). Tourism dependence and resident attitudes. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 25(4), 783-801.
- Stronza, A. & Gordillo, J. (2008). Community Views of Ecotourism: Redefining Benefits. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(2), 444-468.
- Timur, S. & Getz, D. (2008). A network perspective on managing stakeholders for sustainable urban tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 20(4), 445-461.
- Tourism Malaysia (2016). *Facts and Figures Overview 2014*. Retrieved on 08 Jan 2016, from <http://www.tourism.gov.my/statistics>.
- Tourism Malaysia. Retrieved from <http://www.tourismmalaysia.com.my>.
- Vargas-Sanchez, A., Porras-Bueno, N. & Plaza-Mejia, M. (2011). Explaining residents' attitudes to tourism. Is a universal model possible? *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(2), 460-480.
- Ven, S. (2015). Residents' participation, perceived impacts, and support for community-based ecotourism in Cambodia: A latent profile analysis. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*. DOI: 10.1080/10941665.2015.1075565.
- Vernon, J., Essex, S., Pinder, D. & Curry, K. (2005). Collaborative policymaking. Local sustainable projects. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(2), 325-345.
- Yoon, Y., Gursoy, D. & Chen, J. S. (2000). Validating a tourism development theory with structural equation modelling. *Tourism Management*, 22(1), 363-372.
- Zahra, A. L. (2011). Rethinking regional tourism governance: The principle of subsidiarity. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 19(4-5), 535-552.

Submitted: 30/10/2016

Accepted: 16/05/2017