



Social Impact Assessment in Measuring Environmental Sustainability in Tourism Project Development: Trends in the Existing Literature

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ABSTRACT

In development planning, there is an urgent call on the preparation of Social Impact Assessment (SIA) in order to measure the sustainability of the proposed new development and its surroundings, mainly the community affected by the result of environmental and physical changes. However, issues arise as to how certain development projects such as tourism, which allow visitors and tourists arrival, will cope with the future carrying capacity. There is evidence that current approach on the SIA is not able to provide detail on the implication of development especially associated with tourism activities and its influence to the environment and its living community. This paper will examine the debate on what are the attributes of environmental sustainability relevant to tourist demand and its specific measurement. The understanding is important as a guidance to the physical development where the development must comply with the national agenda and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). The result of the review is expected to provide a perspective of the key attributes in self-regulation of any approval projects and currently in progress. While the knowledge of environmental science provides a good projection on physical aspects and appropriate green technology, this paper on the other hand, gives an insight on social impact related to the physical development from a sustainable built environment point of view.

Keywords:

Social impact assessment, Environmental sustainability and community, Tourist arrival

1. Introduction

Why is SIA important in Malaysia's development context?

The idea of Social Impact Assessment (SIA) as highlighted in the Report Preparation Manual by PLANMalaysia [1] indicates that the purpose is to guide the development through the physical aspects. The content is mainly referred for the use of SIA consultants in the preparation of SIA reports with quality output and able to help in the process of making effective decisions in managing social issues resulting from a development project. It also can be used for the purpose of self-regulation on any project that has been approved or is underway in which the development foresees management of social issues. Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is generally accepted for many categories of projects especially involving high scale development projects and infrastructure. However, referring to the existing Social Impact Assessment (SIA) reports produced in Malaysia, none of it directly look at

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complexity of tourism development, especially the impact as result of tourist arrival in the future, or in the other word, demand from the outbound user and not the community living in the area of development.

Why must tourism development consider tourists in the SIA assessment?

Tourism has the characteristics of demand and supply. Demand aspects such as the needs and wants of tourists will influence what is happening in the future of the development area. This is due to the motivation and their expectation according to facilities that are provided and as to how it meets the needs of tourists. Based on this, typology of tourist and tourism recreational spectrum influences the possible impacts depending on the activities and type of physical development. Do the SIA foresee this aspect of tourist demand? This issue and problem arise when the existing components of the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) according to the manual and report may not actually take into account the characteristics of the visitor's demand. These involve tourist attitudes, tourist motivation, expectations and tourist satisfaction that directly and indirectly determine spending and behavior in the tourism development area. Considerations for SIA in the tourism-based development areas such as resorts, theme parks and coastal areas with high population densities arquely not able to examine potential actual tourist presence. Thus, this paper attempts to address the issue of the consideration of tourist demand in SIA assessment and into perspective of how the potential presence of tourists in the development of tourism-based areas are being considered.

2. Methods

To understand the issues and aspects that need to be considered in SIA and surrounding environment development related to tourism, a bibliometric review analysis on the existing literature (book, journal and report) is required. Bibliometric review analysis is one of the methods in providing perspective of what aspects or themes that have been previously studied. According to literature, bibliometric review analysis is defined as a quantitative study of bibliographic material (data) and provides a general picture of a research field that research papers, authors, and fields attempted to bring. This review can be put into categories. Similarly, it is also being seen as the method for measuring researchers' productivity.

3. Analysis and Discussion

With reference to the existing SIA manual by PLANMalaysia, there are several components of development that can indirectly link to tourism development. In general, the three categories are associated with potential development to support the tourism economy. As shown in Table 1, Category 1 such as Coastal Redemption and National Infrastructure development was constructed usually to cater tourism projects. Both categories in many ways purposely design to serve and accommodate tourist arrival. Similarly, Category 2 might as well be associated with tourism where development of new areas of urbanization usually involves many entertainment and recreational settings, as well as development in the hill or hinterland. Category 3 clearly indicates the specific nature of development for a tourist-built environment related to tourism such as theme park and entertainment centre. What might be arque is as to how the attributes of potential tourists in the short term and long term might cause the social impact and whether this was considered in the preparation of SIA.

Table 1
SIA by category associated with on tourism development

Category	Type of Development	Development Characteristic
CATEGORY 1		
1. Coastal Redemption	Coastal reclamation, including artificial islands.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Covers 50 hectares or more; and b. Excludes reclamation for jetty construction or beach restoration
2. Main National Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. International Airport; b. Domestic Airports; and c. Military Airport. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Involves passenger and cargo airports; and b. Includes upgrading projects involving area expansion in excess of 50% of existing area, or construction of new runways, involving land acquisition.
CATEGORY 2		
1. New Urbanization	New Urbanization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Area exceeding 100 hectares or population exceeding 10,000 people; and b. Resulting in the resettlement of existing communities.
2. Development on the Top or Slope of A Hill	Peak or hillside areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Development as per the Act 172 Implementation Guide: Application for Development Proposal Under Paragraph 22 (A) (c), Act 172 (PPA 13) involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area \geq 20 hectares; • A development area is an area with more than 50% of the area with a slope of 25°; • High density development proposal of \geq 40 units per acre (100 units per hectare) for housing proposal and \geq 1: 4 plot ratio for business.
CATEGORY 3		
1. Entertainment centre/theme parks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Entertainment centre; and b. Theme parks 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. New construction includes upgrading projects on a scale that contributes to the sensitivity of the surrounding community; and b. There are settlements in the vicinity that are feared to affect the quality of life and cause disturbance and other impacts.

Sources: PLANMalaysia (Jabatan Perancangan Bandar dan Desa) [1]

In summary the idea of the review indicates two aspects; Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and tourism development. Both require understanding within the context of supply and demand. In this context, demand from the potential result of tourist arrival is the key of what might impart to the community.

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) Context

Within the context of SIA, it was seen as a process of research, planning and management of change or social consequences (positive and negative, intentional and unintentional) arising from

policies, plans, developments and projects. It involves all types of development and can be measured either before or after the development is implemented. Processes that include specific accomplishments, deliveries and products such as reports and plans. For example, resettlement plans and sociocultural analysis, at appropriate times during the project cycle especially after it is implemented [12]. The purpose is to provide guidance through the physical aspects for the use of SIA consultants in the preparation of SIA reports so that it is quality and can play a role in assisting in the effective decision-making process in managing social issues from a development project.

Tourism Development Context

Within the context of tourism three main aspect must be fully understood in order to add value the SIA, as below:

a. Community Versus Development Aspects

Tourism impact viewed as the changes brought by the tourism development process or the network of development events as a result of tourist arrival. Thus, the impact of tourism is more than the result of a particular event or tourism facility. This effect arises in the form of changing human behavior and stems from interactions between tourist and community in the short and long terms [2].

b. Relationship Model

Three main aspects are closely related to each other in tourism related development which are physical, economic and socio-cultural impacts. Based on this, the impact of development consequently impacts the future of the project area, namely the dynamic element, the static element and the consequence element [2]. Another point of view is the theory of Doxey's Irridex that describes the tourist effect referring to host-visitor relationship involving tourist, host (community) and tourist-host interaction.

c. Attribute or Variable Associate SIA

Purdue, Long and Allen [14] have found that the relationship between hosts and visitors is influenced by the variable of benefits and costs earned. King, Pizam and Milnan [16] in a study in Fiji have found that the local population depends on the tourism industry and work in the sector have a good support and trust and positive towards the development even though they know that not all aspects brought by such tourism activities is good impact to the existing community structure. In addition, Jansen-Verbeke [2] suggested the benefit from tourist arrival requires the need to identify and understand tourists. In this context, Jafar [3] has addressed that the focus on the tourists and their typology will be able to help explain the potential impacts from future development. Tourist motivation is the prediction of what is the tourist behavior that may cause interaction with the local community. This attribute is a must to be examined in order to project potential as part of SIA.

4. Results and Further Inquiries

As highlighted above, within the context of SIA and tourism development, several perspectives and issues need to be addressed for further investigation.

- a. Why is there a need to look at the perspective of the impact of tourism on community social studies in the SIA as a manual?
- b. What are the actual criteria that need to be considered taking into account the concept of demand and supply in the field of tourism to strengthen the SIA study?

- c. To what extent does the social impact assessment (SIA) manual in Malaysia consider the demand and supply aspects of tourism in its impact assessment?

Further study has to identify the impact perspective of tourism on communities to be studied in the SIA. The criteria must take into account the concept of demand and supply in the field of tourism. The tourist arrival impact should be seen as influential as a factor that causes the change of the proposed development in the future.

5. Conclusions

This study will contribute to a better understanding of more specific aspects such as tourism within the SIA. For example, tourism demand is not considered in the manual which has a long-term impact due to the presence factor of tourists and visitors. The factor is critical to understand the influence of physical planning and the impact on the social of the community.

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