

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN ORGANIZING
HOMESTAY PROGRAM
CASE STUDY: HOMESTAY SINARAN BARU, SENAI, JOHOR

IZYAN NADZIRAH BINTI MOHAMAD NOH

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

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IZYAN NADZIRAH BINTI MOHAMAD NOH

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I dedicate this thesis, first and foremost, to my family members and beloved one who have given me their support in this course of study.

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ABSTRACT

Women empowerment in organizing homestay program in Community-Based Tourism was examined in this research study. In many developing countries, promoting women's empowerment to contribute in tourism industry is one of the strategies that implemented to reduce poverty thus improve their standard of living. In Malaysia, women have been empowered by their involvement in homestay industry. Homestay Sinaran Baru was used as a study area to view the nature of women empowerment through tourism activities. The objective of this research is to identify the characteristics, women involvement and motivation factors of women empowerment in organizing homestay Sinaran Baru program. The analysis has found most of women homestay entrepreneurs are in the age of forties to sixties and above with primary to secondary level of education with majority of these women are house wife. Self-employment in involving homestay entrepreneur is especially important for women who have difficulty finding employment because of the limitations imposed by education, age, social marginality or language. These women are highly involved in certain services as homestay provider. The various combinations of these make each situation unique, to a greater or lesser extent. The role of women homestay entrepreneur that prescribe appropriate behaviors for them to involved in organizing homestay program in Community-Based Tourism were shaped from various aspects. The social benefits of homestay entrepreneur viewed by women are significantly influenced by pull and push motivation factors suggesting that these women become entrepreneurs due to community based activities through tourism ventures. Homestay accommodation ensures stable earnings for the operators as they operate it as an alternative and extra income sources with their main occupation. The fact that involvement, motivation and empowerment of these women entrepreneurs are significantly related to economic, social and environmental sustainability that shows these women homestay entrepreneurs are more likely to grow in and see the potential of tourism sector which is fast growing industry in the Malaysian economy.

ABSTRAK

Memperkasakan wanita dalam mengorganisasikan program homestay dibawah Pelancongan Berasaskan Komuni telah dapat dikenalpasti dalam kajian ini. Di kebanyakan negara membangun, memperkasakan wanita amat digalakkan bagi menyumbang dalam industri pelancongan adalah salah satu strategi yang dilaksanakan untuk mengurangkan kemiskinan dan dapat meningkatkan taraf hidup mereka. Objektif bagi kajian ini adalah untuk mengenal pasti ciri-ciri, penglibatan wanita dan faktor motivasi memperkasakan wanita dalam mengorganisasikan program homestay Sinaran Baru. Analisis kajian mendapati kebanyakan wanita sebagai pengusaha homestay adalah dalam kategori usia empat puluhan ke enam puluhan dan ke atas dengan tahap pendidikan peringkat rendah sehingga peringkat menengah dengan majoriti wanita-wanita ini adalah suri rumah. Bekerja sendiri sebagai pengusaha homestay adalah sangat penting bagi wanita yang mempunyai kesukaran mencari pekerjaan kerana taraf pendidikan, umur, tahap sosial dan penguasaan bahasa yang kurang mahir. Wanita-wanita ini hanya terlibat dalam beberapa perkhidmatan sebagai pengusaha homestay. Peranan wanita sebagai pengusaha homestay yang menentukan keinginan mereka untuk terlibat sama dalam mengorganisasikan program homestay, pelancongan berasaskan komuniti yang terbentuk dari pelbagai aspek. Faedah sosial usahawan homestay yang dilihat oleh wanita adalah dipengaruhi oleh faktor motivasi 'pull' dan 'push' serta mencadangkan wanita-wanita ini untuk menjadi usahawan dalam sektor pelancongan berasaskan perkhidmatan. Homestay memastikan pendapatan yang stabil bagi pengusahanya walaupun mereka melaksanakan sebagai satu alternatif dan sumber pendapatan tambahan dengan melakukan pekerjaan utama mereka. Hakikatnya penglibatan, motivasi dan memperkasakan usahawan wanita mempunyai signifikan dengan ekonomi, sosial dan kemampanan alam sekitar yang menunjukkan wanita-wanita sebagai pengusaha homestay ini mampu meningkat dan berpotensi dalam sektor pelancongan yang pesat membangun dalam ekonomi negara Malaysia.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CBT	-	Community-Based Tourism
IKS	-	Industri Kecil Sederhana
JKK	-	Jawatan Kuasa Kampung
KPW	-	Kumpulan Persatuan Wanita
SME	-	Small Medium Enterprise

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This research was conducted to understand about women empowerment in organizing homestay program. Among the keywords that will be used are tourism, Community-Based Tourism, women empowerment and homestay program.

This chapter provides the overall view of this research, which includes the research background, problem statement, objectives, research questions, theoretical framework, study area, scope of study and research outline. The components in this chapter are important for readers to get the general understanding of the focus and purpose of this study.

1.2 Research Background

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world. Tourism in Malaysia has become the second contributor to the income of the country. The society plays an important role in ensuring tourism industry will sustain in the long run (Noraini, 2011). Based on Holland, Burian & Dixey (2003), the top places of tourism destinations, particularly in developing countries include national parks, wilderness areas, mountains, lakes and also cultural sites which are most of the destinations are from rural area as it called as rural tourism.

Rural tourism is broadly defined by past researchers as tourism which takes place in rural areas and is run by small firms own by families of the local communities which are often related to production of local agricultural products and local cultural activities (Dimitrovski, Todorovic & Valjarevic, 2012; Ghaderi & Henderson, 2012). Rural tourism destinations are famous among tourists who enjoy unique travel experiences, such as peaceful relaxation, inspiration, recreation, education and local cultural and entertainment. Rural tourism in Malaysia is commonly perceived as having large number of rural communities in which each rural area is equipped with distinct and varied assets. Rural tourism is found to have brought benefits to the local communities in terms of their economic growth, social cultural aspect, services, standard of living and these have built up positive attitudes and behaviour of the local communities towards tourism development.

Involvement of local communities in tourism activities can provide a variety of positive impact on them. Buhalis (2003) stressed that the involvement of local communities in tourism activities can help them raise their economic, social and cultural. Residents will have the opportunity to work, selling local produce and commercialize the results of other companies related to tourism activities. By

carrying out these activities, they will have the opportunity to gain knowledge and experience to further enhance the social level. From the aspect of improving the culture, it includes improvements to the understanding and appreciation of the culture, heritage and values held by local communities. According to Murphy (1988), the involvement of the local communities can also be used as a tool for maintaining the uniqueness of each community.

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) has been acknowledged as a tool for community development through tourism projects (Yusnita *et al.*, 2012). Community-Based Tourism is one of rural tourism that benefits to local people which is promoted as a means of development takes social, environment and economic needs of local communities besides offering the tourism product for local communities. Community-Based Tourism is able to create direct employment opportunities as well as increasing income levels and reducing the level of poverty in rural communities. Development of Community-Based Tourism activities can strengthen a social institution (Brohman, 1996). This situation exists because the local communities cooperate with one another for the uniqueness that exists in society. Every society adhering to the tools inherited from previous generations passed down through the socialization process. Homestay program is one of the elements in Community-Based Tourism in rural cultural tourism products. The government has given emphasis to the development of rural tourism as a tourism development strategy in this country.

Homestay is a form of tourism and a study abroad that allows a visitor to rent a room from a local family in a home like setting. It is sometimes used for improving language skills and getting familiar with the local lifestyle. Homestays can occur anywhere in the world, but certain countries encourage homestay as a means of developing their tourism industry. Hosting a homestay participant also allows the local family to earn income. Loscocco & Smith-Hunter, (2004), shown that women who own home-based businesses face less family conflict than those who run their

businesses outside the home and because their primary priority remains their family and their roles within the family.

Homestay industry is also seen as a “community-based ecotourism venture”, a term propagated by scholars to accentuate the benefits gained by the local community whose life, to varying degrees, is touched by tourism activities (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996). This developmental approach to tourism is likely to empower the local community at psychological, social, political and economic levels (Scheyvens, 1999). Local communities, including women must be allowed to effectively involve in the decision-making process through tourism development. Thus, tourism industry provide an opportunities for local women in rural area to participate in tourism development through their involvement into business and entrepreneurs activities related to tourism industry that can generate income and improving their living (Wilkinson & Pratiwi, 1995).

Most women across the globe rely on the informal work sector for an income. If women were empowered to do more and be more, the possibility for economic growth becomes apparent. Empowering women in developing countries is essential to reduce global poverty since women represent most of the world’s poor population. Therefore, women also can develop the empowerment of women by involved in tourism industry through homestay program in Community-Based Tourism. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional process which should enable individuals or a group of individuals to realise their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. It consist of greater access to knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision making to enable them to have greater ability to plan their lives, or have greater control over the circumstances that influence their lives and free them from shackles imposed on them by custom, belief and practice. Generally, development with justice is expected to generate the forces that lead to empowerment of various sections of population in a country and to raise their status.

But, power is not a commodity to be transacted. Power cannot be given away as alms. Power has to be acquired and once acquired it needs to be exercised, sustained and preserved. Women have to empower themselves. Unless they themselves become conscious of their oppression, show initiative and seize the opportunities, it would not be possible to change their status (Sumanlata, 2010).

Women's equality in power sharing and active participation in decision making, including decision making in political process at all levels will be ensured for the achievement of the goals of empowerment. Women friendly personnel policies will also be drawn up to encourage women to participate effectively in the developmental process. Women are motivated by opportunities in term of employment, business ventures and skills development, as well as the chance to control over their resources (Ashley *et al.*, 2001). Promoting women's empowerment by participating in tourism development could be provide an opportunities for women to generate income and improving their living thus can reduce poverty (Scheyvens 2000). Therefore, women also can develop the empowerment of women by involved in tourism industry through homestay program in Community-Based Tourism.

In context of empowering women, Kabeer, N. (2001), stressed that having resources including economic, human and social achievement and the factor agency which is the ability to define one's goal and to add upon them will empower women to make strategic choices in their lives. In addition, economic gains and independence have been shown to bring about greater empowerment for women. Then, there should be the impact of the success that women achieve in order to be empowering in this sector. Hence, this study will be focusing on the determining women empowerment that already exists in particulate area through homestay program in Community Based Tourism.

1.3 Problem Statement

Homestay is a new accommodation arrangement in tourism industry. It is a potential and prospective accommodation system in tourism sector. Homestay accommodation gives focus on traditional life style, local culture and customs to attract the tourists. This accommodation gives interaction opportunities to the tourists with local communities, cultural heritage, natural environment and social consistency.

Homestay can ensure economic, social and cultural benefits for local communities as well as sustainable development (Chaiyatorn, Kaoses & Thitphat, 2010). Homestay provides job opportunities for local communities and improves qualities of life for local people (Bhuiyan, Siwar, Ismail & Islam, 2011). Some necessary components for homestay are educational opportunities, entertainment facilities, food availabilities, proper arrangement of accommodation and hospitality (Levitt, 1986). The participation of local people is influencing on social return from homestay accommodations. When the tourism industry depends entirely on local culture and natural resources, it requires the involvement of the local communities to control it (Lilywhite & Lilywhite, 1991). This is because the successful operation of homestay depends on active participation of local communities. Homestay operators can contribute in various programs for improving the life standard of local communities.

Homestay program give focus on economic development and social enhancement of the operators (Bhuiyan *et al*, 2012). According to the Malaysian Homestay Association (MHA), foreign tourists from Japan, Australia, Korea and domestic tourists mainly students are the important client for homestay accommodations (Kayat, 2007). Homestay accommodation ensures stable earnings

for the operators. They can operate this program as an alternative and extra income sources with their main occupation (Anowar *et al.*, 2013)

The participation of women in the homestay industry is a growing phenomenon, yet research in this area is limited especially in Malaysia (Intan *et al.*, 2010). Intan *et al.*, (2010), reveals that majority of the women homestay entrepreneurs are between the ages of 41 years to 60 years with 89.9 percent completed their lower secondary education, fully own but operate the homestay business as a part time basis. They were motivated by the “pull factors”, personal satisfaction, passion and encouragement by friends as opposed to the “push factors” which are more to the economic depression, unemployment, retrenchment and dissatisfaction with their former jobs.

In addition, these women experienced a moderate to high level of empowerment, especially in terms of getting access to training and education services, as well as making decisions on matters related to the business. Meanwhile, this study must be proceeded to identify the characteristics, women involvement in Homestay Sinaran Baru and the motivational factors of women empowerment in organizing Homestay program.

1.4 Research Objectives

In order to achieve the aim, the following research objectives are formulated:

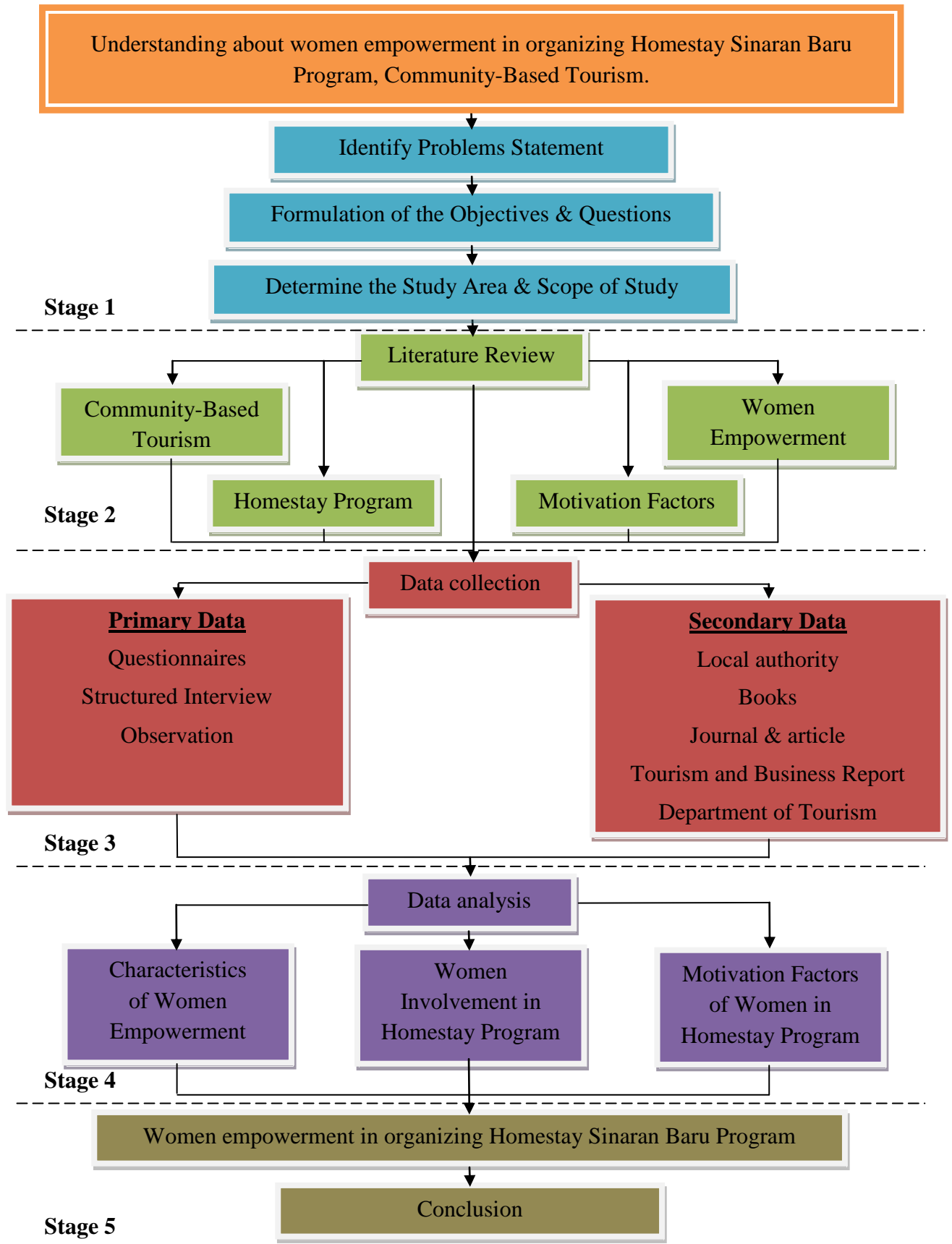
1. To identify the characteristics of women empowerment in organizing Homestay Sinaran Baru program.
2. To identify on women involvement in Homestay Sinaran Baru.
3. To analyse the motivation factors of women empowerment in organizing Homestay Sinaran Baru program.

1.5 Research Questions

The specific research questions dealt here are:

1. What are the characteristics of women empowerment in organizing Homestay Sinaran Baru program?
2. In which part do these women involved in homestay program?
3. What are the motivation factors of women empowerment in organizing homestay program?

1.6 Theoretical Framework



This theoretical framework is divided into five stages;

Stage 1 & 2 – Preliminary Stage

The preliminary stage of the study will include stage 1 and stage 2 where the problem statement, objectives, research questions, study area and scope of study will be refined. In stage 2, the literature reviewed is aimed as the foundation of the research which basically includes the definition, concepts, principles and other information related to the topic. Sources of information are gathered from books, journals, articles, reports, internet, seminar papers and other research publications

Stage 3 – Data Collection

The data to be collected in this study will be a combination of the primary and the secondary data. This study uses quantitative and qualitative methods based on the objectives and variables. From the primary data, field surveys will be conducted with a woman who is the coordinator of Homestay Sinaran Baru. The observation, structured interview and questionnaire will be conducted in this research study. The purpose of this method is to identify and find out the assessment and evaluation of women empowerment from the scope of the study. The secondary data to support this research will be obtained from related books, journals, reports, statistics and studies published.

Stage 4 – Data Analysis

The analysis of the data will be carried out from the technique used, which is quantitative and qualitative method. This method will be modified to cater from the form of data that have been collected. Quantitative data were recorded and analyzed using SPSS software once the data collected has been completed. The data will be discussed in term of the characteristics and motivation factors of women empowerment in organizing Homestay Sinaran Baru program. The qualitative data collected will be discussed in terms of women involvement in this homestay program.

Stage 5 – Discussion & Conclusion

The final stage of the study is the formulation of the conclusion regarding women empowerment in organizing Homestay Program, Community-Based Tourism. This stage is based on the survey and the discussion in the structured interview and the questionnaires that were conducted during stage 4 and related to the objectives of the study.

1.7 Study Area & Scope of Study

The study area is Homestay Sinaran Baru, which is located on the fringe of Johor Bahru, as one of the most successful homestay programs in Johor. Homestay Sinaran Bahru easily reached from Senai International Airport, located 25 kilometres away from Johor Bahru and 15 kilometres away from the airports, and it provides a golden opportunity for this homestay in terms of accessibility. In addition, Homestay Sinaran Baru is the nearest homestay to Singapore border in the terms of distance and the accessibility from Singapore have been provided by asphalt road.

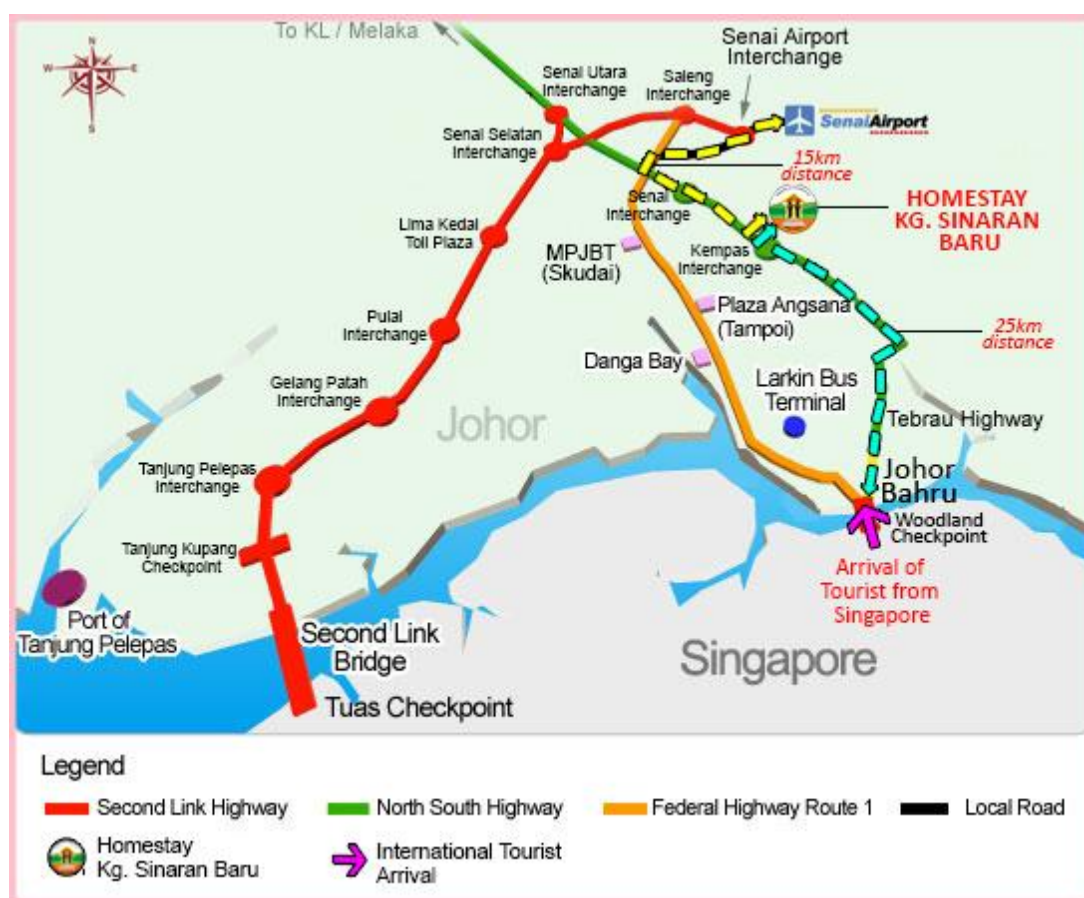


Diagram 1.1 Map of Homestay Sinaran Baru

Homestay Sinaran Baru was established in the year 2006 by Puan Norbi Bin Ahmad, who is the coordinator for the homestay program in Kampung Sinaran Baru. Regarding to Puan Norbi, the homestay program was first started with only three villages were included in it. They were Kampung Sinaran Baru, Kampung Sri Aman and Kampung Tawakal. Two more villages, Kampung Pemuda Jaya and Kampung Impian Jaya were joined the Homestay Sinaran Baru program on 2009 and it brings the total number of participants to 49.

The early history of the opening of this village was when a group of explorer lead by Haji Mohd bin Osman in the year 1969. The name Sinaran Baru, if it's directly translated, it will mean new light. This name is taken because it is situated between two villages namely Kampung Maju Jaya and Kampung Pemuda Jaya which all means towards success. Hence, the name 'Sinaran Baru' is to give inspiration for the new people in the village to keep on achieving success for their brighter future (Ministry of Tourism Malaysia, 2014).

According to the Ministry of Tourism Johor, Homestay Sinaran Baru is one of the most successful homestay programs in Johor, based on the number of visitors' arrival. For the first time they were operated, they have received a group of 60 Japanese travellers who visited Homestay Sinaran Baru as the first foreign arrivals and the prosperity of the local communities in arriving foreign visitors achieved. Homestay Sinaran Baru also won Johor Homestay Award on the year 2012 regarding the highest tourist arrival and income achieved (**Diagram 1.2**).

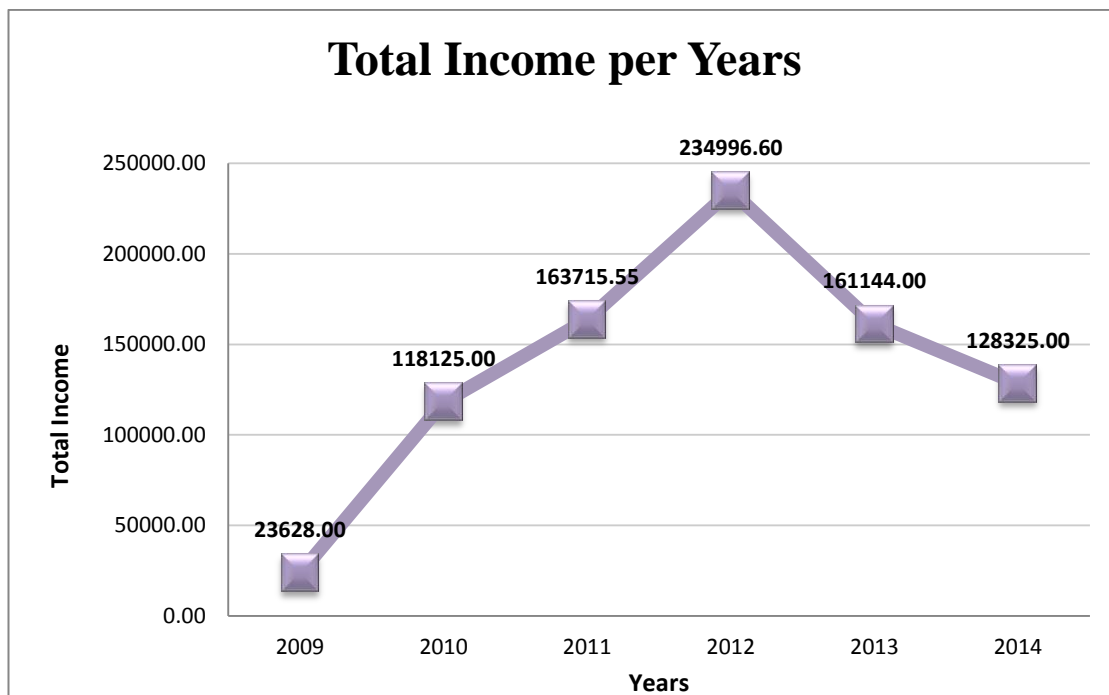


Diagram 1.2 Total Homestay Income per Years

Besides, there are a lot of the Small-Medium Enterprise (SMEs) activities exist in this village especially the promotion of Gray oyster mushroom cultivation, frozen food products, cookies business, sew doll clothes, handcraft from magazine, fruits and tamarind. Besides, other activities such as local fruits feasting celebration, getting to know the locals and getting to know Malay customs are very famous activities doing in the homestay program in this village. Those are the uniqueness of this village that makes it popular among the tourist.

This study will be conducted into the characteristics, women involvement, and the motivational factors of women empowerment in organizing Homestay program which is benefits to improve their living and generate an extra income. Besides, the other success factors that can be link to the homestay program, such as Small-Medium Enterprise (SMEs) activities that already exist in this study area.

1.8 Research Outline

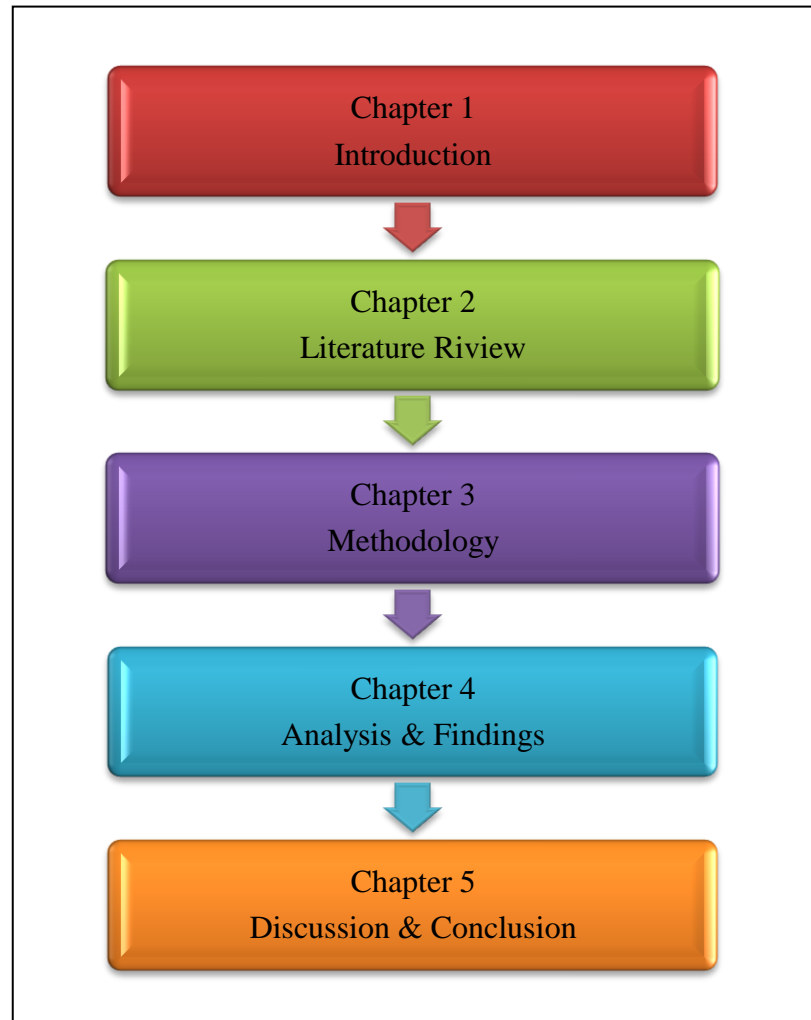


Diagram 1.3 Research Outline

This research consists of five chapters. In this chapter, which is Chapter 1, a relatively broad description is given to provide the reader with a background and discussion of issues related to the research area of the study. This chapter also explains about the problem statements, objectives, study area and scope of study for this research.

The second chapter, Chapter 2 presents the literature review with theories relevant for the research study in providing vital information to help in understanding the context of the research. This chapter covers the basic definition, concept, principles, purpose and some other information in relation to women empowerment in organizing homestay program in Community-Based Tourism. Further elaborates of the subject matter of this research by referring to some books, journal, previous dissertations, academic papers and reports and some other references.

In the Chapter 3, the methodology used for this research will be discussed. The method of data collection for both primary sources and secondary sources are included and further explained in this chapter. The next chapter, Chapter 4, provides findings and analysis according to the data that had been collected. This chapter is the core for this study as it provides the essential information in this research study. Empirical data presentation and the data gathered will be analysed against the conceptual framework. All data that had been collected will be discussed in this chapter. Finally, the discussion will be presented in Chapter 5 as well as the conclusion.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter had indicated specifically the study that will be covered in this research paper, which is analysing on women empowerment in organizing homestay program in Kampung Sinaran Baru. The summary of this chapter are more to the relatively broad description about the research background as an introduction to this research study. The concept and general view of the problem statement were highlighted in this chapter.

Understanding of the study must be done in order to develop the objectives and the research questions regarding to this research study. This chapter is extremely important as it clarifies the main components of research, which include problem statement, research objective, study area and scope of study. It is important for the researcher to be clear on these research components as it is the main guidance for the researcher throughout the execution of this research.

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