

COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION THROUGH TOURISM IN
COMMUNITY DRIVEN ORGANIZATION: CASE STUDY OF KELAB ALAMI

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ABSTRACT

Community-driven organizations are “community-driven” that been organized around a specific geographic location which aim to raise awareness of the needs of local communities. A community-organization also known as a local non-profit organization dedicated in generating improvement within the local level community. They are basically the community development process which in the form of a formal organization. They are usually formed locally, staffed locally, and their actions are specific to where they are located. They are most successful when they are initiated by rural people themselves or by local leaders. The aim of this study is to provide in-depth understanding and findings that related to the overall concept of a community driven organization and its contribution in the perspective of environment, economic and social. The research focused on Kelab Alami (KA) which is a community driven organization that has been involved in environmental conservation and tourism development and in Johor, Malaysia. The study applied the qualitative research approach, interviewing with key stakeholders and thematic analysis has been applied to analyse the interview that explains the community organization and how the internal and external factors of organization affecting the sustainable development of an organization. The findings showed that the initiative and driven factor for community organization development and community involvement. There are three factors that addressed the significant factor towards the sustainability of an organization which are local community participation, experienced professional staff and organizational mission. The outcome of the study become a guidance for relevant stakeholders in understanding, operating and managing the community-driven organization in a sustainable manner.

ABSTRAK

Pertubuhan yang didorong oleh komuniti adalah "pertubuhan yang didorong masyarakat" dianjurkan di sekitar lokasi geografi tertentu bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesedaran tentang keperluan masyarakat setempat. Organisasi komuniti juga dikenali sebagai organisasi bukan keuntungan yang didedikasikan untuk menjaga peningkatan dalam komuniti peringkat tempatan. Pada dasarnya adalah proses pembangunan masyarakat dalam bentuk organisasi lebih formal. Mereka biasanya dibentuk di dalam negara, dikendalikan secara tempatan, dan tindakan mereka adalah khusus di tempat mereka berada. Mereka paling berjaya apabila mereka dimulakan oleh komuniti sendiri atau oleh pemimpin tempatan. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk memberikan pemahaman yang mendalam berkaitan dengan konsep keseluruhan keadaan bagi organisasi yang didorong oleh masyarakat dan sumbangannya dalam perspektif persekitaran, ekonomi dan sosial. Kajian kes difokuskan kepada Kelab Alami (KA) yang merupakan organisasi yang didorong oleh masyarakat yang terlibat dalam aktiviti pemuliharaan alam sekitar dan pelancongan di Johor. Kajian ini menggunakan metodologi penyelidikan kualitatif dengan kaedah wawancara dan analisis tematik. Kajian ini menerangkan keadaan keseluruhan organisasi masyarakat dan bagaimana faktor dalaman dan luaran organisasi mempengaruhi pembangunan mampan dalam sesebuah organisasi. Penemuan kajian menunjukkan faktor inisiatif untuk pembangunan organisasi masyarakat dan penglibatan masyarakat. Sementara itu, tiga faktor telah ditangani sebagai faktor penting ke arah keberlangsungan organisasi, iaitu penglibatan komuniti tempatan, staf yang berpengalaman dan mision sesebuah organisasi. Hasil kajian ini menjadi panduan bagi pihak berkepentingan dalam memahami, mengurus dan mentadbir organisasi yang dipandu oleh masyarakat dalam cara yang lebih mampan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDD	-	Community-Driven Development
NGO	-	Non-Government Organization
CBC	-	Community-Based Conservation
CBO	-	Community-Based Organizations
CSO	-	Civil Society Organizations
VDC	-	Village Development Committees
CIG	-	Common Interest Groups
UA	-	Users Association
Cbank	-	Community bank
MC	-	Management Committee
FBO	-	Faith-Based Organization
CBCI	-	Community-Based Conservation Initiative
KA	-	Kelab Alami Mukim Tanjung Kupang

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Tourism is intimately associated with environment which carries multiple meanings in the study of tourism, ranging from natural environment to various facets of cultural environment (Inskeep, 1991). Natural features such as scenic beauty, beaches and marine areas, flora and fauna, parks and conservation areas where some of the substantial elements known for their tourism attractions. Local community are also in a better position to understand the local needs and issues, thus having more practical and realistic solutions to problem (Iorio and Corsale, 2014). Furthermore, as tourism activities are developed and operated mainly by the local members, consent and support are gained locally which adds towards meeting the social sustainability objectives. More importantly, it forms a strong foundation at grass root level for such initiative (Goh, 2015).

Forgie, Horsley and Johnston (2001) stated that the economy, environment and people are equally important and their health is interlinked. A healthy environment is required for a healthy economy. Healthy water, soils and air is essential and important in maintaining agricultural, tourism and fishing industries for employment and income. Natural capital is an asset which includes plants, animals, ecosystems, scenery and landscapes. Biodiversity needs to be maintained, as the quality of life and good health of living organisms is derived from these natural assets. People have to take responsibility for what they do and use. Each person needs to minimise his or her

impact on the environment. Localised and community solutions should be a first approach rather than a back-up measure.

Conservation is a sustainable practice in protecting and conserving the natural resources and environment that initiate by individuals, organizations and governments to ensure the future usability of resource, resilience of communities and ecosystem integrity. Conservation is a trending research topic which has been investigated and studied by lots of scholars and academician (Siry, 2006; Mehta and Kallet, 1998; Mehta and Heinen, 2001; Waylen et al., 2010; Bajracharya et al., 2006) which has been covered in broad area, include of coastal zone management by Malaysia and Indonesia, local attitudes towards community-based conservation, effect of local cultural context on success of community-based conservation, impacts of community-based conservation on local communities and more.

Different communities and circumstances require different responses and support. Professional advice, administrative assistance and expertise are needed to complement local knowledge. However, support should not encourage dependency. It is important to work with existing and incipient groups and not displace them. According to Forgie, Horsley and Johnston (2001), past community experience, and existing knowledge and capacity need to be strengthened and worked from. Community ownership of initiatives is essential. Genuine grass-roots development cannot be imposed from above. Community Based Conservation Initiatives are more effective if they include all stakeholders. For example, any rural initiative needs to include families and community members, not just landowners. It shows that the broader the base of community representation, the better. Initiatives need to be issue-driven, with specific goals. The organizational structure should not precede the local expression of interest, and the organizational models should not be imposed from outside. An integrated and collaborative approach across all agencies is needed.

Community-driven development (CDD) is one of the conservation approaches that provides control to the development process, resources and decision-making authority directly from community groups. The CDD programmes as a powerful force for development in advocating the people to change their own environment based on their immediate needs. Previous studies had shown that CDD is responsive to local

demands, inclusive, and more cost-effective compared to centrally-led Non-Government Organization based (NGO-based) initiatives. There has been a rise in community consciousness and recognition of the part played by tourism in conservation. More inclusive, people-oriented and community-based approaches to conservation are in part a reaction to the failures of exclusionary conservation, in a world in which social and economic factors are increasingly seen as key to conservation success (Ghimire and Pimbert, 1997). Community emphasis is motivated by the idea that “if conservation and development could be simultaneously achieved, the interests of both could be served. Thus, the old narrative of ‘fortress conservation’ was largely displaced by the counter-narrative of development through community conservation and sustainable use” (Murphree, 2002).

1.2 Problem Statement

The environmental protection has been widely recognized as an essential tool for poverty alleviation when livelihood of the local communities is dependent on the availability of natural resources (James, 2019). Clarke and Agyeman (2011) stated that the sustainable development required the environmental stewardship and protection. Based on Tosun (2000), community involvement can authorize the principles of sustainable development and bring forwards the livelihoods of locals. According to Lin and Simmons (2017), public participation can be considered as a cornerstone of sustainable tourism planning. Tourism is seen as an effective tool to generate supplementary income in areas that conservation has affected the traditional livelihoods of local communities (Dodds, Ali and Galaski, 2018). Community development and participation is important in poverty alleviation (Tasci et al., 2014), empowering and diversifying local communities’ livelihoods (Shikida et al., 2010; Zapato et al., 2011), improving cooperation with stakeholders, protecting the natural environment, and providing assistance on struggling economies (Su, 2011; Lopez-Guzman et al., 2011). According to Lapeyre (2010), it also minimizes leaks, maximize connections, empower locals and instill a sense of ownership.

According to Pimbert and Pretty (1997), “community-based conservation” and “people’s participation” have become part of conventional topic and more focused on

this kind of approach by national and international conservation organizations. The programme has involved the local community and conservation which directly to the sustainable use of nature site can be achieved by utilizing the economic incentives (McNeely, 1988; Wells, Brandon and Hannah, 1992). Berkes (2004) stated that the community-based conservation has emerged at a time when the science of ecology and the various fields of applied ecology seem to be in the midst of three conceptual shifts: a shift from reductionism to a systems view of the world, a shift to include humans in the ecosystem, and a shift from an expert-based approach to participatory conservation and management. Community-based conservation (CBC) is based on the idea that if conservation and development could be simultaneously achieved, then the interests of both could be served. It has been controversial because community development objectives are not necessarily consistent with conservation objectives in a given case. Community emphasis is motivated by the idea that “if conservation and development could be simultaneously achieved, the interests of both could be served. Thus, the old narrative of ‘fortress conservation’ was largely displaced by the counter-narrative of development through community conservation and sustainable use” (Murphree, 2002). One holds that the failure of community conservation is not due to the weakness or impracticality of the concept, but rather to its improper implementation, especially with regard to the devolution of authority and responsibility (Songorwa, 1999; Murphree, 2002). The second holds that the conservation and development objectives, both important in their own right, should be delinked because the mixed objective does not serve either objective well.

However, the practice of community-based conservation remains problematic because of its high dependence on centralised bureaucratic organisations for planning and implementation. Many community-based conservation schemes initiated by outsiders have overlooked the importance of locally specific ways of meeting needs for food, health, shelter, energy and other fundamental human needs. Outside professionals and institutions all too often failed to see the difference between fundamental human needs and their satisfiers: the ways and means of satisfying these needs. Whilst fundamental human needs are universal, their satisfiers vary according to culture, region and historical conditions (Max-Neef, 1989). The NGO have been some of the most enthusiastic promoters of the community-based conservation concept

(Brosius, Tsing and Zerner, 1998), and seen as participatory as, less bureaucratic than state institutions, and able to meet needs of poorest and most vulnerable groups in society (Campbell and Vanilo-Mattila, 2003). However, the extent to which environmental NGOs represent the interests of local communities can be questioned (Lundy, 1999). In order to encourage and sustain the conservation activities, there is a need to involve the local community which are directly dependent in the natural resources for their livings and driven their interest in conservation and stimulate their voluntary conservation action and efforts. Based on the studies of Kennett et al. (2004) and Campbell et al. (2009), co-management or community-based conservation approaches have proven useful for natural conservation such as turtle conservation. As cited in Jino et al. (2018), co-management approaches can be paired with incentive packages (Gjertsen and Niesten, 2010) or tourism opportunities or conservation funding (Meletis and Harrison 2010; Pegas and Stronza 2010). These approaches can help to increase local acceptance and motivation of community members by providing associated livelihoods, revenues or other benefits that encourage respect of and adherence to conservation regulations and suggested practices. However, concerns have been raised that tourism and other incentive packages can lead to conservation efforts motivated primarily by economic or socio-cultural dynamics and benefits, mostly occurring at the individual level (Pegas et al., 2013). However, over-emphasis on economic aspects, while neglecting other considerations, can prove detrimental to the long-term sustainability of conservation efforts, by focusing on individual short-term gain rather than longer-term goals and benefits on a greater scale. Individual participation or economic incentives may leave elements of conservation interventions or related activities overly vulnerable to changing market forces (Jino et al., 2018).

As cited in Dodds, Ali and Galaski (2018), community based and community driven is promoted as a mechanism to improve livelihoods and create community development opportunities (Mtapuri and Giampiccoli, 2013) and is characterized by being located in, owned and managed by the community, which consequently receives a significant portion of the benefits (Trejos and Chiang, 2009; Sebele, 2010; Tolkach and King, 2015; Kelly, 2018). With its emphasis on participation and strong focus on community empowerment through provision of technical and financial support, the community driven approach provided a unique way to respond to the developmental

challenges associated with limited access to social services (Hassan, Ong'ayo and Osore, 2018).

In Malaysia, there is a limited of study related to the community-driven conservation, but mostly focused on community-based conservation. The study that has been conducted related to community-based conservation is more concern for the community conservation efforts through ecotourism or involvement of local community in the planning and management of protected area such as national park and marine park (Masud and Fatimah, 2015; Masud et al., 2017; Yaman and Mohd, 2004). These studies are related to the community attitudes, behavior, and factor of local participation in terrestrial or marine protected area management. Hitcher et al. (2008) has studied about the community-based transboundary ecotourism in Heart of Borneo, and Goh (2015) had conducted the study of community-based ecotourism which initiated by community and has been focused on their success factor. There were also the studies that related to the capacity building of the local community towards environmental conservation (Kusin et al., 2019); knowledge and awareness of local community towards aquatic resources (Chen, 2017; Rahman et al., 2019); local communities' readiness and willingness in conservation (Abdullah and Halim, 2018) and the roles of different stakeholders in community-based conservation (Alexander et al., 2016; Gan, Nair and Hamzah, 2019).

1.3 Research Objectives

The aim of this study is to provide an in-depth understanding and findings that related to the overall concept of conditions for a community driven organization and its contribution in perspective of environment, economic and social. From the research background and problem statements above, there are several objectives developed for this study. The objectives of the study are as below:

1. To determine the relationship between tourism and community-driven conservation in perspective of environment, economic and social.
2. To examine the initiative and contribution of community-driven organization towards tourism, conservation and community.

3. To identify the sustainability factor as one of the sustainable tools that important for community-driven organization in sustaining and strengthening their future development.

1.4 Research Question

From the research background and research objectives as stated in above, there are three research questions has been derived:

1. What is the relationship between tourism and conservation in environment, economic and social perspective?
2. (a) What is the initiative of community in developing community-driven organization?
2. (b) What is the contribution of community-driven organization towards the communities, society and environment?
3. (a) What are the internal and external factors for the sustainable development of a community-driven organization?
3. (b) How can the community-driven organization strengthen and sustain their future development for long life span?

1.5 Research Framework

The research framework as shown in figure below as a guideline for researcher in order to complete the study. The study has been divided into four stages which included of preliminary study, data collection, data analysis and stage of recommendation and conclusion.

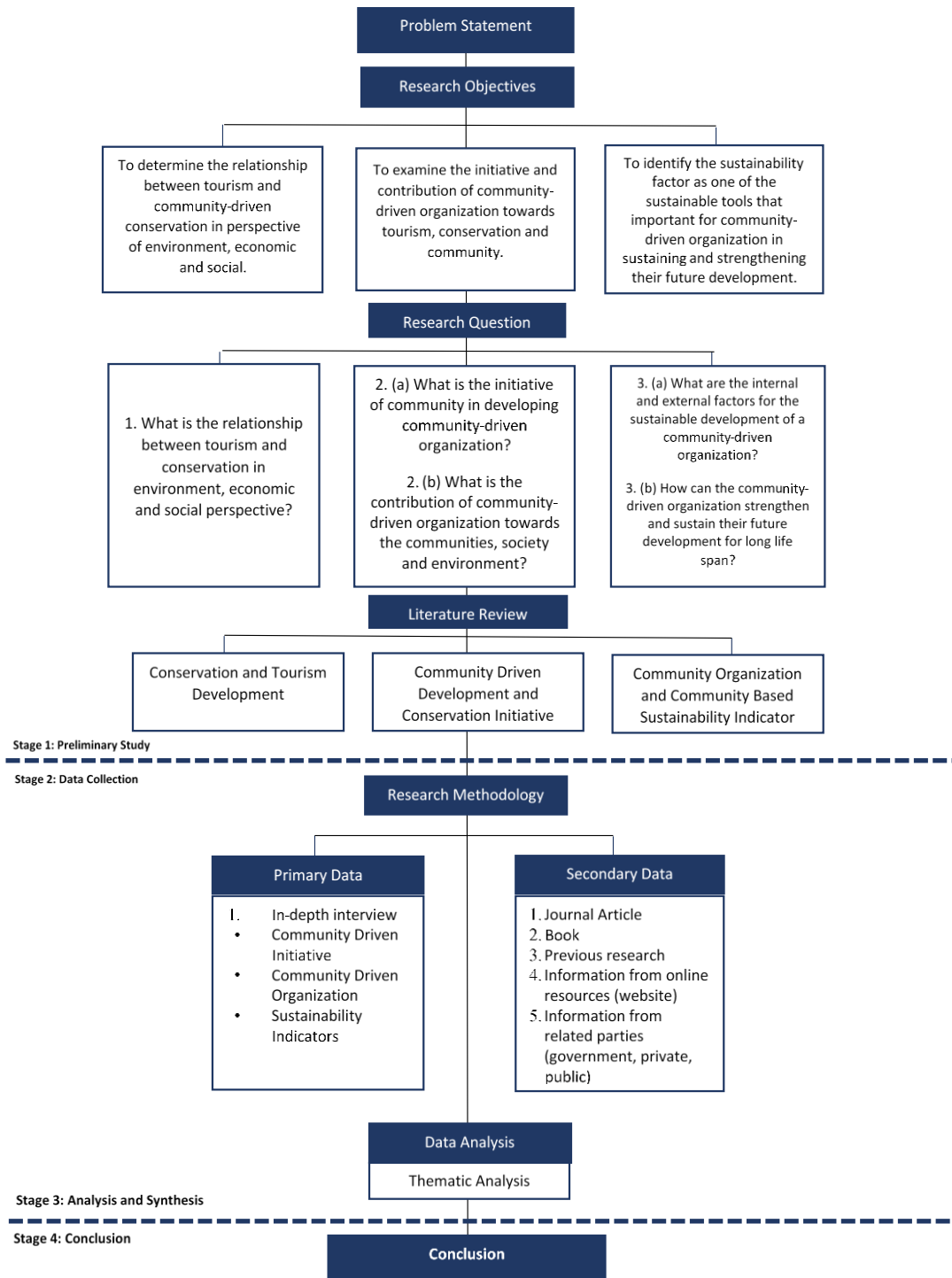


Figure 1.1 Research Framework

1.6 Research Approach

In general, the research approach is divided into four stages, as follow:

i. Stage 1: Preliminary Study

The initial understanding of the conservation and community participation is necessary to have a comprehensive concept of the community based and community driven initiative. The concepts, principles, characteristic and its relationship between conservation and community involvement and participation will help in understanding the community driven initiative in developing an organization or project. This stage also includes a brief explanation of the issues and problems related to the community-based and community driven initiative in developing their own communities in global view and Malaysia. The findings on issues and problems will help in formulating research aims, objectives, scope and the significance of the research. The review of related literature will help to understand the concepts and theory of community initiative and help to conducted the research framework and methodology used in the study.

ii. Stage 2: Data Collection

The data collection process will be done through primary and secondary data. In this stage, the primary data will be collected through in-depth interview with the members of community organization in the study area. The secondary data will be collected from the previous research, books, journal articles and website that related to the study. This stage is important and crucial because it may affect the findings and the significant and reliability of the study.

iii. Stage 3: Analysis and Synthesis

The collected data in the study will be analyzed through the use of appropriate statistical method. The thematic analysis will be conducted for interview data. The analysis will figure out the initiative and contribution of the community organization

in term of environment, economic and social, and their limitation and challenges when developing their own organization.

iv. Stage 4: Conclusion

The conclusion will be made based on the findings obtained from data analysis. The recommendation in strengthening and sustaining the community organization will be suggested based on the findings from this study.

1.7 Significance of Research

As mentioned before, the relationship between tourism and conservation is symbiotic and has bring mutual benefit for both fields.

“The link between protected areas and tourism is as old as the history of protected areas. Protected areas need tourism, and tourism needs protected areas.”

(Eagles, McCool, and Haynes, 2002, p. XV)

There is a need in understanding the symbiotic relationship between tourism and conservation in order to lead the tourism to be more benefits provided for the community without damaging or destroying the natural resources. If conservation and development could be simultaneously achieved, then the interests of both could be served. However, there is limited studies that related to community-driven initiative, and most of the studies related to the community-based initiative which has been stimulate by the government or NGO. This research will help to understand about the initiative of community in developing their own organization for the conservation activities and their interest in spreading the awareness for conservation to their society without being pressed by the government or NGO. Moreover, this research also will figure out the challenges that faced by the community-driven organization and propose the better recommendation in developing their organization and conservation projects.

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