

Relationship Between Community Involvement and Development Impact: A Case of Tourism Island in Malaysia

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Abstract: *The study was conducted to analyse the relationship between community involvement and development impact among communities, one of the famous tourism island in Malaysia, Chenang Beach. A mixed method was used in this study. Quantitative data was gathered from 368 respondents in Chenang Beach. Meanwhile, qualitative data was gathered through face-to-face interview. Four dimensions of community involvement which consisted of decision-making, implementation, benefits sharing and evaluation have been tested in this study. This study presented a positive relationship ($p < .05$, $r = .461$) between community involvement and development impact among communities in Chenang Beach. In detail, there were positive relationships between decision-making ($r = .421$), implementation ($r = .311$), benefits sharing ($r = .463$) and evaluation ($r = .375$) and development impact among communities in Chenang Beach. Therefore, all dimensions of community involvement were significantly related to development impact in this study. This study contributes a fruitful knowledge regarding the relationship between community involvement and development impact, particularly from the Malaysian perspective. Theoretical and practical implications of the results are discussed. Several recommendations for the tourism management bodies, which are in-charge for the development of this island, were provided.*

Keywords: *community involvement, decision-making, implementation, benefits sharing, evaluation, development impact*

I. INTRODUCTION

Development is an activity or process to improve the quality of life of the community. The development process should be conducted systematically, so that the community gained benefits from the development. There are three stages of project development in Malaysia.

The first stage is at the Federal level. At this stage, the committee are among the decision makers at the top position of the country. The role of the committee are to decide on the overall policies and implementation development strategies that are in-line with Vision 2020 and to ensure the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP). Further, at this stage, the committee need to evaluate the implementation strategies of development projects and to coordinate development issues that arise.

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The second stage is at the state level. The state committee need to ensure that all decisions of the National level are effectively carried out and to streamline and expedite the implementation of NAP and policies. Meanwhile, the last stage of the development process is the local authority. Local authority needs to coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the development programmes and projects. Therefore, the cycle of the development in one are begins with the National Plan, State Structure Plan (SSP) and Local Plan (LP). LP is a detailed plan to translate projects and general proposals contained in the SSP. LP shows for large-scale development layout for the area to be developed which are equipped with a written statement to explain the basics and the details about the development. The planning process is organized and typically will facilitate the implementation of a project or program planned. It is a common practice in a national, state and local plan to include prototypical plan for development of specific priority area in order to demonstrate appropriate planning and design principle to provide a basis for future development.

The development process of Chenang Beach starts with a plan set out in the Kedah State Structure Plan (Kedah SSP) 2002-2020 dan LP Pulau Langkawi. This includes the Special Area Plan Chenang Beach (SAP Chenang Beach) issued by the Department of Town and Country Planning in 2013, which is focusing on the development of Chenang Beach. The draft contains the planning of tourism development around Chenang Beach and a list of development projects undertaken. The development projects are aim to improve community surrounding by developing the economic and social impact. The draft carried out based on the changes in the population at Chenang Beach.

Various projects are designed to meet the vision RT Pulau Langkawi 2030 which is "Green and Sustainable City 2030". One of the planned developments in RT Pulau Langkawi 2030 for a period of fifteen years is to develop in line with the increase of foreign and domestic tourists to Pulau Langkawi, especially Chenang Beach. Landscaping in Chenang Beach will change with the construction of high-rise buildings in the future highlighted with green plants in line with the vision of the RT Pulau Langkawi (Majlis Perbandaran Langkawi Bandaraya Pelancongan & Jabatan Perancangan Bandar dan Desa, 2016)

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Most of the development projects in the Chenang Beach are still refining the indicators contained in Pulau Langkawi Development Blueprint 2011-2015 which have yet to be completed. These include development projects in the Chenang Beach, involving an allocation of RM110 million (Majlis Perbandaran Langkawi Bandaraya Pelancongan & Jabatan Perancangan Bandar dan Desa, 2013). The development project is defined as Waterfront City, Bay Boulevard, Town Square, Park and Ride, City Walk and Beach Boardwalk. The goal of this development project was to provide a public space in the heart of Chenang Beach connecting neighbouring villages directly to the beach. In addition, the development project is intended to upgrade Chenang Beach on par with international tourist destination. Moreover, the development will provide space for people to improve their lives around Chenang Beach through their participation in the tourism economy.

Development in Chenang Beach requires continued engagement between local communities and government agencies as suggested by Easton (1957) which emphasizes the importance of community needs in the development process. Therefore, community participation is seen as an act or decision in measuring the effectiveness of the government agencies in the implementation of the development in the Chenang Beach. Community feedback or insights are important as the measurement to evaluate the effectiveness of a development project. Accordingly, each of projects development must be implemented in order to obtain positive feedback from the public as well as positive impact of the development undertaken. Community participation is divided into four types, namely the participation of community participation in decision-making, community participation in the implementation of development, participation in society to benefit from the development and participation of the community in their evaluation of the development undertaken.

A few empirical investigations addressing the development impact have been reported. However, most of the development impact studies preferred to focus on tourism impact to the host (Azizan, 2011; Johan Afendi & Mohamad Zaki, 2008; Johan Afendi, Razak, & Mohamad Zaki, 2012; Nurhazani & Abidin, 2013; Nurhazani & Shaharuddin, 2003) Thus, there is still lack of evidence regarding the development impact in term of physical development in Chenang Beach. Further, there are a few studies conducted to measure the community involvement in Chenang Beach, together with the development impact. Although, most the community participation or community involvement research focusing on the participation in Pulau Langkawi (Azizan, 2008) none of the studies preferred to investigate the relationship of community involvement and development impact focusing on Chenang Beach. Thus, the objective of this study is to explore the relationship between community involvement and development impact in Chenang Beach based on four dimensions of public involvement, which are community involvement decision-making, implementation, benefits sharing and evaluation.

Chenang Beach, Pulau Langkawi

Chenang Beach is a famous tourist area in Pulau Langkawi. Chenang Beach situated 25 km west of Kuah and 500 metres north of Pantai Tengah, the bay forms a white-sand beach strip. Chenang Beach is the busiest beach town on Pulau Langkawi, It's a popular holiday destination for family traveller. Chenang Beach offers so many attractions that could not resist such as Underwater World Langkawi and Rice Garden Museum. Chenang Beach has plenty of places that offer water sports and boat rentals. The area is congested with budget hotels, motels and mid-range beachfront accommodation. Restaurants offers Westernised local dishes and the best nightlife in Chenang Beach. With the total of tourists reaches almost 3.7 million in 2016 (Tourism Malaysia, 2017), the arrival of tourists to Pulau Langkawi and Chenang Beach are increasing. An increasing number of domestic and international tourists to Chenang Beach affect the ability of the tourist area to accommodate the number of visitors at any one time. Therefore, a systematic and planned development needs to be done to ensure that development is not only necessary to meet the needs of the tourists who visits but priority should be given to the people who are the residents of the Chenang Beach area.

II. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

Development impact

A review of the literature on community involvement suggests it leads to development projects that are more responsive to the needs of the poor, improved government's delivery systems, better maintained community assets and involvement of the citizen (Mansuri & Rao, 2004). When a community participates, it both provides information about its preferences, and gains information that may influence its optimal choice. Both types of information are likely to lead to increased welfare for the community and better development projects.

An effective development projects requires a continuing process of improvement, responsiveness and adaptability at local level. This process is a process in which local people are meaningfully involved in the identification of needs, determining local priorities, policy development, decision-making processes and, ultimately, the implementation of actions. This means government agencies should be working with communities to build a shared vision based on a set of core values, including social inclusion, equality and respect for diversity, to turn that shared vision into goals and objectives that reflect the needs and aspirations of the people. An integrated approach to planning at local level, involving local government, and communities, is essential to enhancing community involvement.

Generally, the effectiveness of development emphasises on the improvement of project development (Hamzah & Habibah, 2009; Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 2005; Unit Perancang Ekonomi, 2009; Wall, 2006; Weiss, 1972) and the importance of fulfilling the needs of the community (Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 2005; Unit Perancang Ekonomi, 2009; Weiss, 1972, 1993).



Some of the development projects focusing on the decision-making on development projects (Fournier, 1995; Weiss, 1972), the involvement of politicians and stakeholders (Weiss, 1972, 1993) evaluation criteria for purposes of development projects (Fournier, 1995; Weiss, 1972) and established the standard for evaluating the effectiveness (Fournier, 1995). It also important to measure the performance and compared it with the standard (Fournier, 1995; Hamzah & Habibah, 2009; Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 2005; Unit Perancang Ekonomi, 2009; Weiss, 1972) and make an assessment and analysis (Fournier, 1995; Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 2012; Weiss, 1972) about the development projects.

Therefore, the effectiveness of the development project should be seen as the indicator of the development impact perceived by the community at the area. A study by Azizan(2011) in Pulau Langkawi found that the development of tourism may have an impact on society. The study found that people perceived positive impact on socio-economic aspects such as jobs opportunities, business opportunities, entrepreneurship, investment and better infrastructure facilities on the island. Meanwhile, the study conducted by Johan Afendi and Mohamad Zaki(2008) stated that development, especially the development of tourism activities have an impact on the economic development of the community in Chenang Beach. Traditional economic activities such as agriculture is no longer the main source of income for the local community. Unemployment and poverty in Chenang Beach had declined when fulfilled job opportunities that offered better income. Further, community were involved in business such as travel agency, car rental services, selling handicrafts and boat operators.

Community involvement

Community involvement is a complicated concept that varies with its application and meaning. This term can be interpreted differently, based on the use of the term. Some called it participation, involvement or engagement. Neither of them is untrue (Oakley, 1991). For the purpose of this study, the term community involvement is used. community involvement represents the voice of the public in decision-making directly to the government or through community representatives who have been appointed to represent the local community (Eagles, 2008). Community involvement in development is seen as a positive step taken by the government. Therefore, community involvement is important to ensure that development plans at the national and local level to meet the needs of society as a whole.

Wall (1996) stated that the public receives a positive development in their places as long as they perceived benefits through the development. Community involvement is not merely a statement of the project but should be done seriously. This situation provides an opportunity for the parties involved to show a positive image, providing information to the public starting from the stage of planning, drafting and implementation of the development (Burkey,

1993; Bureekal, 2000; Haywood, 1998). Meanwhile, Lane (1994) added that the community should be involved in decision-making, implementation, maintenance, evaluation and the monitoring of the development projects. Community involvement in the development projects attempting to influence the direction and implementation of development projects for the community. Community participation in development at their settlements is an important factor in determining the success of a development project in an area (Cohen & Uphoff, 1980; Pretty, 1995; Tosun, 2000).

As for Cohen & Uphoff (1980), they mentioned that the main kinds of involvement that needs serious concern are: (1) involvement in *decision-making*; (2) involvement in *implementation*; (3) involvement in *benefits sharing*; and (4) involvement in *evaluation*. They added that the first three kinds of involvement are reasonably well defined in the approaches of development but the fourth kind of involvement occurs less frequently than the others. Eventhough the fourth kind of involvement is not discussed widely, for the purpose of this study, it will be defined and analysed. This dimension of involvement has been used by Haris (2004a) (2004b) (2010), Haris & Abd Hadi (2012), Hoe & Haris (2013a) (2013b) (2014), William & Haris (2013) in their study. Therefore, in this study, the dimension of community involvement introduced by Cohen & Uphoff (1980) and adapted by the local researcher will be used.

In this study the effectiveness of development can be seen through the importance of meeting the needs of the community by encouraging them to involve in development projects. Thus, questions arise about the extent of the development impact received by the community in Chenang Beach. Is development in Chenang Beach affects directly to the people in the area? This study examines the impact of development in Chenang Beach through the community involvement.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population of this study included the residents in Chenang Beach, Mukim Kedawang, Pulau Langkawi. 386 samples from five villages around Chenang Beach were randomly participated in this study. This study utilized the individual unit of analysis which aimed the residents in Pantati Cenang, as part of as the respondent in obtaining the data.

This study employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies; data obtained from questionnaire distribution were analysed and were supplemented by in-depth interviews. The first stage was the quantitative research, which is more systematic and accurate approach to investigate the phenomenal ((Bhattacharjee, 2012; Bryman & Cramer, 2005). Further, qualitative approach was used to gain information based on the quantitative results. Interviews often used when seeking the views and opinions of people with a specific perspective (MacDonald & Headlam, 1999), especially from the government officer regarding the community in Chenang Beach.

Data for respondents' demographic have been collected based on gender, age, education level and



type of occupation. Respondents have been asked into three level of education(e.g. primary school, secondary school and tertiary education).

For type of occupation, they were four categories (e.g. unemployed, government sector, private sector and self-employed). Respondents’ opinion towards their involvement in development at Chenang Beach becomes basic understanding of the development impact. All data collected have been analysed by using IBM SPSS (version 22).

A development impact is the dependent variable in this study. Development impact consisted of 11 items regarding economic impact and social impact perceived by the community. The 11 items were adapted from Azizan (2011), Nurhazani & Shaharuddin (2003), Suhaya et al. (2013), Johan Afendi et al. (2012), Nurhazani & Abidin(2013). Meanwhile, the community involvement is the independent variable in this study. To measure the community involvement, there were 20 items overall, which were

introduced by Cohen & Uphoff (1980) and adapted by Haris (2004) and Haris & Abd Hadi (2012). Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the items were used based on four types of dimensions, namely i) community participation in decision-making, ii) community participation in the implementation, iii) community involvement in sharing the benefits , and iv) community participation in the evaluation. This items were rated on a 6-point scale (from 1=strongly disagree to 6=strongly agree).

IV. FINDINGS ANALYSIS

This study consisted three parts. The first part is demographic profile, followed by second part regarding community involvement and the last part is development impact. Mean analysis was conducted to measure the strength of the impact of each variable relating to the development impact based on community perceptions. The higher the mean score, the higher is the impact perceived by the community in Chenang Beach. Meanwhile, the lower the mean score, the lower is the impact perceived by the community.

Table. 1 Interpretation of mean score for the variables

1.0000 - 1.8333	Very negative / Very low
1.8334 - 2.6667	Negative / Low
2.6668 - 3.5001	Slightly negative / Slightly low
3.5002 - 4.3335	Slightly positive / Slightly high
4.3336 - 5.1669	Positive / High
5.1670 - 6.0000	Very positive / Very high

Source: Tan (2011)

Private sector	88	23.9
Self-employed	156	42.4
Unemployed	85	23.1

Descriptive analysis

There were 368 respondents participated in the survey. The distribution of gender shows that the percentage of male and female is 198 (53.8%) and 170 (46.2%). Most respondents are between the ages of 31 to 40 years old (30.7%) and 41 to 50 years old (27.2%). 79.2percent of the respondents have completed the SPM or PMR examinations; while 14.1 percent are STPM/Certifiante and degree certificate holders. Most of the respondents were self-employed (42.4%). 23.9 percent were working with private companies and 23.1 percent were unemployed.

Table. 2 Distribution of respondents by demographic profile (n=368)

Demographic profile	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Gender		
Male	198	53.8
Female	170	46.2
Age		
Below 30 years old	47	12.8
31 to 40 years old	113	30.7
41 to 50 years old	100	27.2
Above 51 years old	108	29.3
Education level		
Never been to school	9	2.4
Primary school	43	11.7
PMR/SRP/LCE	50	13.6
SPM/MCE/SPVM	241	65.5
STPM/Certificate	13	3.5
Diploma/Degree	12	3.3
Occupation		
Government sector	39	10.6

The second stage involved in-depth interviews with the government officers, who were in-charge in the development of Chenang Beach. Face-to-face interview were conducted using a set of semi-structured questions that aimed to seek views on the finding from the fieldwork. The interviews involved officers from different departments and agencies, who were involved directly with the development of Chenang Beach. Data collected from the intevIEWS were analysed and compared with the findings from cross-sectional study.

Development impact

The development impact were found to be positive with a high mean score of 5.0072. Meanwhile, the community involvement were also found to be positive with a high mean score of 4.5355. Table 1 shows the interpretation of mean scores for the variables based on the 6-point Likert scale. The interview findings revealed that most of the community were perceived positively impact from the development in Chenang Beach. This results were supported by the one of the government officer interviewed. He mentioned that:

Most of the community are happy with their lives. They can start-up a business and make profit and they also can work in accomodation and services industry in Chenang Beach. In my opinion, the development



in Chenang Beach are really benefits them overall, not just the origin people but the youth itself.

Another government officer said:

If you want to see the impact received by the community, nearly 70 percent of the population depends on Chenang Beach’s economic activities. Their income increased due to tourism industry. We are focusing now to the high-end tourists because this type of group, they stay longer and they are spending a lot. So, from that, we can find an appropriate approach to attract them to revisit Chenang Beach in the future.

Given that most of the interviewer had a high expectation towards the development of Chenang Beach. Most of the community in Chenang Beach were blessed from the development.

Community involvement

The total number of items in community involvement is 20 items. Each dimension of community participation has five items related to the dimensions. The item was tested for internal consistency using the Cronbach alpha coefficient. It showed a high reliability coefficient of .804. The mean score of the community involvement to be found with a mean score 4.5355. It shows that most of the community were highly involved in development at Chenang Beach. As stated by one of the interviewer, she mentioned:

The government encourage communities to involve and participate in Public Strata. This is the platform for community involvement in decision making and evaluation . There are people who like it and some are disagree, we just take a note any comments from the public. The agencies will evaluate and make decisions based on the percentage of community who do not agree or object the development mentioned in the Public Strata. If the number is not large, so in these circumstances, the government can overrule community responses.

This statement is supported by another government officer. He said:

What have planned in Langkawi Blueprint, not necessarily implemented. That is why, most of the community who were joined the Public Strata, they will get the whole idea what is going on in Chenang Beach. Most of them are local businessman or businesswomen. Moreover, there were participants’ from local hotel operators of AB Motel, Sandy Beach, Baron and Nadia’s Inn.

As stated in the analysis, it showed that the community and the government officer had reached mutual understanding regarding the community involvement in the development of Chenang Beach. Most of the community involved in the Public Strata, one of the approach used by the government agencies to get attached to the community.

Correlations between Development Impact and Community Involvement

Table 2 presented the correlation analyses between community involvement and development impact. The result showed that there was a significant relationship between community involvement and development impact. In detail, there were positive relationships between decision-making (r=.421), implementation (r=.311), benefits sharing (r=.463) and evaluation (r=.375) and development impact among communities in Chenang Beach. Therefore, all dimensions of community involvement were significantly related to development impact in this study.

Table. 3 Correlation between community Involvement and development impact

Community involvement	Development impact
1. Decision making	.421**
2. Implementation	.311**
3. Benefits sharing	.463**
4. Evaluation	.375**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

This results was supported by the government officers. One of the officers said that most of the communities channel their responses or complaints to the spesific agency based on the issues arises. From there, most of the government agencies built a strong engagement with the communities to resolve any problems. As he mentioned:

Many complaints from the communities are directly to Pulau Langkawi Authority Council because we build good engagement with the communities. Our agency involved closely to the people compared to others government agencies. This is because we will always try to find solutions or alternatives to the problems. Thus, the relationship between communities and government has led to the successful of development in Chenang Beach. From that, communities accept positively project development in Chenang Beach.

Effective development will bring a positive impact on the local community. Impact is measured by economic impact, social impact, the impact of cultural and environmental impact have a direct impact on society. Therefore, it is important for the public to participate in the decision making, implementation, benefits sharing and evaluation of development in Chenang Beach as mentioned by one of the government officer:

Lets review on LIMA’s event, when this event advertised worldwide, the communities receive room reservation until there is no vacant room available. This is so awful. In terms of job opportunities, there are plenty of jobs available. It depends on the individual, if he have certificate or degree, he might be offered a better job. There are scenario when local people who start from the bottom, he can climb the ladder to be a General Manager.

As stated, the community involvement has led to a better development impact. From a different view, the development impact continuously can produce positive impact to the communities.



Therefore, this study showed that a good relationship between communities and government agencies will bring development impact positively to the communities.

V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The rapid development of hotels, resorts, homestays and retail buildings has become the the landmark in Chenang Beach. Apart from being a *Premier Beach Resort Destination* in Asia Pacific, Chenang Beach is seen as an attempt to generate income to the communities in the area. The development stage at Chenang Beach at present are crucial because Chenang Beach is unable to accommodate the current development or planned development in the future. This is due to the uncontrolled development planning which led to the use of land to be unsystematically, environmental pollution, social problems, traffic congestion and irregular settlements (Dani, 2004). In fact, the uncontrolled development brings bad impact to the local communities in the area.

Community involvement in development projects in Chenang Beach affects the perception of the impact in the community. Community involvement in decision-making revealed that community are encouraged to be involved in projects development planning and decision-making. This supported by Fournier (1995) and Weiss (1972) as they stated that some of the development projects focusing on the decision-making on development projects. In that case, projects development initiated by the government should welcome community involvement in sharing ideas and thoughts in decision making process. In addition, community also want to be involved in the implementation of projects development as stated by Hamzah and Habibah (2009), Wal (2006) and Weiss (1972), which is the effectiveness of development emphasises on the improvement and implementation of projects development. This is because when community are involved in the implementation of projects development, they can voice out their ideas and opinions about projects development. Apart from that, community want to be involved in benefits sharing through implemented projects development. This result supported by Uphoff (2014) and Uphoff and Cohen (1977) as they mentioned that most of the community in the development area were positively involved in the benefits sharing from the development. Besides, the involvement of the community in the evaluation should be considered as continuous engagement between the government agencies and the community. This is very important for the progress of projects development in Chenang Beach. This finding is not surprising since previous author (Weiss (1972) and Fournier (1995) also presented that most of the community wants to be involved in assessment and analysis about the development projects.

The results suggested that the relationship between development impact and community involvement were due to the demographic profile in Chenang Beach. Most of the

respondents are male, has finished schooling and self-employed. Besides, most of the respondents are between age of 31 to 50 years old. The demographic background had explained that most of the community in Chenang Beach were self-employed and doing business for living. Therefore, the involvement of the community in the development projects and the community perception on development impact are due to the demography background in Chenang Beach. This indicated that the more community involvement in development projects in Chenang Beach, the higher chances that development impact affects the community as a whole.

The future research should conduct specifically on youth perception towards development impact in Chenang Beach. This is because youth is the future generation that will prosper Chenang Beach. Further, study on different perspective might bring difference results and thoughts. Perhaps, continuous study should also be conducted to analyses the needs and factors that might affect the needs of the community in Chenang Beach. This study has contributed to the community empowerment in Chenang Beach.

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