

The Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Repercussions on the Malaysian Tourism Industry

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The outbreak of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) has hit the nation's tourism sector hard. With the closure of borders, industry players should now realize that they cannot rely and focus too much on international receipts but should also give equal balance attention to local tourist and tourism products. Hence, urgent steps must be taken by the government to reduce the impact of this outbreak on the country's economy, by introducing measures to boost domestic tourism and to satisfy the cravings of the tourism needs of the population. It is not an understatement that Malaysians often look for tourists' destinations outside Malaysia for fun and adventure, ignoring the fact that Malaysia has a lot to offer to tourist in terms of sun, sea, culture, heritage, gastronomy, and adventure. National geography programs like "Tribal Chef" demonstrate how "experiential tourism" resonates with the young and adventurous, international and Malaysian alike. The main purpose of this paper is to give an insight about the effect of Covid-19 pandemic to the tourism and hospitality services industry in Malaysia. What is the immediate impact of Covid-19 pandemic on Malaysia's tourism industry? What are the initiatives (stimulus package) taken by the Malaysian government in order to ensure tourism sustainability during Covid-19 pandemic? How to boost tourist confidence? How to revive Malaysia's tourism industry? How local government agencies can help in promoting and coordinating domestic tourism? These are some of the questions which a response is provided in the paper. Due to the current Conditional Movement Control Order (CMCO) in Malaysia which started from 18th March 2020 to the time this paper is written, the methodology is largely reliant on daily news and information including national Malaysia news and daily updates in local newspaper. The paper also makes some recommendations which have implications for practitioners and policy makers.

Keywords: tourism, Covid-19, government initiative, tourist confidence, local government, domestic tourism

Introduction

Tourism is the third biggest contributor to Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with a total contribution of RM86.14 billion Malaysia Ringgit¹ in 2019. The outbreak of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) has hit the nation's tourism sector hard, with an expected loss of RM3.37 billion Malaysian Ringgit within the first two months of the year 2020. As a result, Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for the year

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¹ RM means "Ringgit Malaysia" in Malay which in English means "Malaysian Ringgit".

(2020) is expected to shrink as much as 0.8 to 1.2 points, with a total potential loss of up to RM17.3 billion Malaysian Ringgit (Ahmad, 2020). In 2018, around 3.5 million people were employed in Malaysia's tourism sector. Tourism is one of Malaysia's biggest sectors for employment, making up just under a quarter of all employment (Hirschmann, 2019a; 2019b). According to MATTA (Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents) press release the tourism sector is looking at a near total-loss in business for the months of April, May, and June, 2019. In 2019, the total value from tourism receipts in Malaysia was approximately RM86.1 billion Malaysian Ringgit, an increase of about two billion Malaysian Ringgit from the previous year 2018. Top 10 international tourist arrivals for the first half of 2019 were from Singapore (5,381,566), Indonesia (1,857,864), China (1,558,782), Thailand (990,565), Brunei (627,112), India (354,486), South Korea (323,952), Philippines (210,974), Vietnam (200,314), and Japan (196,561). The highest tourist receipts came from Singapore (RM11.56 billion Malaysia Ringgit), followed by China (RM7.09 billion Malaysia Ringgit), Indonesia (RM5.71 billion Malaysia Ringgit), Thailand (RM1.7 billion Malaysia Ringgit), and Brunei (RM1.52 billion Malaysia Ringgit). In the case of highest expenditure per capita, Saudi Arabia (RM11,376.90 Malaysia Ringgit) took the top spot with UK (RM5,241.5 Malaysia Ringgit), Canada (RM4,593.1 Malaysia Ringgit), China (RM4,546 Malaysia Ringgit), and the US (RM4,537.90 Malaysia Ringgit) making up the top five. Saudi Arabia also took the top spot for the country with the highest average length of stay at 10.5 nights, followed by France (8.7 nights), Germany (8.3 nights), the Netherlands (8.1 nights), and Canada (7.7 nights) (Shankar, 2019). The tourism industry's uniqueness, dynamics, and resilience are evident from data that show it continues to record growth despite adverse events like the Gulf War, terrorism attacks, flu scares etc. (Mohsin, Ramli, & Alkhulayfi, 2015).

However, the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) has hit the nation's tourism sector hard, with an expected loss of RM3.37 billion Ringgit Malaysia within the first two months of the year 2020. As a result, Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for the year (2020) is expected to shrink as much as 0.8 to 1.2 points, with a total potential loss of up to RM17.3 billion Ringgit Malaysia. With the closure of borders, industry players should now realize that they cannot rely and focus too much on international receipts but should also give equal balance attention to local tourist and tourism products. Hence, urgent steps must be taken by the government to reduce the impact of this outbreak on the country's economy, by introducing measures to boost domestic tourism and to satisfy the cravings of the tourism needs of the population. It is not an understatement that Malaysians often look for tourists' destinations outside Malaysia for fun and adventure, ignoring the fact that Malaysia has a lot to offer to tourist in terms of sun, sea, culture, and adventure. National geography programs like "Tribal Chef" demonstrate how "experiential tourism" resonates with the young and adventurous, and Malaysian alike.

Research Method and Materials

While working on this paper, large reliant on daily news and information including national Malaysia news and daily updates in local newspaper were being used. Aside from that, there are observation and analysis of the present scenario that taken place in Malaysia due to pandemic Covid-19 which had a direct impact on the tourism sector in Malaysia; world studies related to crisis in tourism and recommendations from relevant institutions from the fields of tourism and health—regarding Covid-19; analysis of Malaysia government strategic planning in helping the tourism industry; analysis of statistical reports related to the tourist and

hospitality activity in the country; cabinet analysis of relevant literature and Internet resources; etc. Using Internet resources enabled the collection of up to date materials such as publications related to domestic crisis in tourism and different measures taken by the countries worldwide to cope with the Covid-19 crisis in the sector of tourism and hospitality—these materials were later analyzed. Furthermore, data from previous research were also used in this study.

Covid-19 Sudden Impact on Malaysia's Tourism Industry

The Covid-19 pandemics had severely hampered the Malaysia tourism hospitality service. Malaysia is targeting 30 million tourist arrivals and RM100 billion Malaysian Ringgit tourist receipts under Visit Malaysia 2020 (VM2020), but the Covid-19 outbreak has caused a major downside risk to the plan (Shukri, Minister Tourism, Arts and Culture, March 2020). The local hospitality industry has been severely impacted by the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and many hotels in the federal territory (Kuala Lumpur) are facing partial closure as their occupancy rates have dropped to a massive low. It was reported several four- and five-star hotels in Kuala Lumpur said their occupancy is currently below 10 percent and their business is partially closed. It was reported that the Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH) has projected a revenue loss of RM560.72 million Malaysian Ringgit for just the Movement Control Order (MCO)² period, with occupancy rates projected to fall to a staggering 11 percent. Hoteliers have no choice to partially close their business due to Covid-19. Room occupancy has dropped to below 20 percent from 60 percent to 70 percent (Kaur, 2020).

The “Visit Malaysia 2020” campaign had the ambitious targets of drawing 30 million visitors and RM100 billion Malaysian Ringgit in tourism receipts in 2020 were cancelled with immediate effect. The pandemic has caused massive disruption to the industry and forced the government to cancel the Visit Malaysia Year (Shukri, Tourism Minister Malaysia, March 19, 2020). The hospitality, entertainment and tourism industries have suffered greatly from this outbreak. The outbreak of the Covid-19 has hit the nation's tourism sector hard, with an expected loss of RM3.37 billion Malaysian Ringgit within the first two months of the year. As a result, Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for the year (2020) is expected to shrink as much as 0.8 to 1.2 points, with a total potential loss of up to RM17.3 billion Malaysian Ringgit (Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, March 9, 2020). Malaysia is imposing entry bans on travelers from most countries including Italy, Iran, and South Korea, China, following the Covid-19 outbreak in these countries. Malaysia is facing a sudden drop in international tourist arrivals, which in turn has an impact on economic revenue. Hence, such a great effort to cater to foreign tourists without strategically being engaged with the domestic tourism market is contributing to great economic to Malaysia. Though it is true that disease outbreaks are hard to predict, some believe that such a great effort to cater to foreign tourists without strategically being engaged with the domestic tourism market is contributing to this in no small part. For instance, newer shopping malls with restaurants catering only to “Chinese tourists”, which now are devoid of any life (Murallitharan, 2020).

Besides the loss suffered, the Covid-19 also influenced the travel trend in Malaysia. The Covid-19 pandemic influenced the Malaysia's tourism in many ways. The Malaysia's tourism industries have to adopt the new normal in order to ensure their sustainability. According to the Nigel Wong, Honorary Secretary-General, Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA), travel trends will definitely change after

² The Malaysian Government Movement Control Order, commonly referred to as the MCO or PKP (Malay), is a cordon sanitaire implemented as a preventive measure by the federal government of Malaysia in response to the Covid-19 pandemic in the country.

Covid-19 and there will definitely be changes to the types of holidays people take and to the frequency and mode of travel. Consumers may become more comfortable with shopping for tourism products online. Many regulations may have to be revised in order to ensure local domestic tourism businesses stay relevant and competitive in the digital space. He further said that the industry will need more time to return to some semblance of normality. There will be physical challenges as people will still be wary of going to places where they may be subject to close proximity to other people. Product owners (including tourist excursion) may have to put special guidelines in place to cater to these new preferences and habits which have been developed due to Covid-19 (Nigel Wong, 21 April 2020).

Travelling overseas is perceived to be unsafe and make one more susceptible to contracting the virus as compared to domestic travel. Domestic tourism is now the alternative to overseas travel. The hotel industry will see an increased interest in all-inclusive accommodation, minimizing exposure while maximizing experience, catered to the needs and wants of Malaysians by targeting individual interests based on their demographics. Yap Lip Seng, Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH) CEO was optimistic that domestic travel will play a key role in helping a portion of the tourism industry to recover (Ahmad, 2020).

Government Initiative (Economic Stimulus Package)

The Malaysian government had announced the 2020 Economic Stimulus Package which will help mitigate the impact to the tourism industry that has been severely affected by the Covid-19 coronavirus outbreak. As part of the package, the government will introduce several incentives that could potentially help to boost local tourism. Malaysians will get a personal income tax relief of up to RM1,000 Malaysian Ringgit on spending related to domestic tourism (Tun Mahathir Muhamad, Interim Prime Minister, February 2020). Besides, Malaysians will also be eligible to get digital vouchers for domestic tourism of up to RM100 per person for domestic flights, rails transport³, and hotel accommodations, with the government to allocate RM500 million for these vouchers and matching grants for tourism promotion (Tun Mahathir Muhamad, Interim Prime Minister, New Straits Times, February 2020). The hotels are asked to offer discounts and shopping malls to reduce rentals to their tenants. To further cushion the impact of Covid-19, the government will also lessen the existing guidelines that restrict government agencies' use of hotels in order to help with the reduced tourism demand. Hotels, shopping malls, and other tourism-related businesses were given 15 percent discount in monthly electricity bills from April 2020 to September 2020. The Malaysia Airport Holdings Berhad (BHD)⁴ also provides rebates for shop rentals at airports as well as landing and parking charges. The stimulus package is also extended to those in the tourism excursion services. The lower number of tourist arrivals has negatively impacted those reliant on tourism for their livelihood, a one-off payment of RM600 Malaysian Ringgit each to taxi drivers, tourist bus drivers, tourist guides, and registered trishaw drivers. Further, hotels and travel-related companies were exempted from the Human Resource Development Fund levies from April 2020 to September 2020 (Tun Mahathir Muhamad, Interim Prime Minister, February 2020).

³ Rail transport in Malaysia consists of heavy rail (including commuter rail), light rapid transit (LRT), mass rapid transit (MRT), monorails, airport rail links, and a funicular railway line. Heavy rail is mostly used for intercity passenger and freight transport as well as some urban public transport, while rapid transit is used for intra-city urban public transport in Kuala Lumpur, the national capital, and the surrounding Klang Valley region.

⁴ BHD is a suffix for Berhad, which is used in Malaysia to identify a public limited company. Berhad, BHD, or Bhd after a company's name indicates that it is a Malaysian public limited company (PLC).

How to Boost Tourist Confidence?

Aside from the initiatives given by the Malaysian government, the tourism stakeholders need to do their part to boost confidence in the local travel landscape. Travel operators need to be prepared to change what they have been doing in the past. For example, an agency that has been focusing on selling airline tickets only now needs to sell domestic or inbound travel packages too. Tourism companies should use this time to invest in training and up skilling its staff. It is vital, too, to engage with tourism boards to understand products better and to come up with better post-coronavirus marketing strategies (Liang, President, Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA), April 6, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic did not just cause death to hundreds of thousand globally but had also caused a fear among the people. Hence, to regain the tourist confidence it is very crucial that steps must be taken to instill the confidence among the tourist, that the hotels and hospitality services are safe and sound for usage. For the hospitality industry to restart successfully, the key to success is instilling consumer confidence that a hotel campus is clean, safe, and secure (Scott Berman, Principal and Industry Leader of the Hospitality & Leisure Group at PricewaterhouseCoopers, Miami, April 21, 2020). Hence, hygiene will be front and center for 2020 and 2021 until there is a comfort level on cleanliness and delivering healthy stays/trips. The proposal by MATTA to implement “Safe & Clean” Certification Scheme should be implemented accordingly (MATTA, May 20, 2020). Some countries have already begun putting this into practice. Singapore takes this so seriously that it has launched a scheme to audit hotels nationwide and give them a clean bill of health if they meet seven criteria (Table 1 below). An “SG Clean” stamp placed prominently at an establishment will give locals and visitors “peace of mind”, which aims to audit and certify 570 hotels, tourism attractions, and other tourism establishments in the next two months and 37,000 eventually. Grand Hyatt Singapore was the first Singapore hotel to receive an “SG Clean” stamp (Hamid, 2020). Similarly, Accor, a leading Augmented Hospitality hotel group, has partnered with testing and certification provider to develop safety standards and cleaning protocols (Caswell, 2020).

Table 1

7-Point for SG Clean Program

7-point for SG Clean Program	Clause number for Implementation Requirement
1. Appoint a “SG Clean” Manager to implement measures and ensure compliance to checklist of SG Clean Program.	1
2. Have processes in place to check temperature and look out for respiratory symptoms of employees and ensure that those who have visited Covid-19 affected countries with travel restrictions in place or are under an active Stay-Home Notice (SHN) or Quarantine Order (QO) are not at the hotel.	2
3. Where feasible and applicable, have processes in place to check temperature and look out for respiratory symptoms of tenants, suppliers, and ensure that tenants, contractors, and suppliers who have visited Covid-19 affected countries with travel restrictions in place or are under an active SHN or QO are not at the hotel. Where feasible and applicable, have processes in place to check temperature and look out for respiratory symptoms of hotel guests 1 and event guests. Implement appropriate safe distancing measures for guests.	3
4. Step up frequency of disinfection for all common facilities and ensure that employees observe good personal hygiene.	4
5. Check that procedures are in place to manage Covid-19 suspect cases.	5
6. Check there are documents and records of all preventive measures.	6
7. Ensure compliance to government orders, guidelines, and health advisories on the Covid-19.	7

Role of Government Agencies in Coordinating Tourism Activities

The local government sector has traditionally played an important role in supporting tourism development of local areas. This included the provision of infrastructure, the development of tourist attractions and experiences, support for festivals and events, and the implementation of tourist promotion plans. Tourism plans, policies, and development objectives are core elements of the County and City Development Plans. Importantly, the sector mobilized a network of stakeholders including agencies, community groups, and the private sector to invest in and promote their local tourist offering. These activities were driven by the ambition of each local authority to harness the development opportunity of areas throughout Ireland as places to live in, invest in, and visit in a sustainable way (Local Authorities Ireland Tourism Policy, 2017). The local government has a role to develop the community-based tourism potential as follows:

Motivator

In the development of tourism, the role of local government as a motivator necessary for stretching the tourism business continues to run. Investors, communities, and entrepreneurs in the field of tourism are the main target. The local government needs to continuously support and motivates the main stake holders to ensure sustainability of tourism within the locality.

Facilitator

To provide facilities in order to support all programs organized by the government. Practically, governments can make cooperation with various parties, both public and private.

Dynamist

In the pillars of good governance, so that the ideal development can take place, the government, private sector, and the public should be able to synergize well (Adi, Utama, Sri Budhi, & Purbadharma, 2017). According to Angela M. Cameron, Ali Memon, David G. Simmons, and John R. Fairweather (Lincoln University, 2001) to enable tourism development, territorial local authorities should play the following role namely:

1. Support economic development initiatives, such as funding for Regional Tourism Organizations, business feasibility studies or rating relief,
2. Help develop local amenities and attractions, such as zoos, art galleries, parks, and reserves,
3. Promote events, such as cultural or sporting festivals. To manage tourism's adverse social and environmental impacts, territorial local authorities,
4. Regulate tourism development, for example, setting environmental, health and safety standards,
5. Plan utilities, such as transport networks, waste management, and sewerage,
6. Monitor tourism development and trends, such as host satisfaction surveys and environmental monitoring.

Domestic (Community-Based) Tourism

Community Based Tourism (CBT) is defined by World Bank as "Community driven development aims at giving a voice to the stakeholders, involve them in identifying their own needs and the ensuing decision making, encourage them to take responsibility, and mobilize the majority of actors in a given community through a participatory process". This type of tourism often allows the local community to be proactive and manage their tourists well. Not only that, but they are also motivated to create a better environment so that the tourists can enjoy their trips as well. In Malaysia CBT is well established in Sarawak, where it involves the local

communities, environment, social and cultural rights. It has very strong focus because it directly benefits the local communities. The potential of CBT is that it empowers the community, by encouraging them to engage in planning, evaluation, and control of resources. CBT encourages this whole and holistic approach to benefit the visitors. This quality approach not only helps to improve CBT performance but also influences the visitors to learn, respect the way of life of the local people and enjoy their visit (Mybackyardtour.com, 2019).

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is normally regarded as a platform for local community to generate economic benefits through offering their products to tourists that range from the local communities, lifestyles, natural resources, and cultures. CBT is also characterized as a development program which enhances the social and cultural benefits of local community through the social and cultural exchanges with tourists (Donny, & Mohd Nor, 2012). The Community-Based Tourism comprises of crucial facets like local communities, natural resources, cultures, and lifestyles. This type of tourism gives opportunities for the local communities to set up their own small-scale self-managed business. The natural resources are part of tourism products that locals offer to the visitors. Besides that, numerous culture practices by the locals are motivators to tourists who are eager to see themselves the differences of cultures, as compared to theirs. With that, guests will have the opportunity to experience and learn about the local ways of life and cultures. In fact, these activities are a complete package that can be found in a home stay program, a program that involves active participation among the community who have “skills and knowledge already exist” in them (Dunn, 2007, p. 14) and is a source of income, particularly to community in rural areas.

CBT helps the communities to improve their competences in the entrepreneurship, management, communication (interpersonal) and leadership. This involvement empowers the local community in every aspect of tourism management especially on the fact that they can earn money. For instance, having a local guide to cook various traditional foods for English-speaking tourists can improve their English communication skills. This is part of his job to make sure that the tourists can gain real information while tasting the food. Secondly, CBT helps the communities to preserve their culture, tradition, and heritage. Home stay operators, local guides, cultural performers, and many others who are working directly through CBT can take pride in recognizing themselves as stalwarts of local traditions. They maintain not only their culture and heritage but also prepare the next generation to uphold their culture. Thirdly, CBT has improved the quality of life in the communities due to various job opportunities created. Small businesses were established in the home stay areas selling local handicraft such as Bidayuh bead products, and food cottage industry (Mybackyardtour.com, 2019).

Result and Discussion

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is regarded as a platform for local community to generate economic benefits through offering their products to tourists that range from the local communities, lifestyles, natural resources, and cultures. CBT is also characterized as a development program which enhances the social and cultural benefits of local community through social and cultural exchanges with tourists which is seen as a process of assimilation. The Community-Based Tourism comprises of crucial facets like local communities, natural resources, cultures, and lifestyles that they can offer to tourists. This type of tourism gives abundance of opportunity for the local communities to set up their own self-managed business even in the micro level of commercial. The tourism products that the local used are majority from the natural resources that tourists anticipate to bargain. Besides that, locals’ cultural practices and traditions are becoming a major factor in enticing tourists who are eager to see cultural differences before their very eyes and with that, they would have

the opportunity in experiencing and learning about the locals' way of life and cultures. In fact, these activities are a complete package that can be found in a home stay program which it involves an active participation among the community who already have the skills and knowledge in them and is a source of income by giving those skills as a hospitality service to tourists. Above all, CBT imparts Malaysians to display their sense of citizenship and loyalty in a fun and adventurous manner while re-learning local traditions, culture, and heritage, whilst reviving the domestic economy which is much needed in this post Covid-19 pandemic period.

This research aims at proposing ways or an approach that can be done in order to boost the domestic tourism specifically the Community-Based Tourism which involves the state's Tourism Exco as the policy maker and three main stake holders (service providers, local community, and relevant government agencies including the local authority) as shown below.

As seen in Figure 1, the State Exco Tourism, tourism industry service provider, government agencies at state level including the local authority, and community head should be working closely in order to ensure every step taken is involved as each component leads to another component. For example, in Figure 1, the State Exco Tourism as the tourism policy maker, for instance, tour guiding policies, which is then being implemented by the tourism service provider to the end user. Similar process towards the government agency at the state level and also the community head. However, in ensuring the sustainability of the domestic tourism, there should also be an effective communication between all parties as each of it plays a vital role.

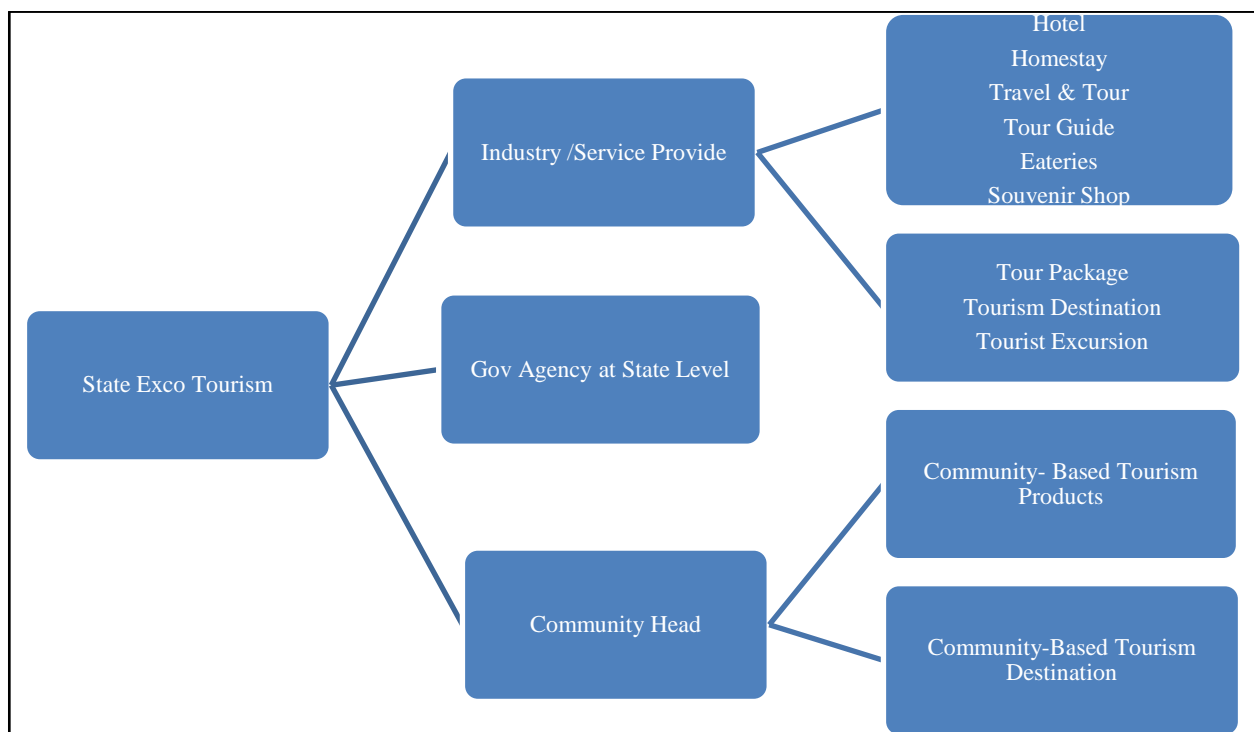


Figure 1. Role and function of stake holders in promoting tourism activities.

Conclusion

Tourism is the third biggest contributor to Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) with a total contribution of RM86.14 billion Malaysian Ringgit as of 2019. However, the spread of Covid-19 pandemic in the end of 2019 had hindered the tourism industry which is one of the most prosperous economy sectors for

almost every country in the world. Malaysia tourism industry is no exception to this. The outbreak of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) has hit hard the nation's tourism sector, with an expected loss of RM3.37 billion Malaysian Ringgit within the first two months of the year 2020. As a result, Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for the year (2020) shrunk as much as 0.8 to 1.2 points, with a total potential loss of up to RM17.3 billion Malaysian Ringgit. This was a massive lost not just towards the tourism industries but also to the Malaysian government as well. The enactment of the Movement Control Order (MCO) policy and closed border policy resulted to an instant stop of undertaking the international tourists from coming to Malaysia to this day (2021). This had forced the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia (MOTAC) to cancel "Visit Malaysia 2020" campaign with immediate effect. The unprecedented societal changes brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic are dramatically affecting both international and domestic tourism. Travelling overseas is perceived to be unsafe and make an individual more susceptible towards contracting the virus as compared to domestic travel. The act of domestic travelling in certain ways is seen to be safer while helping the local travel industry to get back on track. A lot of robust efforts had been done in order to build and sustain an exciting domestic tourist market which would have ensured that when foreign tourists "dry up", locals would have at least helped in tiding things over.

Although the ministry will make full use of the economic stimulus package to address the Covid-19 situation and assist those in need but, this is not the solution to the problem faced by Malaysia tourism and hospitality industry. The industry players should now realize that they cannot rely and focus too much on international receipts but should also give equal balance attention to local tourist and tourism products as well. Hence, urgent steps must be taken by the government to reduce the impact of this outbreak towards the country's economy, the tourism industry, the local council and relevant government agencies, and most importantly for the community itself.

There is no doubt that the Covid-19 pandemic destroyed the Visit Malaysia 2020 campaign and Malaysia's tourism industry as a whole. Nonetheless, it brought along a message that the local tourism industry should not become too dependent on international tourists and should also be focusing on the locals too. A lesson learned from this Covid-19 pandemic that the tourism stake holder should strike a balance between local (community-based tourism) and international tourism. The government agencies and the local authority should play an active role in ensuring the community-based tourism within their locality is sustainable and being promoted actively. Community-Based Tourism products and activities should be given a wide coverage locally and internationally. It is proven that Community-Based Tourism could sustain the livelihood if it is maintained properly. Until the international tourists are allowed to travel to Malaysia, the Ministry of Tourism and the local authority should be proactive in encouraging Malaysians to travel locally in order to help the tourism industry in surviving the current situation. Above all the tourist accommodations (home stay, hotel, resort, holiday home, etc.) should be ready and willing to invest in order to get their premises to be sanitized, and certified as safe for their guests. This will help to boost the confidence among the local travelers that they are well protected during their stay at the premise.

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