Social Entrepreneurship and Tourism in Malaysia: Advancement Strategies Inspire Community Engagement Using PRISMA Method

Shaherah Abdul Malik[1,2], Noreen Noor Abd Aziz[2*], Mohd Hafizan Musa[3], Shahrizan Yusoff[4]

1   Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business, Universiti Utara Malaysia,50300,Wilayah Perseketuan Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
2   Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Johor Kampus Segamat, 85000 Segamat , Johor, Malaysia
3   Computing Sciences Studies,College of Computing, Informatics and Media, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Johor Kampus Segamat, 85000 Segamat , Johor, Malaysia
4   Manufacturing Section, Universiti Kuala Lumpur Malaysian Spanish Institute, 09000 Kulim, Kedah, Malaysia

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This paper aims to conduct a methodical analysis of social entrepreneurship and tourism in Malaysia to propose progress strategies that promote community engagement. It analyses the role of Malaysian social entrepreneurs in promoting the development of community engagement. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) has been used as an official systematic review guideline for data collection. Data were obtained from research studies in the period 2012-2022. 25 papers from the Web of Science (WoS), Scopus, and Google Scholar databases were analysed. The results suggest that Europe has published the most on these subjects during the past ten years. One of the main issues related is the financial and strategic policy issues of Malaysia tourism from 2020 to 2030. The findings show that social entrepreneurship attaches importance to using strategies to enhance the development of competencies to develop the tourism sector in the country. Eight strategies have been identified to create a framework that includes innovation and strong cooperation practices between the government, NGOs, entrepreneurs, and local communities implemented in the tourism sector in the country.

1. Introduction

Social entrepreneurship is moving aggressively into the mainstream as a movement and a term. And with this increasing popularity, more and more change agents are racing to the scene to comprehend what it is and who social entrepreneurs are. Simple terms, social entrepreneurs are businessmen who use their businesses to create social value.

According to Borzaga and Galera [1], social entrepreneurship, pursuing a dual mission to achieve financial sustainability and social impact, has been identified as an essential contributor to economic development and social change in local communities. Nevertheless, social

---

* *Corresponding author.*
E-mail address: noree974@uitm.edu.my (Noreen Noor Abd Aziz)

entrepreneurship projects are only successful if they support significant stakeholders, such as governments, enterprises, tourists, and local communities [2].

As one of Malaysia's core industries, tourism is the country's fifth largest sector after financial services, oil palm, wholesale and retail, gas and energy, and petroleum, contributing billions to the Gross National Product (GDP). The tourism sector has also developed much social entrepreneurship in the country. In addition, this sector also help to improve the income and socioeconomic of the local population. Ecotourism sub-sector, cultural heritage tourism, social tourism and volunteer tourism are subsectors in the tourism industry [4]. Conversely, increasingly Malaysian NGOs successfully utilise social entrepreneurship to support their initiatives which have been crucial to the nation's economic and political recovery since the Covid-19 pandemic.

This article adds two things to the body of knowledge by answering this query. First, this study responds to Grybovych *et al.,* [6] in the need for a critical examination of the interactions between tourism-based social enterprises and local communities to provide a thorough evaluation and nuance of the social values produced by such initiatives. Therefore, this article aims to improve the knowledge of social entrepreneurship in the tourism industry. The second step is examining the newest social entrepreneurship development tactics for Malaysian tourism industry.

The following is the breakdown of this article. The following section reviews current studies and explores critical ideas, emphasizing Malaysia's National Tourism Policy, social entrepreneurship, and local involvement in tourism development. The original dataset is presented and illustrated with a choice of prime examples from the tourism industry. The final section examines several strategic recommendations made by Malaysian tourist social entrepreneurs and critically evaluating how social entrepreneurship might be crucial to the growth of regional tourism.

2. Literature Review

The Oxford English Dictionary defines tourism as a person who makes a visit or visits at a time of spaciousness [5]. Tourism also refers to leisure tourism and business tourism, and it includes the following sub-sectors: accommodation, shopping, tourism products (e.g. ecotourism, cruise ship tourism and other related activities such as spa and wellness), food and beverages, as well as domestic transport (inbound) and domestic transport.

The tourist sector in Malaysia started to take shape in the late 1960s. Tourism was not seen as a significant economic activity until 1970 since primary commodities like rubber and tin outweighed the importance. Malaysia is now globally recognised as one of the top tourist destinations, ranking in the top 10 in terms of tourist arrivals and 15 among the top 15 in terms of global acceptance.

2.1 National Tourism Policy of Malaysia

The National Tourism Policy of Malaysia (DPN) 2020-2030 is formulated to transform Malaysia's tourism industry by leveraging public-private sector partnerships to drive innovation and competitiveness towards sustainable and inclusive development in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. In line with the strategic direction, six transformation strategies are designed to drive transformative change, including strengthening governance capacity, creating a special tourism investment zone, receiving smart tourism, increasing demand sophistication, adopting sustainable and responsible tourism and enhancing human capital skills. Twenty-two strategic actions and 32 tactics later supported this strategy.

In addition, through the NDP 2020-2030, the Malaysia Association of Tourism Agencies (MATA) believes that the tourism sector in Malaysia can be more competitive, sustainable, inclusive, and ready to weather disasters such as Pandemic Covid-19 in the future.

However, efforts to increase the role and percentage of social entrepreneurship in the tourism sector in Malaysia are not explained in detail in the NDP 2020-2030. Although the government is very focused on strengthening the tourism segment through this strategic plan, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) concept is to increase innovation tendencies. In the tourism sector, rough the involvement of social entrepreneurs is still a question mark. Is the government still sceptical of the ability of social entrepreneurs to boost Malaysia's name in the tourism sector, or do the government and society still lack understanding of the term social entrepreneurship in the tourism sector?

2.2 Social Entrepreneurship in Tourism

Some critical themes reflect the importance of social entrepreneurship in the tourism sector, such as economic and social value creation, social innovation and sustainability in the destination. These themes are captured in the definition, which states that social entrepreneurship in the tourism sector is a process that uses tourism to sustainably create innovative solutions to social, environmental and economic problems. By connecting the best tourist destinations in a country with ideas, capacities, resources and social agreements from within or outside the goal, social entrepreneurship in the tourism sector is capable of sustainable transformation of entrepreneurship and tourism [7]. Hjalager and Nordin [8] have analysed how social entrepreneurship in tourism emerged, and a brief typology developed from the roles, functions, and offerings of products and services. They also suggested that the social diversity of tourism in the tourism value chain should bring together 'suppliers', 'providers', and 'intermediaries' of generic social entrepreneurship models based on social innovation strategies developed by Hoogendoorn *et al.*, [9].

Jordan *et al.*, [10] also described social entrepreneurs in the tourism sector as 'agents of change' who used their talents and passion for driving the transformation of a country's tourism destination. Using their entrepreneurial skills alongside their philanthropic vision, these individuals act as entities facilitating goals to achieve their tourism and the aspirations of the wider community. This is because cooperation between social entrepreneurs, NGOs and the government can encourage participation, engagement, and collaboration between communities to provide the necessary resources and create an institutional environment that supports social tourism enterprises [11].

Mair and Martí [12] also agree with the benefits offered by this social entrepreneur. An article published by them stated that, although the goal of social entrepreneurs is to generate finance, they also help the community's life aspects to create a community that can manage and addresses local social problems and their needs. Malek and Costa [13] also stated that this vision covers the essence of community development based on the unity of the community and government agencies and NGOs and strengthens the sustainability of economic, social and environmental outcomes.

Fostering sustainable community development through social entrepreneurship requires cooperation from entrepreneurs, communities, travel agencies, NGOs and governments. A strategic plan needs to be programmed based on unity and community agencies, led by tourism social entrepreneurs who influence the cooperation and engagement of local communities and decision-makers, shaped by factors such as market opportunities, innovation strategies, market orientation

and local policies. The following section will present and debate methods and theories for developing the strategic plan to promote community involvement in this social entrepreneurship program.

3. Methodology

In this study, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) tool was used to establish and standardise the search strategy as well as to identify the key components of the review question. PRISMA is a systematic strategy for seeking qualitative investigation studies and mixed methods. By identifying the critical components of non-quantitative investigation inquiries, the PRISMA tool makes it easier to be forceful during investigations.

3.1 Identifying Research Questions

This article explores strategies, issues, and the relevance of strategies to promote social entrepreneurs in the Malaysian tourism sector. Therefore, the following research questions are formed to guide investigation in order to ensure that various literatures that focuses on those areas of interest is captured.

1. What strategies can the Malaysian government, policymakers and social entrepreneurs use in the tourism sector?
2. What factors influence the strategy of choice?

3.2 Identify Related Studies

The top search terms and concepts are used to research the writing of related publications on social entrepreneurs used by the Tourism community around the world. Various keywords for search terms are used to get more comprehensive coverage of the literature, such as Tourism. Three databases have been searched to identify key peer-reviewed source literature. They are a Web of Science (WoS), Scopus and Google Scholar. Descriptive essential search items are described in Table 1.

Table 1
The leading search item used to issue a published article

Essential search items used to generate published articles
"Tourism industry" OR "Tourism Malaysia"
"Social enterprise" OR "SE"

3.3 PRISMA Bush List

The PRISMA checklist is used to identify the article. Twenty-five articles have been identified from the primary search descriptors. Each piece has been checked for the screen. Seventeen themes that did not fit those criteria were in Table 2, which deals with social entrepreneurs in the tourism sector.

Table 2
Comprising and exclusion criteria

Criterion	Comprising	Exception
Period	2002-2022	Articles outside the year
Language	English and English	Other languages
Types of articles	Original and peer-reviewed research	Articles that are not peer-reviewed
Study focus	A social entrepreneur in the tourism industry	Other residents

This process continues with a deeper iteration of the review in which the full-text version of the article is obtained, carefully reviewed, and verified as relevant, guided by the author's exclusion or inclusion criteria. The process results produce the last nine reports identified by the research topic as illustrated in Figure 1 below.
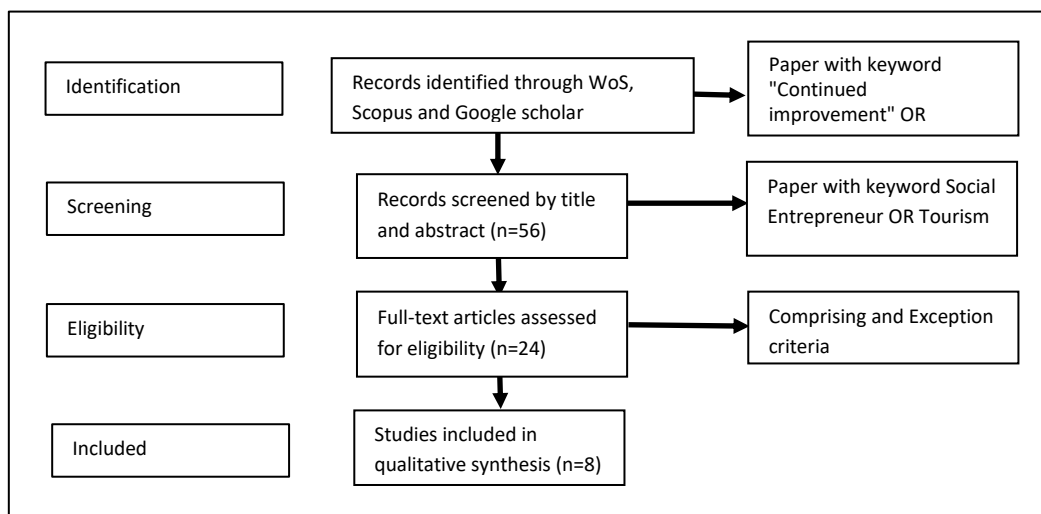

Fig. 1. Image of PRISMA for article selection

4. Issue Analysis

One of the ways the government supports the improvement of the tourism industry is through the tourism function in Malaysia. Tourism Malaysia, in collaboration with local and social entrepreneurs, should make the most of digital promotion and marketing through innovative interactive and social media hardware to offer a travel experience tailored to the needs of specific market segments [14]. Social media can be used to dominate the travel market as online views and reviews become increasingly popular as a reference to tourists in making adventure decisions. All industry participants, including locals, NGOs, and local governments, are encouraged to maximize the potential of digital marketing by leveraging the platforms of Tourism Malaysia. The marketing platform should be enhanced to be more user-friendly and interactive and have engaging and relevant content [15].

In addition, safety measures should also be taken to ensure the satisfaction and well-being of tourists while in the country [16]. The behaviour of a few people who take advantage of tourists should not be taken for granted. Proposals to create a tourist security unit in collaboration with NGOs, residents and social entrepreneurs should be established to help the police deal with crimes against tourists. The authorities need to increase the number of security personnel, especially in tourist hotspots, so that the safety and well-being of tourists are ensured. Patrols also need to be carried out more often, and more safety huts are erected. In short, the security aspect should be

emphasised so that foreign tourists continue to visit the country and preserve its image of the country [17].

The third proposed strategy is to identify the community's needs and develop local capacity to address these needs through training and some form of community-based tourism [18]. A travel agency has adopted this strategy at a social enterprise in the Philippines that operates 'squatter tours' in Manila. In their observations, they found that residents from the slums work and are trained to manage tourist visits and facilitate the day-to-day operations of tourism enterprises.

In addition, Phillips *et al.,* [20] propose a social innovation approach by 'building a movement' complementing the work of the 'intermediary' tourism experience. Movement-building social enterprises share a similar purpose with non-profit advocacy organisations, influencing people's views on social issues through their commercial activities [19]. In this model, responsible forms of travel are promoted by tourism intermediaries to the market, emphasising the need for sustainable tourism, positive changes in tourist travel behaviour, and the social reasons they are intended to support.

Reid *et al.,* [21] state that community governance is essential in the proliferation of social entrepreneurs in the interspersing sector. Strategic or community governance plan can be used as an innovative approach to promoting the tourism sector. A good governance framework can also be used as a two-pronged platform with community consensus in the community development process.

Next, the innovation strategy should influence the market orientation of the tourism social enterprise, which leads to two factors having a mutually exclusive relationship [23]. Market orientation involves the supply of tourism products and income-generating activities that this enterprise can offer and facilitates in exchange for consumer spending. This outlines the value proposition of the tourism social enterprise for tourists (guests), while the innovation strategy determines the social value proposition for the local community [22].

The government should formulate a local policy that should act as an 'enabler' of social entrepreneurship activities in the tourism sector. This policy should support tourism initiatives, business models, and activities that give back sound to the community [24]. This is because voluntary resources to community efforts can lead to publicity about their company in line with a specific cause or event. In addition, they generate additional income by working with non-profit organisations at special events, raising awareness of their business and contributing to fundraising.

Finding a source of income remains a challenge and dominates the country's tourism director. The threat from the status quo exists due to short-term market fluctuations, changing legacy patterns, and competition is complex challenges to overcome. As a result, the opportunity and financing provided can catalyst the growth of social entrepreneurs in the country's tourism sector. However, there are possible looming income problems that hinder complex social structures and low incomes that can increase the negative perception of social entrepreneurs in the tourism sector. Thus, five (5) proposals for interrelated community capitals in overlapping elliptical amid advancing social entrepreneurs in the tourism sector including:

i.   Natural capital is related to topography, the natural world, and local resources, such as the landforms, plants, and wildlife that frequently serve as the destination's main tourist draw.
ii. Built-up capital refers to the construction of physical infrastructures, such as buildings, roads, and other facilities, in support of the mobilization of the tourism sector.
iii. The financial capital includes the required financial resources to develop the infrastructure and the ability of the community to finance social entrepreneurship projects in the tourism sector.

---

iv. Social capital is based on the social structure and networking in the community and the abilities of the network of tourism social entrepreneurs.

v. Human capital includes talent, knowledge, and community skills that will allow them to make the most of their resources, hire outside help for resources that are not available to them locally, and fill specific jobs in the tourism industry.

However, further research needs to be done to ensure the certainty of accessibility issues towards the latest Malaysia National Tourism Policy 2020-2030. The small sampling sizes that explore this study may also contribute to such recommendations.

5. Conclusions

The tourism sector is an industry that can generate the country's economic growth. It is an important sector to increase national income by increasing the number of tourists visiting. However, all planned efforts require high obligations and commitments from all parties and must be implemented wisely, such as pulling hair in flour, hair not breaking, and flour not scattering. It is hoped that the country's tourism industry will continue to grow and always rise from the lips of the people globally and globally.

Acknowledgement

References
[1] Borzaga, Carlo, and Giulia Galera. "New trends in the nonprofit sector in Europe: The emergence of social enterprises." In *Accountability and social accounting for social and non-profit organizations*, pp. 89-110. Emerald Group Publishing Limited, (2014).

[2] Cole, Stroma. "Information and Empowerment: The Keys to Achieving Sustainable Tourism." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 14, no. 6 (2006): 629–44.

[3] Gregory, D. J., and B. B. Anderson. "Framing a theory of social entrepreneurship: Building on two schools of practice and thought." *Research on social entrepreneurship* (2006): 39-66.

[4] Dickinson, Janet E., Karen Ghali, Thomas Cherrett, Chris Speed, Nigel Davies, and Sarah Norgate. "Tourism and the smartphone app: Capabilities, emerging practice and scope in the travel domain." *Current issues in tourism* 17, no. 1 (2014): 84-101.

[5] Garau, Chiara. "From territory to smartphone: Smart fruition of cultural heritage for dynamic tourism development." *Planning Practice and Research* 29, no. 3 (2014): 238-255.

[6] Grybovych, Oksana, and Delmar Hafermann. "Sustainable practices of community tourism planning: Lessons from a remote community." *Community Development* 41, no. 3 (2010): 354-369.

[7] Hall, Jeremy, Stelvia Matos, Lorn Sheehan, and Bruno Silvestre. "Entrepreneurship and innovation at the base of the pyramid: a recipe for inclusive growth or social exclusion?" *Journal of management studies* 49, no. 4 (2012): 785-812.

[8] Hjalager, Anne-Mette, and Sara Nordin. "User-driven innovation in tourism—A review of methodologies." *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism* 12, no. 4 (2011): 289-315.

[9] Hoogendoorn, Brigitte, Enrico Pennings, and Roy Thurik. (2010). "What Do We Know About Social Entrepreneurship : An Analysis of Empirical Research" Erasmus Research Institute of Management ERIM, June: 39 no. 8 (2010).

[10] Jordan, Evan J., Christine A. Vogt, Linda E. Kruger, and Nicole Grewe. "The interplay of governance, power and citizen participation in community tourism planning." *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events* 5, no. 3 (2013): 270-288.

[11] Kiss, Agnes. "Is community-based ecotourism a good use of biodiversity conservation funds?." *Trends in ecology & evolution* 19, no. 5 (2004): Elsevier Ltd: 232–237.

[12] Mair, Johanna, and Ignasi Martí. "Social Entrepreneurship Research: A Source of Explanation, Prediction, and Delight." *Journal of World Business* 41, no. 1 (2006): 36–44.

[13] Malek, Anahita, and Carlos Costa. "Integrating Communities into Tourism Planning Through Social Innovation." *Tourism Planning and Development* 12, no. 3 (2015): Routledge: 281–299.

[14] Hardy, Anne, Robert JS Beeton, and Leonie Pearson. "Sustainable tourism: An overview of the concept and its position in relation to conceptualisations of tourism." *Journal of sustainable tourism* 10, no. 6 (2002): 475-496.

[15] Mosedale, Jan. "Thinking outside the box: Alternative political economies in tourism." In *Political Economy of Tourism*, pp. 93-108. Routledge, (2010).

[16] Ateljevic, Irena, Nigel Morgan, and Annette Pritchard, eds. *The critical turn in tourism studies: Creating an academy of hope*. Vol. 22. Routledge, (2013).

[17] Mosedale, Jan, and Frieder Voll. "Social innovations in tourism: Social practices contributing to social development." *Social entrepreneurship and tourism: Philosophy and practice* (2017): 101-115.

[18] Murphy, Jamie, Albert Teo, Casey Murphy, and Eunice Liu. "The BEST Society: From charity to social entrepreneurship." *Social entrepreneurship and tourism: Philosophy and practice* (2017): 237-249.

[19] Okazaki, Etsuko. "A community-based tourism model: Its conception and use." *Journal of sustainable tourism* 16, no. 5 (2008): 511-529.

[20] Phillips, Wendy, Hazel Lee, Abby Ghobadian, Nicholas O'regan, and Peter James. "Social innovation and social entrepreneurship: A systematic review." *Group & Organization Management* 40, no. 3 (2015): SAGE Publications Inc.: 428–61.

[21] Reid, Donald G., Heather Mair, and Wanda George. "Community tourism planning: A self-assessment instrument." *Annals of Tourism research* 31, no. 3 (2004): 623-639.

[22] Scheyvens, Regina. "Ecotourism and the empowerment of local communities." *Tourism management* 20, no. 2 (1999): Elsevier Ltd: 245–249.

[23] Salazar, Noel B. "Community-based cultural tourism: Issues, threats and opportunities." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 20, no. 1 (2012): 9-22.

[24] Schellhorn, Matthias. "Development for whom? Social justice and the business of ecotourism." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 18, no. 1 (2010): 115-135.