

Information Required by the Disabled Travelers: A Case Study in Kukup Island, Tanjung Piai, Ledang Hills and Endau-Rompin Forest Park

Maklumat yang dikehendaki oleh pengunjung Orang Kurang Upaya: Satu Kajian Kes di Pulau Kukup, Tanjung Piai, Ledang Hills dan Taman Hutan Endau-Rompin

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ABSTRACT

Disabled tourism is being popular nowadays. However, the current tourism environment is not suitable for the use of disabled. Whether it is domestic or international travel, it involves travelers visiting the far destination from the original residential areas and using the services provided at the destination. Thus, the needs of travelers in terms of information and accessible facilities must be provided to attract tourists. However, incomplete source of information has been identified as a major weakness in disabled tourism. The objective of this paper is to review the information required by disabled travelers before they planned their holidays and to study the facility available in the national park at the study area. From the literature review, it is found that a wide range of information needed such as online accessibility, transportation, accommodation and disabled tourist attraction. Not all the national parks at the study area provided a website with complete information required by disabled travelers. From observation and audit method, it is found that the detailed facility planning should be done to improve the condition of the existing special facilities and building more facilities. Not all park managers are concerned and aware of the needs of disabled travelers. Business opportunities in the tourism sector can be created by addressing these barriers. Many disabled travelers will be planning for holidays if the information provided is complete and the accessibility of the tourism environment is created.

Keywords: Accessibility; disabled; facility; information; tourism

ABSTRAK

Pelancongan orang kurang upaya sedang popular pada masa kini. Walau bagaimanapun, persekitaran pelancongan ketika ini tidak sesuai untuk kegunaan orang kurang upaya. Sama ada ia adalah perjalanan domestik atau antarabangsa, ia melibatkan pelancong melawat destinasi yang jauh dari kawasan perumahan asal dan menggunakan perkhidmatan yang disediakan di destinasi. Oleh itu, keperluan pelancong dari segi maklumat dan keperluan perlu disediakan untuk menarik pelancong. Bagaimanapun, sumber maklumat yang tidak lengkap telah dikenal pasti sebagai kelemahan utama dalam pelancongan kurang upaya. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji semula maklumat yang diperlukan oleh pelancong kurang upaya sebelum mereka merancang percutian mereka dan mengkaji kemudahan yang terdapat di taman negara di kawasan kajian. Dari kajian literatur, didapati bahawa pelbagai maklumat yang diperlukan seperti kebolehcapaian atas talian, pengangkutan, penginapan dan tarikan pelancong kurang upaya. Tidak semua taman negara di kawasan kajian disediakan sebuah laman web dengan maklumat lengkap yang diperlukan oleh pelancong kurang upaya. Dari pemerhatian dan kaedah audit, didapati bahawa perancangan kemudahan terperinci perlu dilakukan untuk memperbaiki keadaan daripada kemudahan khas sedia ada dan membina lebih banyak kemudahan. Tidak semua pengurus taman prihatin dan sedar akan keperluan pelancong kurang upaya. Peluang perniagaan dalam sektor pelancongan boleh diwujudkan dengan menangani halangan-halangan ini. Ramai pelancong OKU akan merancang untuk bercuti jika maklumat yang diberikan adalah lengkap dan akses kepada persekitaran pelancongan dicipta.

Kata kunci: Kebolehcapaian; orang kurang upaya; kemudahan; maklumat; pelancongan

INTRODUCTION

Tourism among the disabled tourists is getting popular nowadays. However, the current tourism environment is not very suitable for usage by people with disabilities. Whether it is domestic

or international travel, it involves tourists visiting the far destination from the residential areas and they will be using the services provided at the tourism destination. Thus, the needs of travelers in terms of information and accessible facilities must be provided fully to attract tourists. However,

incomplete source of information has been identified as a major weakness in the disabled tourism.

Ten percent of the worldwide population consists of people with disabilities. People with disabilities are the people with intellectual disabilities, physical, sensory (hearing, vision and speech), psychiatric or mental illness. Women who are pregnant, people with permanent and temporary injuries, people with small children and people who suffer from obesity also categorized as disabled. People with disabilities are often marginalized from the social environment. They tend to be older, poorer, less educated and has fewer employment opportunities than those without disabilities. In countries such as Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Afghanistan, many people become disabled as a result of direct conflict either by battle or from wounds due to mine explosions. Access to justice for persons with disabilities is often said to overcome discrimination, communication and physical access. They are at higher risk of becoming victims of crime and exploitation, they may not be aware of the use by others for criminal purposes. This group is not given a chance because of physical differences and the lack of access to facilities and resources needed including courts and other legal institutions (Cueto 2007).

Tourism has been identified as one of the largest and fastest growing industry worldwide. Changes and developments have been seen since the late 90's and early twentieth century when the previous tour involves only the elite class has turned to the concept of mass tourism and alternative tourism-oriented customers. It has created a new phenomenon in the development of hotels, infrastructure and other facilities used by tourists. Tourists tend to visit an eco-friendly destination where facilities and services are easily accessible. Friendly destination is a destination that has all the amenities that easy and can save time without any interference from home until chosen travel destination. As a result, tourist-friendly destination is a comprehensive tourist destination, which gives full satisfaction to tourists through the relationship in terms of three elements such as activities, spaces and products without any interruptions (Anuar, A.N.A. et al. 2012).

People with disabilities have a lot of advance planning to do before planning a trip than physically perfect person (Darcy 2001). According English Tourism Council, barrier-free tourism information will lead to an increment in travel planning. However, the provision of incomplete information has been identified as a major weakness of tourism

for people with disabilities (Shalini, Sanmargaraja & Seow Ta Wee 2013).

The objective of this paper is to review the information required by disabled tourists before they planned to travel and study facilities available in the study area a national park.

INFORMATION NEEDED BY THE DISABLED TOURISTS

Collection of information on barrier-free tourism product is one of the easiest ways for national tourism organizations to create new market segments. The issues that the tourism authorities need to address include the systematic collection, presentation and dissemination of information barrier-free tourism. The internet provides an opportunity for marketing domestic and foreign (Darcy 2001). The information required by disabled travelers are online accessibility, transportation, accommodation, food and water supplies, aids movement and the list of activities that are appropriate to the physical condition of tourists.

ONLINE ACCESSIBILITY

A great effort is usually directed to get web traffic, so-called as eyeballs can change the information directly or indirectly to customers. However, much of this effort can be wasted if the content of the website cannot be accessed. Some individuals may have problems accessing the site content, have different needs, capabilities and constraints of the situation can act as a barrier but if understood and addressed through design and web development it would be better. Many of these individuals will use one of the aids. In the case of individuals who are blind or visually impaired, they can use assistive technologies such as screen-reader automatically (Williams, R., Rattray, R. & A. Grimes, A. 2007). The goal is to ensure access to software availability and usability of software by a focus group consisting of people with disabilities. This goal can be achieved when all users can see and understand what is on the screen and operate its own control. Thus, software design should allow the user to see, hear, make inputs, read text or processing information differently from user to user (Kavcic, A. 2005).

TRANSPORTATION

Information about transportation to tourist destinations is not available. Airlines and travel are no longer allowed to refuse to carry people with disabilities. This rule also means that appropriate assistance should be provided in all the way without any additional cost to the passenger. Traveling by plane is often a part of the holiday. However, two years after the rule was implemented, the investigation showed that many people with disabilities still receive second class service. Bus fare information and their destinations by bus less complete. Disabled travelers hope ended with disappointment because the bus is not accessible by wheelchair and when asked the driver to take them to the airport, they were told that these things are not available in the scope of work bus driver (United Spinal Association 2011).

ACCOMMODATION

Based on a study done on disabled travelers, about eight out of ten respondents did not feel confident that they can cope easily travel far in the United Kingdom. The main problem highlighted by respondents was the lack of information accessible room at the hotel. This means that they have to book in advance and cannot guarantee that when they arrived as the planning, the hotel is fully accessible and the hotel staff will meet their needs. Many people feel that it is not possible to plan a spontaneous trip because they have to check and then check again that the hotel will provide a desired what they are. Information as well as hotel room discounts not available and this becomes difficult for disabled travelers to plan financially and sometimes room prices offered are quite expensive and not affordable. Other issues raised by disabled tourists, including room prices charged full price but then not be able to access any of the facilities provided (Trailblazers Ambassadors 2010).

FACILITIES FOR THE DISABLED TOURISTS

Information that can attract tourists with disabilities is not provided. Required information such as public

utilities, facilities assists movement, food and water sources, and sanitation in tourist destinations and activities that can be done in a tourist destination. The main problem faced by the domestic segment is either no toilet for the disabled or unsanitary condition. The absence of public facilities such as telephones, toilets, water pipes in public places, the absence of ramp in the area required, the height of ramp is not suitable and the lack of a sidewalk be barriers to people with disabilities. List of foods, which are provided, do not fit with the needs of this group. Information about the water intake from water filling machine are not provided. Most of the activities listed in the list of activities incompatible with the physical condition of these people (Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management 2010).

FACILITIES PROVIDED IN KUKUP ISLAND, TANJUNG PIAI, LEDANG HILLS AND ENDAU-ROMPIN FOREST PARK

According to Table 1, it shows that special facilities for the disabled tourists are less available on all the Johor National Parks. From this table, it is found that not all of the Johor National Park has pedestrian crossing facilities, the locker room or nursing, grocery store or corner shop, bus and pay phone booths. There are also other constraints for people with physical disabilities such as access, sensory access and communication access. Physical access involve people with disabilities that require the use of wheelchairs or pedestrians, streets, roads, elevators, handrails, clear signage, Curb, circulation room, wide doors, lower counters and telephone inquiries. Disabled access involves sensory hearing and visual problems. This group requires a signage, which is using Braille so that it can be felt by hand, and visual cues at different levels, the audio signal in the elevator and lights a powerful speaker system. Access to communication involves people who have problems in writing, vision or hearing problems and speech problems. This group needs a typewriter phone service. Access to information in a variety of media, non-verbal cues or posters in simple English or community language should be provided.

TABLE 1. List of all Facilities Audit Johor National Park

Element	Endau Rompin		Pulau Kukup		Tanjung Piai		Gunung Ledang	
	Audit	Provision	Audit	Provision	Audit	Provision	Audit	Provision
1. Accessibility								
a) Ramp	√	**	√	*	√	***		**
b) Handrail	√	***	√	***	√	***	√	*
c) Grab-bar	√	***		*		*		*
d) Special or pedestrian paths and sidewalks	√	***	√	***	√	***	√	**
e) Building entrance	√	***	√	***	√	***	√	***
f) Staircase	√	***	√	***	√	*	√	*
g) Textured route	√	*		*		*	√	*
h) Pedestrian crossings		*		*		*		*
2. Spatial								
a) Special car parking		*		*		*		*
b) Toilet	√		√		√		√	
c) Changing or breastfeeding room		*		*		*		*
d) Provision of residential units or chalets	√	***		*		*	√	***
e) Grocery store or Corner Shop		*		*		*		*
f) Bus stop		*		*		*		*
3. Supporting Facilities								
a) Statement signs	√	***	√	***	√	***	√	***
b) Direction signs	√	***	√	***	√	***	√	***
c) Warning signs	√	***	√	***	√	***	√	***
d) Special sign board		*		*	√	***		*
e) Fixed or built-in bench or seat	√	***		*	√	***	√	***
f) Paid phone booths		*		*		*		*
g) Drain or ditch	√	**		*		*	√	***

Criteria for accessibility rating:

***** Facility is fully accessible. Features and facilities meet and exceed the Universal Design principles.

**** Majority of the facility is accessible; however, there are some accessibility barriers. Some improvements are needed to make the facility fully accessible.

*** Facility is partially accessible. Barriers exist to fully accessing the facility and an alternate facility may be necessary.

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* Facility has poor accessibility. Alternative facility is recommended if barrier free access is required.

DISCUSSION

From auditing and observation it is found that not all Johor National Parks has adequate facilities for the disabled. Due to lack of facilities, most people with disabilities are not so keen to visit national parks in Johor. National Parks Corporation also not keen on making publicity in print and mass media cause people do not know much about the place of recreation provided by this corporation.

Lack of information needed cause tourists with disabilities themselves have lost faith in the ability to enjoy a holiday. Their confidence level also becomes low. This causes people with disabilities isolated from society as barricaded themselves in their homes.

Lack of awareness about disability in the community is a concern. Disabled people feel that

they are treated or ignored such disturbance or as if they are inferior position of the society. There is also the view expressed that the behavior of people who do not respect and underestimate these people is very annoying.

CONCLUSION

The increase in the number of tourists with disabilities in need of some improvements to the facilities provided at the time now like to provide more places to relax, large font on a sign and provide a variety of additional aid. Representatives from these groups may be invited to give their comments and suggestions.

Making adjustments and emphasizing the facilities for visitors with disabilities can lead the tourism industry will open up the door to all of the many potential new customers to visit from time to time; this will indirectly lead to an increase in national income. However, some changes and adjustments take high cost, there are many ways that do minor adjustments and simple that will help in the improvement of existing opportunities to attract tourists with disabilities. It is very important not to make these people as heroes or victims of disability.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My sincere appreciation and thanks to the Faculty of Business and Technology Management and Centre of Graduates Studies of Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM) for the support, guidance and assistance given. Thank you.

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Received: 18 April 2017
Accepted: 24 June 2017

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