



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERPRETATION PRODUCTS AT TIOMAN
MARINE PARK INFORMATION CENTRE***

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**EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERPRETATION PRODUCTS AT TIOMAN MARINE
PARK INFORMATION CENTRE**



By

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents

For their love, endless support

&

encouragement.

To my father, Heng Tor Leng, and my mother, Loh Fook Ying, who taught me the value of education and who made sacrifices for us, their children, so that we could have the opportunities they did not have.

ABSTRACT

People care about things they know, appreciate, and understand. Things that people care about are perpetuated; things they do not care about are forgotten. Interpretation is a keystone in helping people to appreciate, understand, and care about the environment. This study focuses on evaluation of the interpretation products applied in the Tioman Marine Park Information Centre that will provide information to help develop a high level of awareness among the tourists and the host communities. It is important to understand the interest between visitors and exhibits that being displayed in this information centre in term of giving information and awareness about the marine ecosystem. Interpretive objectives, Tilden's principles and interpretive signs were used as key indicators in the assessment of the interpretative effectiveness of the Tioman Marine Park Information Centre. The exhibits were measured according to in order to evaluate the criteria of an interpretive exhibit. The results had shown that some exhibits meet the prescribed elements of interpretation while some do not. It is hoped that this finding will strive the Tioman Marine Park Information Centre to create unique and meaningful interpretative exhibits with the ability to effectively fulfill their educational missions to public.

ABSTRAK

Orang mengambil berat tentang perkara-perkara yang mereka ketahui, menghargai, dan memahami. Perkara-perkara yang disayangi orang akan berterusan; perkara yang masyarakat tidak mengambil berat akan dilupai. Interpretasi adalah kunci untuk membantu orang ramai untuk menghargai, memahami, dan mengambil berat tentang alam sekitar. Kajian ini memberi tumpuan kepada penilaian terhadap elemen interpretasi yang diamalkan dalam pameran Pusat Informasi Taman Laut Pulau Tioman dalam membantu membangunkan tahap kesedaran dalam kalangan pelancong dan masyarakat tempatan. Ia adalah penting untuk memahami kepentingan pameran yang telah dipamerkan di pusat informasi ini di kalangan pengunjung, dari segi pemberian pengetahuan dan kesedaran mengenai ekosistem marin. Objektif interpretasi, prinsip Tilden serta tanda-tanda interpretasi telah digunakan sebagai penunjuk utama dalam penilaian keberkesanan interpretasi di Pusat Informasi Taman Laut Pulau Tioman. Bahan pameran telah diukur mengikut elemen interpretasi terpilih untuk menilai kriteria sesuatu pameran. Keputusan kajian ini telah menunjukkan bahawa beberapa pameran telah memenuhi syarat unsur-unsur interpretasi yang ditetapkan manakala sesetengahnya tidak. Diharap keputusan kajian ini akan membantu Pusat Informasi Taman Laut Pulau Tioman untuk mewujudkan pameran interpretasi yang unik dan bermakna untuk mencapai misi pendidikan mereka kepada orang ramai.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

At present, there is a need to gain people's support and participation for a generalized change of attitude based on firsthand knowledge and understanding of the problem which can be positively channeled for the benefit of nature.

Interpretation broadly refers to educational activities used in places like zoos, museums, heritage sites and national parks, to tell visitors about the significance or meaning of what they are experiencing. Interpretation is one of the most successful ways as it is a persuasive conservation communication process used to reveal information in helping people to understand and appreciate their environment. Nowadays, interpretation has been acknowledged as a vital tool to enhance public knowledge on resources, to foster conservation and to strengthen social interaction. The primary goal of interpretation is to serve as a public-relations tool through the visitor's firsthand experience. It can communicate the value of natural resources by nurturing public's awareness, understanding and appreciation towards particular resource through publicity campaign of awareness programs.

Interpretive action through environmental conservation is used time and time again to increase public awareness toward nature environment. Environmental conservation is carried out which facilitates the knowledge about nature and the relationship between society and the nature. Environmental conservation also

involves an increment in our understanding and awareness on the importance of preserving our natural and heritage resources (Sharpe, 1976).

1.2 Problem Statement

Tioman Island apparently is one of the most researched islands with the establishment of Tioman Marine Park Information Centre where it located on the northern fringe of the bay where Tekek Village lies. There were a lot of researches been carried out within Tioman Island. These researches mainly focused on flora (Latiff et al., 1999) and visitors' perception of the aggregate attraction of Tioman Island (Shuib et al., 1991). Overall, there is a lack of environmental conservation, and public apathy contributed toward environmental degradation (Ainul Raihan Hj Ahmad, 2003) throughout the haphazard rapid development in Tioman Island.

However, there are no substantial studies to examine the effectiveness and the impact assessment of interpretation of Tioman Marine Park Information Centre as it serves to educate the public toward promotion of conservation, education and management of coastal marine resources regard of environmental degradation. During the past, interpretation programs have been judged largely on how well they contribute to resources management, law enforcement, or even safety issues. Interpretation is seen by some as the link between the visitor and an area's resources. Knowledge gain, attitude change and behavior modification were used as key indicators in the assessment of the effectiveness of interpretation.

Uzzell (1998) contends that the evaluation of interpretation is recommended, but is rarely conducted. Thus, it is essential to conduct this study. As more effective the interpretive elements are, the more easily it has the most impact on the visitors in reaching the goals of sustainable tourism development.

1.3 Study Objectives

The overall objective of this study is to look at the influences of interpretive elements. In order to achieve the objective stated above, two specific objectives are listed below:

- I. To evaluate the effectiveness of the interpretation products of Tioman Marine Park Information Centre through three selected interpretive elements.
- II. To yield several recommendations on the interpretive contents based on interpretation principle to the park authority.

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