

**A comparison of how two homestays
(Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng
Homestay) safeguard traditional Malay
food (TMF) as a means of promoting
cultural-based food tourism in Perak,
Malaysia**

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Abstract

The study compares and contrasts the extent to which two homestay programmes in the state of Perak, Malaysia, promote and safeguard traditional Malay food (TMF). The first case study is Kampong Beng Homestay (KBH), located in Lenggong Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the second is Gopeng Homestay (GH) that situated in Gopeng, Perak. The homestay programme is a tourism product developed by Malaysia's Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC), considered a vehicle for rural community development through cultural tourism. It is believed that local food holds significant potential of TMF not only to contribute to the authenticity of the destination, which in turn will enhance the marketing and promotion of the homestay programme. The government also hopes that homestay providers and their local management initiatives - should be given more power and control over their individual homestays so as to market the product according to their specific capabilities, advantages, and interests. Using a case-study approach, this research examines the role of government stakeholders in giving support and promoting TMF in these two homestays and considers their concerns about existing issues and future development, in particular with reference to exploit local authentic culinary heritage in the construction of a unique identity for tourist attraction. The results draw attention to three issues from the context of the stakeholders, homestay providers and tourists across the two case studies. The correlation was found that the government stakeholders need to encourage the homestay providers to increase the viability of their TMF to enhance and promote the uniqueness of their TMF to the tourists so that TMF can be the leading local products in their homestay programme. Besides, the stakeholders need to review the marketing materials for the homestay programme by publicising more information about their TMF to heighten the local food awareness among tourists and thus safeguard not only the TMF but also the heritage, skills and ways of life of the local people in the homestay.

Keywords: promoting traditional Malay food, safeguarding traditional Malay food, homestay programme, cultural-based food, Malay culinary heritage, Gopeng Homestay, and Kampung Beng Homestay.

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Dedication

Nearly everything I have is in it, but it is not full. Pain and excitement are in it and feeling good, bad, evil thoughts, and good ideas are also in it. Now I am looking forward to the future and thankful for moments like these. This thesis is dedicated to my angels, Anggun and Aydan and my hero, Dzahir for their love and endless support.

I believe in dreams, but the best is yet to come

-NAI-

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List of Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AKC	ASEAN-Korea Centre
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATSP	ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan
B&B	Bed and Breakfast
BDS	Brunei Darussalam Standards
BTB	Brunei Tourism Board
BTDD	Brunei Tourism Development Department
CBET	Community-based Ecotourism
CBT	Community-based Tourism
CBT-I	Community Based Tourism Institute, Thailand
CLMV	Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam Tourism Co-operation
CSICH	Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
DHM	Department of Heritage Malaysia
DOT	Department of Tourism, Philippines
FIT	Foreign Independent Travellers
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GH	Gopeng Homestay
GHP	Gopeng Homestay Providers
GHT	Gopeng Homestay Tourists
GMF	Gastronomic Meals of the French
GMS	Greater Mekong Sub-region
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IFT	Ipoh Food Trail
INFRA	Institute for Rural Advancement
JKKK	Committee of Village Development and Security
KBH	Kampong Beng Homestay
KBHP	Kampong Beng Homestay Providers
KBHT	Kampong Beng Homestay Tourists
KEMAS	Community and Development Department
KTMB	Malaysian Railways Limited
Lao PDR	Lao People's Democratic Republic
LGU	Local Government Unit, Philippines
LNTA	Lao National Tourism Administration
MATRADE	Malaysia External Trade Development
MD	Mediterranean Diet
MH	Malaysian Airlines Flight

MIGF	Malaysia International Gourmet Festival
MITI	Ministry of International Trade and Industry
MOCAT	Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism, Malaysia
MOTAC	Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia
MOTOUR	Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia
MPRT	Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, Brunei
MRRD	Ministry of Rural and Regional Development
MTPB	Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board
MTPN	<i>Majlis Tindakan Pelancongan Negeri Perak</i> or Perak State Tourism Action
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NHEP	Nam Ha Ecotourism Project
NHNPA	Nam Ha National Protected Area
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
PAT	Plant a Tree Programme
PATA	Pacific Areas Travel Association
PHA	Perak's Homestay Association
PKKNPA	Phou Khao Khouai National Protected Area
PRLC	Project for Recovery of Life and Culture
PS	Primary Stakeholder
RTAM	Railway Tourism Association of Malaysia
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SME	Small and Medium Industries
SOA	Sense of Attachment
SOO	Sense of Ownership
TDC	Tourism Development Corporation
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
TFITF	Tourists' Feedback Intangible Factors
TFR	Tourists' Feedback Recommendations
TM	Tourism Malaysia
TMC	Traditional Mexican Cuisine
TMF	Traditional Malay food
TMT	Tour Merng Tai
TRF	Thai Research Fund
TRF	Traditional Rawa food
UK	United Kingdom
UMNO	United Malays National Organisation
UN	United Nation
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia

USP	Unique Selling Point
WHS	World Heritage Site
WSHG	Women Self Help Group
WTO	World Tourism Organisation

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Giap *et al.*, (2016) in their research *Drivers of growth in the travel and tourism industry in Malaysia*, identified that the tourism industry has emerged as one of the main contributors to Malaysia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The direct contribution of the tourism and travel industry for 2015 (the last date for which figures are available) amounted to RM166 billion, which contributed 14.4 % to the nation's GDP. Malaysia is listed number 26 out of the 184 countries in the world in terms of the most popular countries to visit, and earns a significant economic return on its tourism programme. Figure 1.1 illustrates the number of tourists to Malaysia from the year 2005 to 2015 and the income received by the government from the tourism sector. It shows a significant increase in the number of tourists coming to Malaysia and a concomitant tripling in receipts derived from tourism. The former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Najib Razak, acknowledged this in a 2015 speech:

'Our renowned Malaysian hospitality and culture of service, our rich national heritage, our cultural diversity and of course, now more than ever, the value for money that foreign tourists will experience in Malaysia compared with many other destinations because of the exchange rates. All of these are huge selling points that need to be amplified and communicated across all channels to drive up tourism numbers.' (The Rakyat Post, 2015)

YEAR	ARRIVALS	RECEIPTS (RM)
2015	25.70 million	69.1 Billion
2014	27.44 million	72.0 Billion
2013	25.72 million	65.4 Billion
2012	25.03 million	60.6 Billion
2011	24.71 million	58.3 Billion
2010	24.58 million	56.5 Billion
2009	23.65 million	46.1 Billion
2008	22.05 million	49.6 Billion
2007	20.97 million	53.4 Billion
2006	17.55 million	36.3 Billion
2005	16.43 million	32.0 Billion

Figure 1. 1 Tourist arrivals and receipts to Malaysia from 2005 to 2015
(Source: Tourism Malaysia, 2015)

Yet, there is sufficient empirical evidence to suggest that the Malaysian government should be more proactive in promoting the tourism sector by enhancing existing packages, and/or by developing new ones, to boost continuous significant growth in the industry in the face of tough competition from other ASEAN countries (Mohamed, 2009 as cited in Falak *et al.*, 2014). In one such initiative to develop tourism as an important contributing sector to the economy, Malaysia is expanding its cultural and tourism products by aggressively rolling out and promoting the homestay experience programme across the country (Yusnita *et al.*, 2013). This cultural and heritage tourism is associated with the development of specific destinations that are located in rural areas and are promoted as a tourism product. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) defines rural tourism as creating a “rural environment” for the visitor by offering a combination of natural, cultural and human experiences which possess typically rural characteristics (Othman *et al.*, 2013). These individual experiences provide tourists with an authentic and more traditional understanding of the essence of rural life. It invites tourists to explore nature by embracing a return to a rural lifestyle and authenticity. Rural tourism comprises a spectrum of activities and services organised by the local population, including rural life, art, culture, and heritage (Razzaq *et al.*, 2013).

In addition to what it can offer tourists by introducing them to the culture of the country’s less-visited rural isolated areas, the ‘homestay programme’ is considered to have an important potential economic impact on rural communities’ development. The Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia (hereafter, MOTAC), for example, has given particular emphasis to this programme when it identified its potential to provide additional income and employment for rural communities in Malaysia. Homestay is thus actively promoted by this ministry as a type of community-based tourism in Malaysia (Razzaq and Hadi, 2011). Ibrahim and Razzaq (2010) highlighted that under the *Rural Tourism Master Plan* 2001, for example, the government formulated a unique programme to promote homestays as one of the mechanisms to promote rural tourism. The government has increased its focus on the development of the homestay programme due to its significant cultural heritage contribution to the country and recognised it as one of the elements to promote Malaysian culture and lifestyles, as well as getting the community involved in the tourism sector. By taking advantage of the existing

natural resources and, cultural and heritage assets within the community, communities have been able to develop the homestay product without spending an inordinate amount of money on changing the current infrastructure and impacting adversely the natural environment (Pusiran and Xiao 2013).

This study will make a contribution to research by demonstrating the importance of local cuisine as part of the culture and traditions in the homestay programme. It is presented in nine chapters which are: an introduction; two literature reviews; a methodology and methods chapter; three chapters presenting and analysing the results from the fieldwork on two case studies; a synthesis chapter of the findings of the previous three; and, finally, a conclusion, with recommendations.

This current **Chapter 1** discusses the background research relating to the homestay industry in Malaysia and how this cultural tourism contributes to Malaysia's GDP. The discussion continues by outlining the challenges faced by homestays and their community members in developing the programmes while at the same time safeguarding their culture, heritage and the natural environment. Then, after identifying the research gap that this study fills, the study's research questions, and the aims and objectives of the study are presented. A definition of terms is listed in this section, primarily of the particular words in standard Malay, to facilitate the flow of the study. Lastly, the significance of the research and its findings are presented at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 2 starts by addressing the current issues in culinary heritage in Malaysia and the homestay tourism sector. The discussion continues with an evaluation of various models of the homestay tourism market in the ASEAN member state countries, focusing on their planning and management relating to culinary aspects. These examples provide a general understanding of homestay management planning and rural community-based tourism development, which anchors the local communities' efforts to shape tourists' experiences of culinary heritage.

The discussion continues in **Chapter 3** with the homestay providers' current practices and guidelines in preparing local food, as contrasted with the wider Malay food culture and traditions. Deliberations on the relevant literature end with a discussion of culinary aspects in the tourism industry, cultural food-related issues, and the current methods of disseminating information regarding traditional Malay food (hereafter, TMF) to the younger generations in the homestay communities. The last part of this chapter discusses the factors related to the processes of preserving and promoting traditional food from the perspectives of the stakeholders (in Malaysia stakeholders are usually defined as the regional and state government bodies, see Page 7), homestay providers and tourists.

Chapter 4 concentrates on the overall case-study methodology and the rationale for selecting the two case studies. It discusses the methods used to collect data, which were primarily qualitative. An explanation of the study's research methods extends the discussion on the case studies. Ethical issues and challenges encountered are also discussed. This chapter ends with an overview of the interpretative approaches used to analyse the data and elaborates on the 'triangulation' in the research.

Chapter 5 reviews the literature relating to intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as understood in the context of homestay tourism in South East Asia. A list of terminology related to community-based tourism, ecotourism, ethnic tourism, cultural tourism, culinary tourism, heritage tourism and so forth is discussed in this chapter. Then, in **Chapter 6**, an international example of the culinary element of cultural tourism drawn explicitly from UNESCO's 2003 *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (hereafter, 2003 Convention).

Chapter 7 presents an interpretation of the data collected from a study of the perspectives of the stakeholders - their roles, interests, and concerns about the growth and development of the homestay tourism market in Malaysia. The primary stakeholders from the federal ministries, state department and agencies and local organisations have contributed their unique input and insights to this study, including their views on how culinary heritage can be promoted and safeguarded as a fundamental attraction in the homestay programmes.

Chapter 8 and **Chapter 9** interpret the data from the two selected case studies: Kampong¹ Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay. Analysis of the data gathered from fieldwork with the host communities is organised into a number of different themes, such as the roles of providers in promoting their food as part of their culture and traditions; other local products; and, added major attractions in their homestay programme. The results and analysis are not only focused on the development of food as a cultural experience in the programmes, but also provide further information on the issues and challenges faced by the providers and their communities. Then, **Chapter 10** presents the tourists' perceptions of their experiences in visiting and staying with the host communities are also discussed in detail in this section. The study reveals diverse negative and positive aspects of the development of these homestay programmes from the perspectives of homestay tourists. The chapter suggests that the related stakeholders and agencies, especially the homestay providers in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay, need to be more attentive to the difficulties that are hindering their homestay programmes from being more successful.

Chapter 11 provides an overall discussion of the four analysis **Chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10**. The discussion comprises a summary of the primary government stakeholders', homestay providers' and tourists' contributions to the promotion and safeguarding of TMF through the homestay programme, as well as to the planning and development of this programme in Malaysia.

Chapter 12 draws some conclusions and provides a number of recommendations for the homestay sector. It discusses a list of promising characteristics of the homestay programme in Malaysia while preserving their traditional cultural and traditions, particularly local cuisine, through cultural tourism. Several general recommendations gleaned from this study are not meant to be prescriptive in nature, but could serve as a foundation for the homestay programme to aim for a better strategy to promote their food culture and traditions through the homestay programmes.

¹ Kampong is a traditional Malay village located in rural areas (Mohamed, 2010). It is a human settlement where occupational activities are based on agricultural activities, the landscape possesses significant cultural attributes presenting homogenous populations with traditional values such as fishing, gardening, and rice cultivation (Ismail, 2003, pg. 10).

1.2 Research Background

The homestay programme is a particular branch of tourism that packages together standard tourist services (lodging and food) with cultural heritage and the natural environment. It promotes local culinary, dance, music, and handicraft traditions to tourists by allowing them to experience the daily life of Malaysian culture while staying with host families in a traditional village setting (Intan Osman *et al.*, 2014; and Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010). Through homestays, tourists have the opportunity to visit rural villages and experience the hosts' culture in their homes. A large number of officially recognised homestay programmes are registered under MOTAC and are promoted by the government as experiential tourism in every part of the country. Each one has unique features and activities to offer tourists depending on the location, local culture, food and the main economic activities of the locality. The homestay programme is a special holiday package where tourists have the opportunity to stay with hosts and gain first-hand and close-up experience of the locals' daily activities, such as paddy planting and batik painting. For example, some homestays offer fishing using traditional methods as one of their main activities. Other main attractions for tourists include observing fireflies and hunting crabs in mangrove swamps. Overall, the homestay programme in Malaysia is designed especially for those who wish to savour the slower or 'laid-back' life of the villagers, relax and unwind while taking in the sights, sounds, and wonders of Malaysian rural life.

The homestay programme has emerged as a powerful platform to promote the natural, cultural and adventure aspects of Malaysia as a culturally rich destination replete with traditions set in a verdant tropical environment. However, despite occasional success stories, the homestay programme is largely under-developed and barely surviving due to a lack of organisation by local communities in the coordination and management of the programme. A primary concern of the programme is how homestays could empower local people to make homestays thrive without becoming over-reliant on outside parties for their planning and development. At stake is the challenge of making local communities take the opportunity to more fully understand and promote the homestay product by taking ownership of their own cultural heritage and package it in an appealing and sustainable way. This involves enhancing their capabilities to learn how to

manage and market the programme. As Rasid *et al.*, (2012) point out, the local communities in the homestay programme in Malaysia have failed to recognise the potential of their cultural and heritage product due to a lack of knowledge and awareness of the tourism industry. Therefore, this study intends to contribute to the development of a successful homestay programme by exploring and analysing the experiences and opinions of the major stakeholders and tourists in the homestay sector, with a particular focus on the scope for maximising the role of cuisine as a cultural heritage experience. The study takes two homestays as case studies: Kampong Beng Homestay in Lenggong and Gopeng Homestay in Gopeng, Perak.

The study involves various stakeholder groups described as primary (federal government, local state department and NGOs), secondary (homestay providers or host communities) and tertiary (tourists) as shown in Table 1.1 below. The primary stakeholders in this study are persons and/or bodies that have an interest in, and concern for, the homestay programme in Malaysia. Several categories of stakeholders have been identified, such as those with community and economic interests as well as planning and development concerns. Bodies such as the Federal Government of Malaysia (through MOTAC); local state departments in Perak; NGOs; agencies; academic from state universities; coordinators of homestays, homestay providers and tourists hereafter will all be referred to as stakeholders. The inclusion of travel agencies in the study is to gather their input on the marketability of the homestay programme in the tourism industry in Malaysia. The same goes for the academics as ‘stakeholders’ who may not be specifically recognised in the planning and development of the homestay programme in Malaysia, yet are still involved in the programme by contributing current knowledge and understanding from the academic perspective.

Table 1. 1 Types of Stakeholders in this study

Type	Classifications
1. Primary Stakeholders	Federal ministries, government state department, agencies, NGO’s and local organisations.
2. Secondary Stakeholders	Homestay providers in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay
3. Tertiary Stakeholders	Domestic tourists in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay

In the same way, the homestay organisations in Kampong Beng Homestay (KBH) and Gopeng Homestay (GH) are identified as homestay providers/host in this study. A ‘homestay provider’ or ‘homestay host’ is a local family that offers their house as a homestay (ASEAN Homestay Standard, 2016). A host family that participates in the homestay programme in Malaysia must be officially registered with MOTAC. They have to go through several training courses and formal home inspections conducted by MOTAC officials before they are officially awarded the title of registered homestay operator. Finally, the tertiary sources in this study are homestay tourists in KBH and GH. The tourists involved in this study were those staying with the host families to interact and experience the daily life of the Malay culture and traditions in the Malaysian homestay programme. All groups who are affected directly and indirectly by the homestay services and its programme, therefore, can be said to have an interest in them, as stakeholders.

This thesis focuses on the development and promotion of TMF as a major homestay attraction, i.e. the recipes, food preparation and cooking processes, such as natural herbs and plants, fish breeding, hunting, and any other activities that are integrated into local culinary heritage, including how the natural environment is utilised. It is, therefore, necessary to identify well-established elements of culinary tradition that can help the homestay community in promoting and sustaining their traditional food to fit the cultural tourism context in Malaysia. Using the two homestays as case studies, the goal of this thesis is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be utilised by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities. It is hoped that the results of this study will provide insights on the programme for the relevant government stakeholders, who can draw on those insights to develop a more successful and sustainable homestay programme nationwide. More narrowly, the focus is on how local cuisines and culinary traditions may be integrated more systematically into the homestay activities in order to stimulate the interest of tourists to visit different and diverse homestay destinations. The research considers it crucial that all the related parties in homestay management make local food a central element of their touristic appeal. It also suggests that with proper planning and implementation, local food could strengthen the image of homestays and also serve to sustain local culinary cultural heritage. In doing so, appropriate guidelines as part of a comprehensive plan need to be drafted for all homestay providers, encouraging better service and

quality of their own local and cultural food so that it can benefit their communities as well as the wider programme. Memorable local food experiences as a major component of a homestay visit will generate word of mouth advertising by tourists, thereby positively affecting visitor numbers.

1.3 Research Issues

1.3.1 The Current Reality of the Homestay Programme in Malaysia

The homestay programme in Malaysia is feasible for only a certain number of villages located in popular destinations (Kayat, 2002; Mohd Nor and Kayat, 2010; Yahaya, 2004; and Pusiran and Xiao, 2013). In addition to their geographical location and setting, the success of these homestays is also either the result of effective homestay management and planning by principal stakeholders or of the robust determination of the homestay communities themselves. Studies by the Bureau of Innovation and Consultancy UTM (2009) have noted that some homestay providers have withdrawn from the programme due to lack of demand from tourists at certain times of the year, making it difficult for them to survive year-round. Moreover, the homestay programme does not seem to contribute significantly to tourist numbers in Malaysia. Pusiran and Xiao (2013) estimated the percentage of tourists staying in homestay at less than 1% per year of the total number of tourists in the country. These concerns have stimulated investigation into the underlying causes of what might be perceived as a lack of success for the homestay programme.

There is growing body of literature that recognises the importance of homestay programme in Malaysia, which aims to help rural Malays financially, to promote rural villages as a new tourism capital, and to help preserving Malaysian traditional culture (Mohd Nor and Kayat, 2010; Pusiran and Xiao, 2013; Ramele and Yamazaki, 2013; Yusnita *et al.*, 2013; Hassan, 2014; Mura, 2015; Samsudin and Maliki, 2015). However, the issue of how the Malaysian homestay programme can be developed as a strong destination and thus, helping the rural areas is still a primary concern. A key aspect of homestay to be lacking in identity has been raised by Pusiran and Xiao (2013). They carried out an investigation into the challenges in community development in the homestay programme in

Malaysia and found out that there is still a lack of publicity and effective marketing strategies in developing homestay as one of Malaysia's strong tourism product. Homestay is not seen as an ideal type of attraction for international tourists due to the low standard of accommodation and facilities in most of the homestay that are located in rural areas. Furthermore, the inability of most homestay providers and their wider community to speak English, or any foreign language, is regarded as a significant barrier to the homestay programme growing a strong international clientele. Pusiran and Xiao (2013) state that the inability of homestay providers to master even some basic English is usually a hindrance to the experience of tourists trying to interact with hosts. However, other authors (see Yusof *et al.*, 2014) have found that some international tourists in the homestay programme in Labuan (East Malaysia) take the opportunity to speak and communicate in Bahasa Malaysia, the national language of Malaysia, which is not their mother tongue. They found that a significantly different culture is the most important attraction of the homestay programme as compared to other opportunities such as organised tours to local attractions and local services. Collectively, there remain numerous issues and challenges concerning the homestay programme in Malaysia as discussed below.

1.3.2 Common Issues in Homestay Management and Development

One factor cited as critical for success in the homestay programme is strong and committed leadership. According to Kayat (2008); and Razzaq and Hadi (2011), homestay programmes have failed because of a lack of effective and committed local leadership and/or a leadership lacking in the necessary knowledge and skills. This evaluation was supported by (Mohd Nor and Kayat, 2010), who found that changes in leadership styles slowed down the growth of tourism at one homestay village. They noted how the role of the leader² in the homestay programme is a major factor in success, and that changes in leadership style from a hands-on style to a more laidback approach ultimately affected the programme and reduced the number of tourists. In other respects, a homestay leader with limited expertise and experience of tourism is a further contributing

² 'Leader' in this study refers to the head of an individual homestay programme who runs its administration and management. The leaders are elected by the members of their registered homestay providers in a particular homestay programme. Depending on the services given by the leader, he/she will serve as the leader until further notice.

factor to the failure of some homestay. Moreover, with a lack of experience in the tourism industry, a leader might raise false expectations about the benefits of this business to the local community. On the ground, these communities might suffer from a lack of preparedness for the changes necessary to sustain a programme and therefore limit opportunities for growth in their homestay (Hall *et al.*, 2005; Razzaq and Hadi, 2011). In the same way, lack of tourism knowledge will also be a critical barrier that not only directly limits the locals' participation in the development of the homestay, but also leads to insufficient commitment to taking a programme forward in an innovative way.

Questions have also been raised about the homestay management's lack of understanding of the tourism business, a factor which has impeded the progress of homestay development (Ahmad *et al.*, 2011; Pusiran and Xiao, 2013). Villagers may lack investment capital, expertise and entrepreneurial ability when embarking on their homestay programme. Hence, they may often require and sometimes be dependent on external assistance. Moreover, the lack of variety of activities offered to tourists interested in partaking in something unique and meaningful may also be seen as barriers to a successful programme. Underlying and contributing to these concerns is a lack of financial resources, logistical problems, transportation issues, and lack of experienced event organisers. Also, a lack of training and skills in providing quality accommodation and services has also been identified as a matter of concern.

Extensive research has also shown that a passive wider community is an internal challenge in the development of the homestay programme, or at least a scenario in which community members have become dependent on government agencies to oversee their homestay programme. This leads to a degree of 'estrangement' from the programme on behalf of local people (Pusiran and Xiao, 2013). When the communities become too reliant and require constant monitoring, their homestay may not run smoothly or sometimes fall into disarray when that external monitoring by outside agencies and parties breaks down for any reason. This problem is further intensified when there are leadership issues, such as poor communication, poor external relations, lack of transparency, alleged corruption, and so on. As a result, there may be no formal management system in place at these particular homestay organisations, such as working committees,

meetings, minutes of meetings, etc. In the end, a lack of records and information may cause the homestay to provide incorrect statistics, especially concerning growth, for their homestay programme.

Maintaining generational interest and commitment is a further challenge facing homestay programmes. Commenting on the lack of commitment by the younger generation within the local communities, Pusiran and Xiao (2013) observed that these issues may severely undermine the longer-term sustainability of the programme. As most of the activities in the homestay programmes are focused primarily on traditional culture, the question arises as to whether the younger members of the community, animated by modern trends and outside cultural influences and facing a shortage of work in the villages, will be committed to remain in the community and continue its traditions. As the younger generation frequently leaves the villages for the cities to improve their employment opportunities, this results in a decline in youth participation, undermining the capacity of the programmes to fill the many functional roles which the younger generation has traditionally undertaken, such as tour guides, cultural performers, boatmen, and transportation services. When a homestay village lacks replacement hosts, it makes it vulnerable and may affect, and threaten, its long-term sustainability. Measures and strategies have to be established to encourage and attract the younger generation to continue living in the homestay village to ensure the continued sustainability of the programme (Pusiran and Xiao, 2013).

Finally, a lack of effective and appropriate promotion and under-developed marketing strategies have also been cited as factors behind the inadequate dissemination of information regarding the opportunities that staying with a host family can offer tourists seeking a real experience of traditional rural life. This lack of promotion has limited the opportunities for homestay providers to network with other players in the tourism sector and has been identified as a barrier to the integration of their product into the wider tourism industry, thereby blocking the scope for a more prosperous programme (Pusiran and Xiao, 2013).

1.3.3 Neglecting Local Food as a Mainstay of Local Heritage and Identity in Malaysia

The author's interest in food as a mainstay of local heritage and identity in Malaysia developed while she was visiting a homestay programme. Her personal experience with this homestay prompted this research. The author's observations revealed that the particular homestay that she had visited lacked commitment and passion in terms of showcasing the local culture, in particular the traditional food heritage, to tourists. As a result, her experience as a tourist living with a local family in a homestay involved visiting rural villages and enjoying their natural environment attractions, rather than gaining a wider understanding of local culture and traditions. TMF, as an integral aspect of local culture and traditions, was not significantly present as one of the promoted features of the homestay; on the contrary, food was present as merely a daily set menu prepared by the host as part of the homestay packages (i.e. in the sense of providing breakfast, lunch, and dinner as a means of daily sustenance).

In reality, most local hosts attend to tourists based on a plan drawn up by a local coordinator. If there is a request for anything that falls outside that from tourists, the providers have to inform the local coordinator in advance, who then works out a budget and means of carrying out that wish. The organisation would not entertain any last-minute requests as they need to plan the activities and source the human resources for the request. Thus, the principal aspects of the package are geared more towards the activities in the homestay, such as living in a traditional house, enjoying local nature, and other attractions in the surrounding areas of the village, rather than providing an understanding and knowledge of local cultural traditions. A major consequence of this was highlighted by Pusiran and Xiao (2013), who discovered that tourists using a homestay programme often become disappointed and disillusioned when they found them lacking in real experiences and local ways of life. My observations enabled me to determine that the homestay organisations should show more initiative in promoting their traditional food culture so that these elements could be incorporated into the wider homestays' activities, which would also serve to safeguard their local culinary heritage. The providers should develop a holistic approach in which gastronomic

products and food specialties can become a medium for meaningful touristic experiences and a source of indelible memories for tourists.

Another question that needs to be raised in the development of the homestay programme is why the homestays allocate a significant amount of money to the tangible aspects of tourism such as cultural and art performances, dance, music, rituals, all of which to varying degrees are highlighted as their principal product. These events naturally generate a significant number of jobs and require a great deal of time to prepare, in contrast to using the conventional everyday products in a home environment. Important though these products are, it would also be appropriate to draw on the aspects of culture that are found naturally in the home, such as kitchen garden projects, cooking demonstrations in a host kitchen, forest handicrafts, and so forth. Showcasing the natural way of life of the local communities and their skills concerning day-to-day aspects of living might stimulate tourists to visit. In the process, it could be found that local food, for example, can become an intimate source of bonding with tourists. As Lin and Mao (2015) emphasised, local food is indeed an authentic product that symbolises the location and culture of a destination (Sims, 2009). For that reason, the elements and processes associated with food preparation and consumption can create a connection between tourists and local people and their culture. The memory of eating traditional food in calm and tranquil village surroundings, to a great extent, is a power that might stimulate tourists to recommend a homestay and/or induce them to return again.

Therefore, it is recommended that host communities take ownership of their local culinary products and explore the opportunities this provides for increasing visitor numbers (and thereby income derived from tourism). In the long-run, this could become a basis for some homestay providers to back out of the programme as a way of expressing their dissatisfaction and frustration with its management. This is where the government stakeholders should play a more prominent and effective role in guiding the homestay providers to understand and promote the identity and image of their homestay, including culinary heritage. The homestay organisation should focus on how they could highlight the unique culinary aspects of their regions and villages, the kampong values and meanings that are embedded in culinary practices. The expertise of the host communities in

cooking TMF should be identified as a major strength of each host community, emphasised in their activities and integrated into the homestay concept.

1.3.4 Traditional Food Promotes Social, Economic, and Cultural Benefits for Homestays

As of today, there is no site-specific research on how the cultural heritage of food can be recognised as a leading aspect of homestays. On the other hand, there is a growing body of literature that recognises the importance of food as a potentially powerful contributor to tourism strategy (Richards, 2002; Chang and Teo, 2009; Zakariah *et al.*, 2012; and Sujatha and Pitanatri, 2016). Food is one of the opportunities available for making the best use of scarce resources through creativity and adaptability, made necessary by the lack of conventional natural and cultural tourism assets (Chang and Teo, 2009). The ingredients of TMF are usually available year-round, any time of the day, and in any weather condition. It became the best option for several destinations, which lack the conventional ‘sun’, ‘sea’, and ‘sand’ (Richards, 2002). However, investigating how food could become a major motivation for tourists to visit a destination has been given less attention especially in promoting a sense of place.

Many developing countries use tourism as a catalyst for socio-economic development to keep rural areas expanding their economic opportunities (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010). The *9th Malaysia Plan (2006-2009)* for example, emphasised that community development in rural areas, through the homestay programme, provides an opportunity to promote social, economic and cultural benefits (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010). However, Rasid *et al.*, (2012) observed that the inability of a community to be involved in tourism development planning, or to be able to react to business-environment changes, are key barriers to the economic growth of the community through initiatives such as the homestay programme. As a result, local communities tend to gain only minimum benefits from tourism development. So far, very little attention has been paid to the role of promoting traditional food heritage as a fundamental aspect of homestay programmes. While some research has attempted to investigate how to help the local community to generate more income, and to elevate their standard of living, no research has focussed on the homestay’s diverse culinary opportunities. The aim of the

programme is not only to bring benefit in general to the homestay, but is also to offer new job opportunities, especially for young people, to participate as professional tour guides and other roles which directly involve them in running the facilities and the coordination of the programme, in addition to contributing to the preservation of traditional culinary practices.

As Lin and Mao (2015) noted, local food is an iconic product that can encapsulate the natural environment of a particular location, and, as a result, it can provide a ‘memory-bank’ of the destination for tourists (Urry, 1990). Local community leaders and homestay providers need to be convinced of the potential inherent in re-calibrating the homestay experience away from an almost total focus on the performing arts and heritage - traditional dance, music, and other cultural performances – to incorporate and centralise authentic local cuisine. At the end of the day, food is one of the best communication media to develop relations and create bonds between strangers and provide long-lasting memories. The bonding created by these communities with their tourists through food will not only provide subsequent resilient memories for tourists, but will also enhance their experiences of cultural traditions unique to rural areas.

1.4 Research Goal

The goal of the study is to explore ways in which the value of culinary heritage can be enhanced by the host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities, so that they could proactively promote their local food culture to tourists.

1.4.1 Research Aims

From the research goal, the research questions and aims are:

- 1. RQ1:** What are the elements of UNESCO’s and ASEAN’s homestay programmes that can be applied to Malaysian homestay programme, in using and revitalising culinary heritage as a strategy to promote cultural tourism?

Aim 1 To explore the way the culinary and heritage aspects of UNESCO's and ASEAN's homestay programmes can be used to strengthen the Malaysia Homestay Experience Programme developed by the Malaysian government.

Objective 1a To understand the strategies applied in the international, UNESCO's and ASEAN's homestay programmes in safeguarding the culinary heritage, and the way these strategies have been incorporated in the promotion of cultural heritage.

Objective 1b To identify the way UNESCO's and ASEAN's homestay programme strategies in promoting traditional food can be applied to specific Malaysian homestay destinations such as KBH and GH.

2. **RQ2:** To what extent, and in what ways, do stakeholders integrate local food as a strategy in promoting homestay?

Aim 2 To investigate the way stakeholders champion and support the use of local food in homestay programmes in Malaysia, with the intention that the culinary activities in the programme can be used to attract tourists to visit homestays in Malaysia.

Objective 2a To understand the way different stakeholders in Malaysia have championed and supported culinary heritage as an essential aspect of homestay programmes, including in encouraging the use of TMF.

Objective 2b To understand the way through which stakeholder groups in Malaysia have reviewed the importance of TMF as a catalyst to promote KBH and GH.

3. **RQ3:** How much emphasis is placed on the value of TMF in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay, as a means of promoting and publicising their homestays in order to enhance the tourist experience?

Aim 3 To review the way TMF is used in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay as a specific asset to their homestay programmes.

Objective 3a To understand the amount of emphasis put on the value of TMF and the culinary practices by homestay providers in

Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay, as a key part of the promotion of their homestay programme to tourists.

Objective 3b To investigate and identify the potential role traditional Malay food can play in promoting KBH and GH to tourists.

Objective 3c To investigate and identify the potential value of traditional culinary practices of the providers in KBH and GH as a strategic culinary appeal and cultural asset for homestay tourists.

4. **RQ4:** What are the essential elements of TMF that might enhance tourists' homestay experiences, and that would make TMF a central part of the homestay programme?

Aim 4 To investigate the different aspects of local culture that particularly appeals to tourists.

Objective 4a To understand tourists' interest in and consumption of local food and cultural heritage as part of the homestay programme.

Objective 4b To understand the way the homestay providers in KBH and GH promote their traditional Malay food to tourists.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The Government of Malaysia has recognised and acknowledged that the homestay programme plays a vital role in the socio-economic development of rural destinations and their communities. Investigating how the homestay industry in Malaysia can continue to survive and develop is an on-going concern among primary stakeholders, especially those related to the planning and developing of this alternative tourism product. The benefits of homestays can be looked on as a catalyst in sustaining the economies of the rural areas (Liu, 2006), preserving and presenting authentic local cultures, (Wang, 2007), promoting rural community development (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010) and ensuring local community participation in tourism (Kayat, 2010; and Agyeiwaah, 2013).

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in developing tourism products in the homestay industry. Homestays offer more than just a basic type of accommodation. Through the cultural context of the homestay, sociocultural relationships are also developed between a host family and tourists through

various cultural encounters (Kayat, 2010; and Agyeiwaah, 2013). According to Agyeiwaah (2013), tourists' eating, cooking and engaging in diverse cultural activities together with their host families allow two parties with different cultural background to interact and learn about each other's lives. Based on this, this study goal is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be utilised by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities. Currently, very little is known about how local food can contribute to the socio-economic circumstances of local communities involved in the homestay programme. It is therefore timely to examine how promoting traditional food through the homestay initiative can offer an innovative potential direction in cultural and heritage tourism studies, whilst presenting a new approach to achieving sustainable tourism development (Everett and Aitchison, 2008).

The research will focus on two selected areas in Perak, Malaysia, as case studies, namely Kampong Beng Homestay in Lenggong and Homestay Gopeng in Gopeng. The first case study, Kampong Beng Homestay, covers four villages located in Lenggong Valley: Beng, Durau, Batu Ring, and Dusun. The Gopeng Homestay case study involves three villages; Jelintoh, Sungai Itek, and Pintu Padang. Figure 1.2 shows the location of Gopeng and Lenggong in Perak. Gopeng and Lenggong are located approximately 50 kilometres (32 miles) from each other.



Figure 1. 2 Map of Perak, Malaysia
 (Source: <http://thatsmemma.blogspot.co.uk>)

Despite their proximity to each other, these two homestays have different characteristics and identities concerning their cultural and tourism products. Gopeng Homestay is one of the pioneer homestays programmes in Perak, aiming to attract tourists with heritage, cuisine, and eco-tourism. Gopeng is also well known for its limestone caves such as Gua Tempurong (Tempurong Caves), located approximately 5 KMs from the homestay. Kampong Beng Homestay is situated in the Lenggong Valley, which was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in June 2012, and, as such, this homestay represents a developing tourism destination that should be able to benefit from that inscription.

This study provides an important opportunity to advance our understanding of how promoting TMF might act as a catalyst for stimulating the economies of homestay communities in rural areas. Stakeholders play a pivotal role in planning and developing the programmes, and thus it is important to identify and examine the roles of these related parties, which include the federal and local state government, homestay providers and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) which seek to promote and preserve local culinary

heritage. In addition, feedback from tourists plays a critical role in enabling us to determine the sustainability of homestays in Malaysia by allowing us to understand the current state of the homestay sector and review its future potential. Collating data from primary (federal government, local state department and NGOs), secondary (homestay providers or host communities) and tertiary sources (tourists), this study provides a number of suggestions and recommendations to the related parties involved in the homestay initiative, intending to improve their existing products and services by providing more relevant cultural food experiences to tourists.

Finally, the study will outline how local culinary traditions could enhance the image and the local identity of homestay destinations. This would ensure that the primary stakeholders recognise the value of viewing traditional food as a means of differentiating homestays from other tourism destinations, thereby enhancing tourist satisfaction and strengthening the viability of homestays in Malaysia's highly competitive tourist industry. The prospect of promoting local food and culinary products in homestays could ultimately provide not only economic benefits but also important social and cultural benefits to the homestay communities in the shape of preserving communal heritage and ways of life.

1.5.1 Justifications of Study

This thesis tries to understand what aspects of local culinary culture particularly appeal to domestic tourists in KBH and GH. The selection of domestic tourists in this study relates to research done by Kunjuraman and Hussin (2017) about the homestay programme in Mesilou Village, Kundasang, Sabah, Malaysia. They observed that domestic tourists are very important in the tourism industry in Malaysia. Kunjuraman and Hussin (2017) suggest that trying to satisfy these domestic tourists should be given equal attention as trying to satisfy international tourists because their satisfaction influences their loyalty to tourism destinations in Malaysia. By understanding the requirements of domestic tourists, homestay providers should be able to understand better what the homestay programme needs to offer. In recent years, there has been a focus on discovering international tourist's motivational factors relating to consuming Malaysian food.

However, such work has overlooked the requirements of domestic tourists – the primary target audience of the homestay programme.

The homestay programme was initially developed to promote Malaysian culture to international tourists (Zakaria, 2012). However, due to a lack of promotion of the programme, foreign tourists tend to stay in hotels and regard homestays as an unusual and ‘alternative’ mode of accommodation. Zakaria (2012) observed that the homestay programme in Malaysia ignored the real target market, which is domestic tourists. Table 1.2 below shows a big gap between the number of domestic tourists and foreign tourists staying in the homestay programme in Malaysia from 2012 to 2015. Domestic tourists increased from eighty per cent to eighty-two per cent within those years, but foreign tourists decreased from twenty per cent to eighteen per cent. The evidence shows that the homestay programme in Malaysia is still struggling to capture international tourists to visit their homestay. Furthermore, Habibi (2017) suggested that international tourists become more anxious (than domestic tourists) about their safety and security while they are on holiday since they are not familiar with the country. Collectively, these studies outline a critical need to study the demands of domestic tourists with respect to the integration of local culinary heritage in the homestay programme as stated in Research Question 4 on page 18.

Table 1. 2 Total number of domestic and international tourists for the homestay programme in Malaysia from 2012 to 2015 (Source: Industry Development Division, MOTAC)

No	Items	2012		2013		2014		2015		Comparison 2015 and 2014
		Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	
1.	Domestic Tourists	259,423	80	288,107	82	296,439	81	319,395	82	7.7%
2.	Foreign Tourists	65,835	20	62,847	18	71,034	19	71,830	18	-1.1%
3.	Total tourists	325,258	100	350,954	100	367,473	100	391,225	100	6.5%

1.6 Operational Definitions

This study of homestay culinary heritage uses a number of essential terms:

- a) **Traditional food**, according to Trichopoulou *et al.*, (2007), is an expression of culture, history, and lifestyle. Many traditional foods have been prepared

and eaten for centuries. The consumption of this food has usually taken place in a particular area or region over an extended period of time.

- b) Culinary Tourism**, according to Long (1998, p. 181), is the intentional, exploratory participation in the foodways of another culture. Participation includes consumption or preparation and presentation for consumption of a food item, cuisine, meal, or eating style that is considered as belonging to an unfamiliar culinary system. The word culinary itself is the adjective form of food (meaning ‘kitchen’ in French), but it tends to emphasise the actual practice (e.g. culinary utensils), the style of food preparation, and consumption, as well as the social context in which food is acquired, prepared, and eaten (Hornig and Hu, 2008; Ignatov and Smith, 2006).
- c) Practice**, as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary (2018), is to perform an activity or exercise a skill repeatedly or regularly in order to acquire improvement or maintain proficiency in it. In the culinary world, the word ‘practice’ has much to do with the activities performed in the kitchen by the cooks or chefs.
- d) Malay** is defined by Article 160 (2) of The Federal Constitution of Malaysia as meaning a person who professes the Muslim religion, habitually speaks Malay, conforms to Malay custom, and satisfies residence requirements. To be Malay for the purpose of the Constitution, one need not be of Malay ethnic origin. Conversely, even a genuine ethnic Malay is not a Malay for the purpose of the Constitution if, for example, he does not profess the Muslim religion (Mauzy, 1985, p. 174).
- e) Homestay**, according to Merriam Webster (2007), is defined as “a period during which a visitor in a foreign country lives with a local family”. The official definition of the Homestay Programme according to MOCAT (1995) is “where a tourist stays with the host’s family and experience everyday ways of life of the family in both direct and indirect manners” (Pusiran and Xiao, 2013; Hamzah, 2007).

- f) **Tourism**, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes (MOTAC, 2008). Leiper (1979) defined tourism as the theory and practice of touring or travelling for pleasure. The definitions of tourism, however, have been expanded based on its economic and/or business implications.
- g) **Heritage** has been characterised as something that can be inherited from the past and transferred to future generations (Farahani *et al.*, 2012; Imon, 2007). The Venice Charter defined cultural heritage as ‘historical monuments’ in 1964 and International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) refined it as ‘monuments’ and ‘sites’ in 1965. Then, UNESCO divided heritage into movable and immovable heritage (Farahani *et al.*, 2012). There is no standardised terminology to define heritage, but the word incorporates tangible, intangible, and environmental elements (Ahmad, 2006 as cited in Farahani *et al.*, 2012).
- h) **Cultural Heritage**, according to ICOMOS (2016), is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values. As an essential part of culture, cultural heritage contains intangible and tangible elements.
- i) **Tangible Cultural Heritage** has been categorised by UNESCO as something that exists in material form which can be physically touched, such as monuments, buildings, works of art, paintings, objects, and so on. Farahani *et al.*, (2012), in a study of George Town World Heritage Site, identified buildings for worship, dwellings, sites of living human communities, human creations such as artefacts and utensils, and architecture as tangible cultural heritage.
- j) **Intangible Cultural Heritage**, according to Farahani *et al.*, (2012), is something that exist in immaterial form, for example beliefs, music, dance, literature, theatre, languages, knowledge, local traditions, practices of the

community, and so forth. UNESCO describes it as the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage.³ Intangible Cultural Heritage is transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.

- k) Stakeholders**, with reference to Merriam Webster's (2017) definition, means a person or body that is involved in or affected by a course of action.

- l) Host**, according to the Oxford English Dictionary (2017), is a person who receives or entertains other people as guests, while the ASEAN Homestay Standard (2016) defines host as a person/community that represents the homestay and provides services/hospitality to homestay guests. Thus, this definition is in accordance with Lynch's (1999) study, which defined host as the named contact person for organisations involved with the accommodation unit.

- m) Tourists** according to the Cambridge English Dictionary (2017) mean someone who visits a place for pleasure and interest, usually while on holiday. However, Merriam Webster (2017) defined tourist as the one that makes a tour for pleasure or culture which is relevant more to this study. In this study, the word 'tourist' is preferred over 'visitor' as, according to Leiper (1979), the meaning is about temporary visitors staying at least twenty-four hours in the country visited with the purpose of the journey classified under one of the following: (a) leisure (recreation, holiday, health, study, religion, and sport); (b) business, family, mission and meeting. Similarly, a tourist, according to the Cambridge English Dictionary (2017),

³ Article 1 of the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). ICH, as defined in paragraph 1 above, is manifested *inter alia* in the following domains: (a) oral traditions and expressions, including language, as a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage; (b) performing arts; (c) social practices, rituals and festive events; (d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; (e) traditional craftsmanship.

is someone who visits a place for pleasure and interest, usually while on holiday. More precisely for this study, Merriam Webster (2017) defined a tourist as one that makes a tour for pleasure or culture.

Chapter 2. The Development of the Homestay Concept in Malaysia

2.1 Tourism Development in Malaysia

Tourism development in Malaysia was revamped with a renewed impetus in 1953 after the Culture Department was officially opened by the Government of Malaysia. Before that, tourism came under the Ministry of Culture, Sport, and Youth (Mohamed, 2001, in Marzuki, 2010). After the formation of the Culture Department, tourism development in Malaysia made impressive progress in terms of its contribution to the Malaysian economy (see Table 2.1). However, despite the rise in tourism-driven economic activity, diversification away from traditional industries such as rubber and tin was limited (Wells, 1982 cited in Marzuki, 2010), largely due to the fact that the newly formed Department of Tourism (1959) came under the auspices of the Ministry of Trade. In 2010, Marzuki reported that the development of modern tourism began in earnest in the early 1970s, sparked by an important conference - the Conference of the Pacific Areas Travel Association (PATA) - held in Kuala Lumpur in 1972. The conference served to enlighten governments and their citizens about the opportunities and benefits which could flow from developing the tourism industry. PATA gave momentum for the sector to grow, beginning with a newly created Tourism Development Corporation (TDC) in 1972 and then the setting up of a National Tourism Master Plan in 1975 (Sirat, 1993). In May 1992, the government took a further step to expand the tourism industry by setting up the Ministry of Culture, Arts, and Tourism (MOCAT), charging it with the mission:

...to expand and diversify the tourism base and to reduce country's dependency on a narrow range of activities and markets.

(Sharif, 2002, p.66)

The increasing importance of tourism in Malaysia can be seen from the figures in Table 2.1. Tourist arrivals increased starting from 1998 until the year 2010 (the final year for the table). Total income receipts reported also grew with the government's efforts to organise events and festivities to attract more foreign tourists to come to Malaysia. 'Visit Malaysia 2007', for example, recorded a total

of 20.9 million foreign tourists visiting the country, an increase of 3.4 million compared to the previous year. Numbers have continued to rise since. In other measurements of its significance and growth, in 2011 and 2012 the contribution of the tourism sector amounted to RM 57.0 and RM65.3 billion respectively (Mohamad *et al.*, 2014), making it the second most important foreign currency earner in 2012 (Tourism Malaysia, 2012). Therefore, with the continuous extension and development of tourism, Malaysia has acknowledged and sought to act on the potential of this sector to be a significant contributor to the Malaysian economy.

Table 2. 1 Tourist arrivals and receipts to Malaysia from 1998 to 2010
(Source: <http://www.wonderfulmalaysia.com/malaysia-general-country-information.htm>)

TOURIST ARRIVALS & RECEIPTS TO MALAYSIA		
YEAR	ARRIVALS	RECEIPTS (RM)
2010	24.6 Million	54.2 Billion
2009	23.6 Million	53.4 Billion
2008	22.0 Million	49.6 Billion
2007	20.9 Million	46.1 Billion
2006	17.4 Million	36.3 Billion
2005	16.4 Million	32.0 Billion
2004	15.7 Million	29.7 Billion
2003	10.5 Million	21.3 Billion
2002	13.2 Million	25.8 Billion
2001	12.7 Million	24.2 Billion
2000	10.2 Million	17.3 Billion
1999	7.9 Million	12.3 Billion
1998	5.5 Million	8.6 Billion

Since its foundation, MOCAT has devised initiatives to develop the tourism industry, much in line with other Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia and Thailand. The two overriding goals were to:

- Assist the states to create and promote distinctive identities so as to be more attractive to domestic tourists;
- Encourage states to support their tourist attractions and destinations and assist through joint promotions and the provision of promotional expertise at the state level.

In 1992, the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board (MTPB) was created under MOCAT to replace the Tourism Development Corporation (TDC). This new agency was established to support the government with the implementation of new tourism policy and promote Malaysian tourist destinations both internally and overseas (Sharif, 2002, cited in Marzuki, 2010). The MTPB is also in charge of developing and coordinating tourism facilities and amenities. Their mission states that the goal is to:

...promote Malaysia as an outstanding tourist destination... to increase awareness of Malaysia's unique wonders, attractions and cultures... to increase the number of foreign tourists and extend the average length of their stay... to increase Malaysia's tourism revenue... and to develop domestic tourism and enhance Malaysia's share of the market for meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions. (MTPB, 1975, p.4)

Notably, the formation of the MTPB has brought a new dimension in Malaysia's tourism industry, especially with their aggressive marketing and promotion efforts targeting overseas markets. Using the new catchphrase 'Malaysia, Truly Asia', Malaysia has been presented to the world as a leading tourist destination with a unique culture and identity. Marzuki (2010) examined how, with the new development of overseas branches of the MTPB in London, Amsterdam, and Dubai, Malaysia was aiming to expand its global profile as a high-class and developed tourist destination.

Under various tourism planning policies, the government has highlighted tourism expansion in each of a number of development plans. The progress of this industry has been promoted in every planning period starting from the Second Malaysia Plan (1971-1975). The government has sought to improve the sector in each of the plan periods to ensure that they implement a suite of policies deemed necessary to promote tourism and exploit rising demand as tourism became an increasingly important global industry. MOTAC is also invested with the responsibility to facilitate connections between tourism and culture in efforts to promote Malaysia as a cultural destination (MOTAC, 2015).

2.2 History and Concept of the Homestay Programme in Malaysia

The homestay programme in Malaysia can be traced back to the early 1970s when a local lady named Mak Long Teh began offering her home on a long-term basis to ‘drifters’ or ‘hippies’ in the ‘drifter enclave’ of Kampong Cherating Lama in Pahang. She provided breakfast, dinner and a space to sleep in her modest kampong house, sparking the concept of ‘homestay’ (Hamzah, 2006; Hamzah, 2008; Kayat, 2010; Razzaq *et al.*, 2011; Pusiran and Xiao, 2013). Subsequently, other local people in the small villages along the beach began to offer similar arrangements as Mak Long Teh to satisfy the influx of domestic and international tourists looking for a different travel experience and seeking to explore and learn about local culture. In the late 1980s, the President of the Homestay Association of Malaysia, Dato’ Sahariman, took the initiative by upgrading the simple homestay to a formal homestay to host exchange programmes with groups of Japanese youths. The formal homestay programmes enabled the Japanese youngsters to stay with local families and participate in everyday activities related to rural and pastoral ways of life. Given the success of this exchange programme, the Ministry of Agriculture began to use the homestay programme as a catalyst for rural development (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010; and Razzaq *et al.*, 2011). Recognising its potential, the homestay was officially positioned as a community-based tourism programme in Malaysia in 1995, with the first homestay village located in Desa Murni, Temerloh, Pahang. This went on to become a prosperous programme and has since grown. Through efforts to make homestay an official programme under MOTAC, the government gave particular attention regarding additional funds for marketing and developing more homestay programmes nationwide. The Malaysian homestay is different from those in other countries due to the elements of lodging with host, or ‘adopted’, families (Muslim *et al.*, 2017). Thus, with the formalisation of the homestay as one of MOTAC’s programmes, the government has officially defined the Malaysian Homestay Programme as “[one] that gives visitors the opportunity to stay with a chosen family, interact, and experience the daily life of their homestay family and learn the culture and lifestyle of the rural community in Malaysia” (MOTAC, 2015).

The homestay sector has gone by various names, such as farm stay, culture homestay, heritage homestay, education homestay, voluntary homestay, private

accommodation, leisure stay, and cottage (Albaladejo-Pina and Diaz-Delfa, 2009; Barnett, 2000; Gu and Wong, 2006; Pearce, n.d). However, despite this variety in terminology, what makes the approach unique is the fact that the tourists stay with local host families and experience their culture in a traditional village setting. The Malaysian homestay programme does not only focus on providing accommodation, but also on offering an opportunity to garner an authentic understanding of local life by promoting traditional and genuine lifestyles in the rural areas (Mura, 2015). The programme also encourages local communities to be involved with the public and private tourism-related enterprises and businesses to stimulate their economies and thereby improve rural life monetarily. The Government of Malaysia also believes that homestay programme offers commercial potential if it is successful in attracting international and local tourists, and thus various efforts had been made to promote this programme. With this opportunity in mind, the central government has provided numerous financial incentives (see Chapter 7, page 177) to local communities to encourage them to organise local cultural attractions and activities to tourists (Yusof *et al.*, 2013). As the homestay programme became more formalised into a distinctive sub-sector, statistics show that local household incomes have increased while at the same time local communities have benefitted financially from the increased awareness of cultural heritage conservation.

The incomes of the homestay programmes in the fourteen states of Malaysia for example, have shown a significant increase from the year of 2012 to 2015 as illustrated in Table 2.2. Comparing the record for the income in 2014 and 2015, almost all of the homestays in Malaysia have recorded an increased in their total income except for the states of Kelantan and Negeri Sembilan. However, with the 22 % increase for the overall total income of all the homestays in Malaysia, the programme has shown its potential value in the tourism industry.

Table 2. 2 Total income for all the homestays programme in Malaysia from 2012 to 2015
(Source: Industry Development Division, MOTAC)

No	States	Total Income (RM)				Percentage 2014-2015
		2012	2013	2014	2015	
1	Perlis	41,347.00	170,391.00	259,480.00	394,356.00	52%
2	Kedah	979,019.00	722,882.00	801,232.00	1,917,206.00	139%
3	Pulau	367,916.00	418,411.00	426,777.00	728,846.00	71%

	Pinang					
4	Perak	300,720.50	292,340.00	497,489.00	550,746.00	11%
5	Selangor	2,181,747.60	3,822,168.30	2,285,897.00	3,119,811.00	36%
6	Melaka	1,923,190.00	1,356,530.00	1,484,040.00	1,686,275.00	14%
7	N. Sembilan	842,689.60	960,022.00	952,388.00	853,691.50	-10%
8	Johor	1,775,315.40	1,301,025.00	1,881,772.50	2,095,211.60	11%
9	Kelantan	288,074.00	234,959.00	363,155.00	270,295.00	-26%
10	Terengganu	301,204.50	327,601.00	227,395.60	268,624.00	18%
11	Pahang	4,956,411.70	7,263,919.00	8,567,617.60	10,625,492.00	24%
12	Sarawak	1,598,764.10	1,964,900.20	2,997,325.50	3,070,792.80	2%
13	Sabah	2,651,841.20	2,433,501.70	2,052,034.30	2,329,718.60	14%
14	Labuan	337,416.00	302,299.00	432,947.00	481,868.00	11%
Total of the income (RM)		18,545,656.00	21,570,949.20	23,229,550.50	28,392,933.50	22%

In terms of tourist numbers, a market survey undertaken to supported the development of the master plan indicated that foreign tourists who came to Malaysia spent 15% of their stay in rural areas. A report from the Industry Development Division of MOTAC showed that the number of domestic tourists increased from 2014 to 2015 by 7.7% (see Table 2.3). Although international tourism increased only by 1.1% for the same period, the overall number of tourists using the homestay programme increased by 6.5%, indicating positive growth in the development of the homestay programme in Malaysia.

Table 2. 3 Total number of domestic and international tourists for the homestay programme in Malaysia from 2012 to 2015 (Source: Industry Development Division, MOTAC)

No	Items	2012	2013	2014	2015	Comparison
		Total	Total	Total	Total	2015 and 2014
1.	Domestic Tourists	259,423	288,107	296,439	319,395	7.7%
2.	Foreign Tourists	65,835	62,847	71,034	71,830	1.1%
3.	Total tourists	325,258	350,954	367,473	391,225	6.5%

Fundamentally, the homestay programme has been seen as a way of supporting local development through tourism (Acharya and Halpenny, 2013, cited in Mura, 2015). Up to July 2017, MOTAC had recorded that around 5,474

homestay providers were registered for the programme in Malaysia, involving 348 villages nationwide across fourteen states in Malaysia (see Table 2.4).

Table 2. 4 Homestay Statistics in Malaysia as of July 2017
(Source: Industry Development Division, MOTAC)

State	No. of Homestays	No. of Villages	No. of Providers	No. of Rooms
Perlis	3	3	56	64
Kedah	16	22	345	442
Pulau Pinang	11	28	234	264
Perak	11	41	305	409
Selangor	15	34	443	709
Melaka	9	9	137	217
Negeri Sembilan	13	33	288	435
Johor	22	46	468	615
Kelantan	10	10	185	187
Terengganu	16	21	323	450
Pahang	40	46	570	835
Sarawak	24	43	316	568
Sabah	17	33	242	454
Labuan	3	3	79	97
Total	201	348	3,901	5,474

The essence of the programme is that visitors get to stay at a ‘kampong’, a traditional Malay village, with a local host family. These hosts or participants in the homestay programme have been carefully selected and have to adhere to strict guidelines set by MOTAC. Participating homestay villages can be found in every state, with some tucked away in the hinterland, while others are situated in the vicinity of easily accessible major towns. Based on this understanding, the homestay programme in Malaysia by definition entails a local community responding to the challenge to participate in the programme by allowing foreign and domestic tourists alike to stay together with local families. The tourists are able to learn about local ways of life, culture and the daily practices of people in rural areas (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010). In fact, rural tourism activities in Malaysia are part of the government’s ongoing efforts to achieve the target of reducing economic disparities between rural and urban areas as well as empowering village communities (Yusof *et al.*, 2013).

Thus, the Malaysian homestay programme can be regarded as a rural-cultural-community-based tourism product (Mapjabil *et al.*, 2015). Rural tourism

itself has actually existed for a long time in Malaysia, with many long-lasting nature- and culture-based tourism products located in the countryside. However, it only received formal recognition as a tourism product with the launching of the Rural Tourism Master Plan in 2001 (Yusof *et al.*, 2013). Since then, rural cultural tourism such as homestays have been shown to have brought immediate benefits to both the group that supplies the service - the providers - and the one that demands the programme - the tourists (Musa *et al.*, 2010).

2.2.1 Criteria and Classification for the Homestay

As opposed to a hotel, bed, and breakfast, or a homestay run by an individual homeowner in a residential area, a homestay programme is an alternative form of accommodation (Aziz *et al.*, 2014) operated by a group of registered homestay providers in a communal area (usually a traditional Malaysian village). To regulate the homestay programme, MOTAC issues a license only if the house owner can satisfy a list of selection criteria which stipulate such things as an adequate standard of hygiene, adequate bathroom facilities, no criminal record in the host family, and no history of suffering from communicable diseases within the family.

After being issued a license, the homeowners have to attend a basic training course conducted by the Institute for Rural Advancement (INFRA) under the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development. Several criteria need to be addressed to ensure the homestay programme is successfully implemented. The training is grouped into three main components: Product, Participant, and Principles (the '3Ps'). Mapjabil *et al.*, (2015) showed that the first element - the product of the homestay - is derived from the resources or attractions in the village, such as the natural environment, historical sites, and unique cultural features such as local architecture styles, arts and crafts, music and dance traditions, specific rituals or ceremonies, and food and drink. It can be noted here that although food is included in the product category, MOTAC has not outlined any specific guidelines for promoting the various aspects of culinary heritage as a driving force to attract tourists to a particular homestay (this point will be returned to later). The second element is the actual participants interested in becoming homestay providers or associated entrepreneurs in this tourism business. Usually,

the participants have other forms of income to support their families as the income generated from the homestay is not sufficient to be the only source of the provider's livelihood (Pusiran and Xiao, 2013). Thus, the programme is another platform for the participant to earn additional income to help the families.

Finally, there are several principles by which the homestay providers must abide. As Mapjabil *et al.*, (2015) stated, the factors that need to be give emphasis to the homestay organisation are leadership, personality, integrity, knowledge and social networking. These foundational elements of the programme must be capable of ensuring the sustainable development of the homestay programme (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010).

2.2.2 Inadequate Promotion of TMF in Homestay in Malaysia

Although extensive research has been carried out on the planning and development of the homestay programme in Malaysia, such approaches have failed to address the marketability of this business through a focus on cuisine. MOTAC mentioned food in the homestay guidelines as only one of the aspects in determining the homestay provider's competency to become a registered participant, particularly concerning food preparation in the provider's lodgings (MOTAC, 2015). Traditional food in the homestay is also advertised as one of the local attractions for tourists to experience a village-style life in the rural areas. But in contrast to the promotion and importance of food that has been highlighted (although in a limited way) in the programme, there is a dearth of evidence concerning the effectiveness of promoting TMF as an attraction to tourists to come and visit homestay destinations in Malaysia. In this vein, Okumus *et al.*, (2007) identified that although the marketing of food in promoting tourism destinations has been growing in recent years, surprisingly not all destinations capitalise on the potential opportunities it provides and not all who do try to integrate food in their marketing activities do it effectively.

A study by Quan and Wang (2004) noted that the trend of consuming local food has become one of the crucial elements of a tourist's experience that adds significant value and meaning to a holiday at a destination. This view is supported by Trihas and Kyriakaki *et al.*, (2016), who wrote that in recent decades gastronomy has been considered an element in its own right that could attract

tourists, even referring to cuisine as a ‘peak touristic experience’ (p.227). In Malaysia, however, the culinary market remains greatly under-utilised by the government and other stakeholders in the context of promoting local food as a powerful marketing tool to attract tourists to homestays. Disclosure about the lack of specific reference to local food as an attraction in the homestays was indicated in the homestay programme registration form on MOTAC’s website (as of 1st September 2016, see Figure 2.1). From an examination by the researcher, it appears that the Ministry has not been anywhere near aggressive enough in promoting traditional food as a leading attraction for the homestay programme. Figure 2.1 again, for example, asks all registered homestay programme to indicate the homestay attractions and/or nearby tourism activities. However, it focuses on the cultural heritage and attractions belonging to the homestay. Under the registration form, culinary culture is not mentioned. These outcomes appear to be closely linked with Tibere and Aloysius (2013)’s study. The Malaysian government apparently, has shown serious efforts towards incorporated the national cultural heritage into the national development plan. But the preservation and restoration focus is only on the historical sites, building and artefacts. Although food has its own regional culture, it appears not to be regarded officially as a cultural opportunity for homestay providers.

E. Tarikan/ Aktiviti Pelancongan Yang Berdekatan (Attraction/ Nearby Tourism Activities)	
Tempat Bersejarah / Cultural heritage places	<input type="checkbox"/> Sila Nyatakan: /Please state:
Tempat Rekreasi / Recreational places	<input type="checkbox"/> Sila Nyatakan: /Please state:
Tarikan Semulajadi / Natural attractions	<input type="checkbox"/> Sila Nyatakan: /Please state:
Acara/ Pesta Pelancongan / Event/ Tourism Feast	<input type="checkbox"/> Sila Nyatakan: /Please state:
Kegiatan Kebudayaan / Cultural performances	<input type="checkbox"/> Sila Nyatakan: /Please state:
Pertubuhan Kebudayaan / Cultural Performances Body	<input type="checkbox"/> Sila Nyatakan: /Please state:
Lain-lain / Others	<input type="checkbox"/> Sila Nyatakan: /Please state:

Figure 2. 1 The registration form for the homestay programme in Malaysia (Source: MOTAC, 2016)

The government of Malaysia has only recently begun to realise the important role of traditional cuisine and culture to promote Malaysia as a culinary

destination, an opportunity that, from the above, appears not to have percolated into the official data-collection regarding homestay provision. The Department of Heritage Malaysia (DHM) released its 100 Malaysian Heritage Foods List in 2009 – but this related more to food to be preserved than food to be used to enhance homestay tourism. MOTAC, as the central body for developing the tourism industry in Malaysia, launched its ‘Fabulous Food Malaysia’ campaign in 2009 and subsequently organised three more Malaysian cuisine annual promotional events – ‘Malaysia International Gourmet Festival’ (MIGF), ‘ASEAN Heritage Food Trail with Chef Wan’, and ‘Street and Restaurant Food Festival’, all organised and delivered in 2010 (MOTOUR, 2011). In 2013 the DHM list was expanded to include another 151 items of traditional cuisines worthy of preservation (Jalis *et al.*, 2014). Following these initiatives, the MTPB began to include local cuisine as part of the tourist experience in their promotional plans for 2013. The plan incorporated joint campaigns and annual events specifically to promote Malaysian cuisine as one of the country’s tourists attractions, with the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) under the ‘Malaysian Kitchen Programme’ organising events in 2014. This programme is an international promotional cuisine campaign developed by MATRADE to promote Malaysian cuisine and local products worldwide.

The examples mentioned here show that Malaysia has only recently made a serious effort to include local food and cuisine in the marketing and advertising materials to promote Malaysia as a tourist destination. Yet surprisingly, despite these governmental promotional plans to highlight traditional cuisine locally and internationally, publicity specifically for food is not as aggressive as promotion for the general homestay programme in Malaysia. Moreover, the publicity given by the homestay providers is not as aggressive as the publicity done by the government.

This situation was entirely predictable and should have been avoided because the government has spent a large amount of money on creating an awareness about local food to enhance the promotion of the tourism product in Malaysia. Currently, most homestays identify food or local cuisine as part of a wider cultural programme along with traditional dance, music, arts and crafts, and so forth. This lack of focus on food specifically appears to be a major flaw in the

promotion strategies of the homestay programme. The government – national, regional, state, and local – in conjunction with other stakeholders needs to emphasise much more how local cuisines could help homestay destinations attract tourists. In summary, it is suggested that local culinary heritage has not been reinforced as an opportunity attempt to make homestays more attractive by the whole gamut of stakeholders – from national level right down to local level – responsible for developing, coordinating, managing, and promoting the sector until 2009.

2.2.3 ASEAN Homestay Standards 2016

The objective of the ASEAN Homestay Standards is to develop a comprehensive level of homestay quality to be adopted by ASEAN Member States (Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Cambodia, Vietnam, Brunei Darussalam, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and the Philippines). The development of these standards were recommended in the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP) 2011-2015 to create a better-quality visitor experience by showcasing local resources in a satisfactory, safe, and attractive manner (ASEAN Homestay Standard, 2016). Malaysia was chosen to lead the committee for drafting and revising the standards (Tavakoli *et al.*, 2017). The standards needed to take into consideration the previous standards and regulations that had been developed and created by Malaysia for their homestay programme and upgrade them to a new set of standards that could be applied to all ASEAN countries. Based on these newest of standards, homestays are urged to focus more on cultural kampong values, whereby guests will stay with a host family and experience everyday family and community life in both a direct and indirect manner. The standards focus on the following criteria: host accommodation, activities, authenticity, management, location, safety and security, marketing, and sustainability principles (ASEAN Homestay Standard 2016, p. 2). Each homestay is measured according to the criteria noted above and then grouped into two: homestay organisation and homestay providers. The homestay organisation needs to obtain at least 56.25% out of 75% to pass the assessment. The homestay providers must go through an evaluation for accommodation, hygiene, and cleanliness, marking at least above 18.57% out of 25% from the total mark (see Figure 2.2).

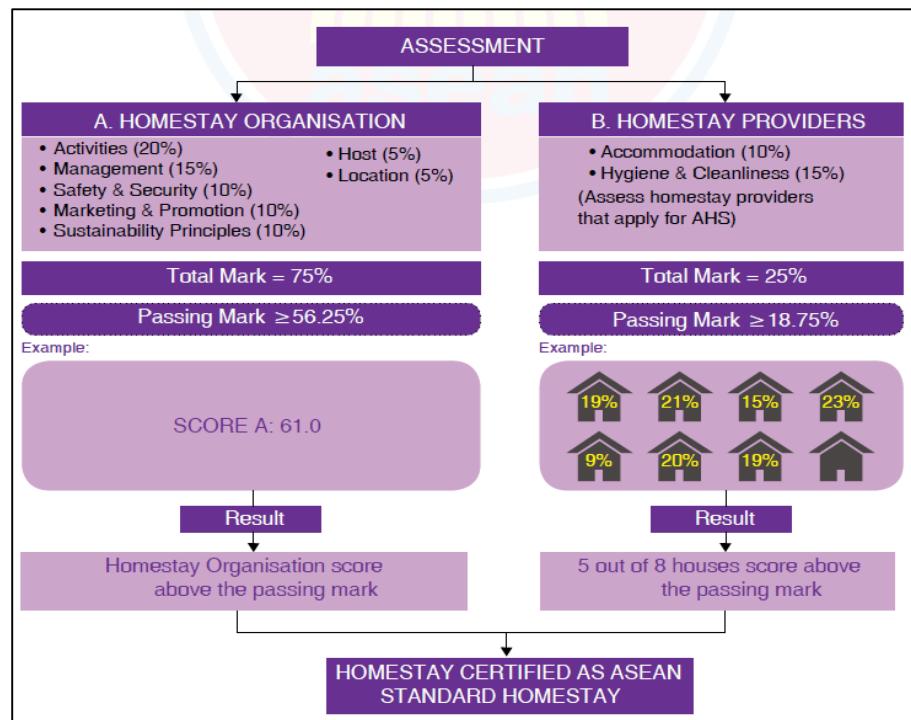


Figure 2.2 Assessment for the ASEAN Standard Homestay (2016)
(Source: ASEAN Homestay Standards 2016)

In the overall assessment, the homestay organisation and providers are jointly assessed according to the nine criteria before they are permitted to be ASEAN-certified homestays. Figure 2.3 illustrates the nine criteria that are evaluated for ASEAN certification.

MAIN CRITERIA		WEIGHTAGE
1.	Activities	20%
2.	Management	15%
3.	Hygiene and Cleanliness	15%
4.	Accommodation	10%
5.	Safety and Security	10%
6.	Marketing and Promotion	10%
7.	Sustainability Principles	10%
8.	Host	5%
9.	Location	5%
Total		100%

Figure 2. 2 Nine criteria and weighted percentage for assessment
(Source: ASEAN Homestay Standards 2016)

Regarding food specifically, it is incorporated under criterion number 3 in the category of hygiene and cleanliness (see Figure 2.3 above). From these initial tests, the overall weight of this element is rated at fifteen per cent, as explain in Figure 2.4 below. The standard for ‘food preparation’ as shown in subdivision of

5.6.3, entails a number of food-related matters that must be adhered to by the homestay providers, such as the condition of the kitchen, utensils, presentation of the tools and equipment, as well as the food handlers, i.e. the host family. This documentation is crucial as the assessment will be made through several methods, such as interview, document reviews, and site inspection. The homestay organisation and the homestay providers will be immediately disqualified if any of them fail or are unable to fulfil all of the requirements as stipulated by the ASEAN Homestay Standard.

The standards stress that where possible homestay providers should source meat, chicken, fish and other ingredients used in cooking from the local market or suppliers (see Figure 2.4). Previous research has established the connections between tourism and food production as a mechanism to support sustainable agricultural practices (Hall, 2018). Furthermore, Butler and Hall (1998) highlighted that sustainable tourism can support the physical environment, such as family farm based agriculture. They found that through such local agriculture, rural communities can sustain their culture and identity through the promotion and use of locally grown food by tourists and providers.

<p>5.6.3. Food Preparation</p> <p>5.6.3.1 Kitchen shall be in good, clean condition and well ventilated</p> <p>5.6.3.2 Kitchen utensils shall be in good condition, clean, and kept in a dry place.</p> <p>5.6.3.3 Chipped plates, glasses and mugs, etc. shall not be used to serve meals for guests.</p> <p>5.6.3.4 Family members involved in food preparation shall have good personal hygiene and be properly attired.</p> <p>5.6.3.5 Meat, chicken, fish and other ingredients used in food preparation shall be fresh and preferably sourced from the local market/suppliers.</p> <p>5.6.3.6 Served food shall be properly covered.</p> <p>5.6.3.7 Guests shall only be served safe drinking water.</p>

Figure 2. 3 Description for food preparation in ASEAN Homestay Standards (2016)
(Source: ASEAN Homestay Standards 2016)

The new standards have introduced strict criteria and assessment for homestay organisations and providers and through this ensured that all of the ASEAN countries will reach a more uniform standard in creating a ‘new brand’ of quality tourist experience. The measures constitute a firm understanding of, and commitment to, the requirements of a quality visitor experience from a homestay

perspective. It was deemed crucial to establish a standardised base level understanding of what a homestay is, and to set a minimum standard across all ASEAN member states. The standards should also facilitate homestay organisations and providers to adopt a more coordinated approach, encourage partnerships with relevant stakeholders, create a positive environment by revitalising the rural economy, and serve to reduce rural poverty (ASEAN Homestay Standard, 2016, p. 2).

These socio-cultural principles incorporate a concern for the preservation of local cultural heritage and customs. The standards incorporate local traditions, with an emphasis on the importance of local food as a domestic product and attraction. In point 5.9.1.3.2 of these standards (see Figure 2.5), the homestay providers are encouraged to offer tourists traditional foods and organise food-related events and performances. Identifying local cuisine as a homestay product and attraction, as one of the criteria to be measured in the standards, alerts homestay providers and their communities to the pressing need to engage with the preservation of local food traditions.

5.9.1.3	Local Product/Attraction
5.9.1.3.1	Promote local festivals and visits to nearby markets.
5.9.1.3.2	Offer guests traditional handicraft, food and organise cultural events and performances.

Figure 2. 4 Local Product/Attraction in ASEAN Homestay Standards (2016)
(Source: ASEAN Homestay Standards 2016)

The Brunei Darussalam Standards (BDS) have taken the initiative to review the criteria specified in the ASEAN Homestay Standard 2016 to support their country's interests and attractions. From point 5.9.1.3 (see Figure 2.5) of their Standards, Brunei has identified traditional food as a main attraction in their Tourist Accommodation Homestay Standards (2016). In bullet point 1.2.1 (see Figure 2.6), the BDS emphasise that a key component of their homestay programme includes local cultural and historical values such as traditional food at places where guests can visit and enjoy authentic cultural experiences.

1.2.1 Attraction

A place of interest and leisure where guests visit and experience typical and inherent environment which exhibit cultural and historical values such as significant historic sites, performing arts institutions, traditional food & entertainment, handicraft centers, local industries and natural locations.

Figure 2. 5 Brunei Darussalam Homestay Standards (2016)
(Source: Tourist Accommodation Standard - Homestay, 2016)

Moreover, Brunei also stresses that food should be included under the activities to optimise and showcase local resources to homestay guests, as presented in Figure 2.7. The goal is to ensure that the micro-food production enterprises of Bruneian homestay provisions can be boosted.

4.1 Activities

4.1.1 Activities shall optimise and showcase the local resources such as the followings:

4.1.1.1 Local culture and heritage

4.1.1.2 Local enterprises. (Examples, micro food production enterprises, farms, local industries, handicrafts).

4.1.1.3 Natural resources. (Forest, Rivers, caves, laks, etc.)

4.1.2 The design and implementation of the activities shall encourage the interactive participation between local community and guests.

Figure 2. 6 The section of activities under Brunei Darussalam Standards (2016)
(Source: Tourist Accommodation Standard - Homestay, 2016)

The main goal of the current study is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be used by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities so that they, in turn, can proactively promote their local food culture to tourists. A study by Novelli *et al.*, (2017) reviewed the ASEAN community-based standards, community-based tourism (CBT) as a way to improve sustainable tourism provision in the region. Their results indicate that, although the criteria include a number of important indicators, some aspects such as local guides or criteria relating to food and beverage, are missing. These missing elements, might restrict good CBT from developing. They underlined that food is a main product components in CBT, particularly homestays, and that activities such as local cooking classes, sharing meals with host families, and guided local tours are fundamental aspects of community visits.

A close examination of the activities indicated in the ASEAN Homestay Standards, shows three main indicators as illustrated in Figure 2.8 below. First, village and community-based activities need to showcase local resources comprising of culture and heritage, natural attractions, and local businesses. Under this requirement, the homestay organisation and homestay providers have to demonstrate to the committee of ASEAN Homestay Standards that there is active participation between tourists and the local community around these resources. Secondly, the homestay programme has to integrate the resources and related activities of their surrounding areas and villages to encourages active participation between local communities and tourist attractions. Thirdly, the homestay programme needs to carry out activities that symbolise the authenticity and tradition of their homestay through language, lifestyle, handicrafts, etc.

This shows that food-relevant activities are not mentioned in the Standards as one of the central criteria of the homestay programme. Previous studies have explored the relationships between local food being incorporated into tourism activities (Hall and Mitchell, 2006; Taylor *et al.*, 2006; Sims, 2009; Che *et al.*, 2013). However, the opportunities presented by traditional food have been neglected in most of the studies (Dah *et al.*, 2013). Taylor *et al.*, (2006) emphasised that the active engagement of local residents could contribute to the development of a sense of place through local food and tourism activities, and thus, promote quality of life among the local communities and help to preserve the cultural capital and natural assets of a destination for future generations. This enables, the homestay programme to take advantage of their food as a cultural asset through offering food-relevant activities to tourists.

3	Activities (WEIGHTAG E: 20%)	Village and community based activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showcases local resources such as local culture and heritage, local enterprises, or natural resources. Activities encourage interactive participation between the local community and guests.
		Surrounding activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visits attractions in the surrounding areas. Collaborates with surrounding villages in carrying out activities.
		Authenticity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community retains its identity, values, and culture (language, lifestyle, etc.).

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and involve guests in communal activities.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve local handcrafts and showcase local performing arts.

Figure 2. 7 Description for activities in ASEAN Homestay Standards (2016)
(Source: ASEAN Homestay Standards 2016)

Besides strengthening the requirements for homestay provision, the Standards also highlight ten elements of sustainability principles from economic, environmental, and socio-cultural perspectives. Under the commercial section in primary criterion 9, for example, the Standards stress the opportunity to provide economic stability for homestay providers through providing employment, purchasing power, and supporting local products/attractions, whereas in the socio-cultural section an awareness of the preservation of culture and heritage is underlined (Figure 2.9). Food, is implicitly included under local goods and services for tourists together with handicraft and cultural events. In a study conducted by Guevarra and Rodriguez (2015), it was stressed that locally sourced products such as traditional food offered to guests, can be used to develop the country’s food tourism thereby stimulating and supporting economic, cultural, environmental sustainability.

9.	Sustainability principles (WEIGHTAGE: 10%)	Economic sustainability	1. The homestay organisation employs staff from the local community.
			2. Allocates incentives to motivate staff.
			3. Provide micro finance to deserving locals.
			4. Purchasing
			5. The homestay organisation purchase materials and products from local micro enterprises.
			6. Guests are requested to buy locally made goods.
			7. Craft sales area within the homestay centre to showcase local products.
			8. Local Product/Attraction
			9. Promote local festivals and visits to nearby markets.
			10. Offer guests local goods and services e.g. traditional handicraft, food and cultural events

Figure 2. 8 Sustainability principles under ASEAN Homestay Standards (2016)
(Source: ASEAN Homestay Standards 2016)

Together, these results provide valuable insights into how Brunei has incorporated the ASEAN Homestay Standards by revising the content according to their country's interests and attractions. However, while Novelli *et al.*, (2017) identified food as the main components of community-based tourism, and especially homestays, they noted it has been omitted from the Standards. What is now needed is a cross-national study involving all of the ASEAN homestay programmes to recognise the limitations and challenges of these Standards. There is, therefore, a definite need for the ASEAN Homestay Standards Board to take into account the example of Brunei in its highlighting the potential contribution of food, as this has yet to be incorporated in any homestay documentation. Moreover, the findings by the academic scholars, as mentioned above, also shows that the Standards need to be reviewed across the ASEAN region. By highlighting this critical finding, this thesis hopes to shed light on what is a glaring omission in

the homestay provision in Malaysia: how local culinary heritage could contribute to the enrichment of tourist experiences in the homestay programme.

2.3 Cultural Heritage Tourism in Malaysia

This thesis investigates how primary stakeholders support the use of local food in the homestay programme in Malaysia in order that the culinary activities in the programme can be used to attract tourists to visit homestays in Malaysia. In this chapter, most of the examples relate to the traditional Malay food (TMF) as an emerging niche market development of the homestay programme in Malaysia. The chapter investigates how Malaysian stakeholders support the development of local food as an element of the homestay programme in Malaysia to enhance homestay destinations so they can attract tourists to visit. Cultural heritage is one of the core components highlighted by MOTAC in the Malaysian homestay programme. The primary aims of the programme are to raise the standard of living in rural communities by offering tourists a different kind of touristic experience: one which includes authentic and deep engagement with the great diversity of Malaysian culture and tradition (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010; Mohd Nor and Kayat, 2010; Razzaq and Hadi, 2011; Ahmad *et al.*, 2011; Leh and Hamzah, 2012; Salleh *et al.*, 2013; Pusiran and Xiao, 2013; and Othman *et al.*, 2013). The overarching concept is the promotion of authentic Malaysian kampong values to tourists by promoting local history, traditional dance, foods, games and sports, marriage ceremonies, and festivals, along with other economic and recreational activities which are based on, and are unique to, individual localities (MOTAC, 2014). ASEAN recognises and distinguishes between two forms of cultural heritage that represent the values of a community: ‘tangible cultural heritage’, and ‘intangible cultural heritage’. More recently, in 2010 UNESCO included and recognised several foods and cooking/eating practices in its Intangible Cultural Heritage List (Santilli, 2015).

However, there have long been concerns about the gradual loss of traditional values and traditional knowledge as people have begun to feel alienated from and/or ashamed of their traditional culture for a variety of reasons, including the incursion of foreign cultural influences and the migration of young people away from the villages to the cities in search of work and new experiences

(Mohd Nor and Kayat, 2010; Pusiran and Xiao, 2013). This erosion of traditional culture has led to a number of programmes and projects aimed at preserving and safeguarding both tangible and intangible cultural heritage (Ismail *et al.*, 2014). Hence, with the aim of promoting local culture and heritage, the Malaysian government decided to develop the potential of every state to safeguard and promote its unique customs and traditions. These initiatives, coordinated through the homestay programme, range from preserving and promoting traditional cuisines to classical dance and the longhouses, for example in the two Malaysian states on the island of Borneo (Rahman, 2014; Hassan, 2014)

The evidence presented in this section suggests that promoting TMF through the homestay could help the programme to provide more novel experience to the tourists by more deeply involved in the local food culture and tradition. Consequently, it should be a central ambition of the homestay organisation, primary stakeholders, and providers in Malaysia to expand more niche market such as TMF in the future.

2.4 Summary

The homestay programme in Malaysia has become one of the promising tourism products for rural communities by showcasing their authentic culture and heritage through homestay products. This chapter has given an account of the development of the homestay programme; the reasons for the widespread promotion of TMF through this niche market. The present study was designed to determine the critical role of TMF in the homestay experience to symbolise the place and culture of the destination. As a consequence, the findings of this chapter suggest that the homestay programme in Malaysia has the potential to enhance the tourist's experience by connecting them to the local food through the authentic visitor's experience.

Chapter 3. The Significance of Traditional Malay Food in Malaysia

3.1 Introduction

The chapter seeks to investigate how much emphasis is put on the value of TMF and its associated culinary practices by homestay providers in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay, as a key part of the promotion of their homestay programmes to tourists. By understanding the ways in which cuisine and heritage in these two homestay programmes are utilised, these examples might influence the national homestay programme and tourism industry in Malaysia, especially with respect to promoting TMF. A large number of terms have been used to describe the link between food and tourism, such as ‘cuisine tourism’, ‘culinary tourism’, and ‘gastronomic tourism’ (Santich, 2004; Çela *et al.*, 2007). Derived from these definitions, ‘cuisine’ focuses on styles of food preparation and cooking alone, while ‘gastronomy’ is concerned with the consumption of food and drink in a more general sense, and particularly with the enjoyment of food and beverages as part of an affluent or aesthetically superior lifestyle (Horng and Tsai, 2010). ‘Culinary’ is the adjectival form of ‘cuisine’ (‘kitchen’ in French), but it tends to emphasise on the actual practice (e.g. ‘culinary utensils’), as well as the style of food preparation and consumption. It also includes (like the noun ‘cuisine’) the social context in which the food is acquired, prepared, and eaten. ‘Culinary’ can thus refer to ingredients, prepared foods, beverages, food production, motivations, activities, institutional structures, as well as food tourism itself (Ignatov and Smith, 2006, p.237–238).

This thesis explores the ways through which homestay providers in Malaysia can develop their programmes through a niche market, namely culinary heritage, to strengthen their homestay products and activities. Food is an inevitable experience at a travel destination (Hsu, 2014), and for that reason; offering tourists an authentic food experience can be a way to improve the economics of the host community in the long run (Sims, 2009). Sims has written a complete synthesis of how local food can be conceptualised as an authentic product, to symbolise the place and culture of the destination. In order to develop a thriving local food industry, the potential mutual benefit for both hosts and

guests has to be identified. A relationship between the rural host communities and any tourism programme needs to be developed as part of the drive to promote the agenda. The key point is that through initiatives centred on local food, rural communities can benefit, while at the same time enhancing the visitors' experience through the programme. Such mutual benefit should encourage sustainable agricultural practice, supporting local businesses and building a 'brand' for that particular destination, thereby producing a 'virtuous circle' - enabling the region to attract more visitors and investments in the future while stimulating sustainable and profitable agricultural practice.

3.2 Traditional Malay Food and Influences from Neighbouring Countries

Malaysia is a multicultural and multiracial country consisting of various ethnic groups namely the Malays, Chinese, Indians, and others (Omar *et al.*, 2014; Zakariah *et al.*, 2012; Ariff and Beng, 2006). As the main ethnic group, the Malay people are regarded to be descendants of the tribal proto-Malays, a mixture of modern Indian, Thai, Arab, and Chinese ancestry. The early settlers of the Malay Peninsula, coastal Borneo and eastern islands were the Malays from the Sumatran coast and the indigenous group from Java and Celebes (Hutton, 2000; Jalis *et al.*, 2009). The early development of TMF had taken place before this colonisation, and evolved through trade, receiving significant influences from neighbouring countries. This can be seen, for example, through the influence of Thai cuisine in the northern and eastern states of the Malaysian peninsular, while the southern states, such as Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, and Johor, have been significantly influenced by Indonesia cuisine from areas such as Minangkabau, Bugis and Javanese. However, Ling (2002) noted that despite the variety in the Malay cuisines, they share a strong common identity in terms of the characteristics of the food itself, which are generally robust, spicy, and aromatic. Thus, the diversity of the people in Malaysia is reflected in their various culinary heritages, which contribute a strong part of the country's social and cultural landscape (Rahman, 2014; Karim *et al.*, 2010). The common basic ingredients of Malaysian cuisines (e.g. lemongrass, ginger, chillies, dried herbs, and spices), from these diverse geographical locations, have brought the varied cuisines together as identifiably 'Malaysian', which, in turn, have been adapted to suit different regional palates (Rahman, 2014). According to Ismail (2006), the cultures of the different groups

in Malaysia are reflected in their culinary traditions, making Malaysia a country with rich and diverse culinary heritage. Most studies of Malaysian cuisine have focused on ‘dynamic’ cuisine in Malaysia, which is based on religion, exploration, and colonisation. However, more research is needed to identify the difference between traditional Malay cuisines in ASEAN countries, expressed by many (Rahman, 2014; Chuang and Committee, 2010; Lee, 2017; Raji *et al.*, 2017; Yoshino, 2010) as a combination of flavours that links Indonesian, Thai, Singaporean and Bruneian cuisines.

Malaysian food recipes can be seen to be distinctive through their preparation, methods of cooking, availability, and use of ingredients such as ginger, turmeric, chillies, lemongrass and dried shrimp paste (Evaland, 2011). Rozin (2006) posited that there are three components of TMF that differentiate it from those of other ethnics such as the Chinese and Indians; namely (a) the staple ingredients, (b) the principle flavours (lemongrass, ginger, chillies, dried herbs, and spices), and (c) the cooking methods. Mohamed *et al.*, (2010) and Eveland, (2011) also argued that the Malay meals always revolve around staple food such as rice, accompanied by curries, chicken or fish, vegetable dishes and a small portion of condiments known as *sambal* or *sambal belacan*, which are made of pungent fermented shrimp paste. Traditional Malay cuisine has been developed through the use of dried and fresh ingredients such as the ingredients commonly used for spice paste in making *sambal* or adding hotness to the dish. The different cuisines belonging to the different ethnic groups in Malaysia, have promoted a deeper understanding and sharing of each-others’ food culture and cuisines. Ishak *et al.*, (2013) and Rahman (2014) concluded that the assimilation and the influence of acculturation of the differing cuisines have contributed significantly towards the formation of a contemporary Malaysian national food identity.

The goal of the study is to explore ways in which the value of culinary heritage can be enhanced by the host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities, so that they could proactively promote their local food culture to tourists. A study by Rahman (2014), shows that the sharing of cuisines promotes understanding of a nation’s culture and cultural conditions. This corroborates the ideas of Long (1998, p.182), who suggested that culinary tourism offers a deeper, more integrated level of experiencing ‘another’ because it brings

two cultures together by use of “the senses of taste, smell, touch and vision”. For that reason, homestay programmes in Malaysia have real potential as a place for tourists to understand the diverse culinary heritage of people in rural areas, with a focus on TMF, thereby enhancing the tourists’ visit. Moreover, the differing types of food seen throughout Malaysia, such as chicken rice (assimilation with Chinese cuisine) and *roti canai*/paratha (assimilation with Indian cuisine), could attract tourists to homestays, to be introduced to, and begin to understand, the rich diversity of Malaysian cuisines.

3.3 The Importance of Food in Malay Society

Embong (2002) stated that until the 1960s and 1970s, Malay society was predominantly rural and agricultural, and that traditional Malay cuisine was produced from local, natural resources. In the same way, Goddard (2005) in his book on ‘*The Languages of East and Southeast Asia*’, mentioned that traditionally the Malays are ‘kampong people’, i.e. communities that rely on fishing, gardening, and rice cultivation. There are similarities between these observations by Embong and Goddard and those described by Ismail *et al.*, (2003). The latter observed that the development of traditional Malay kitchen gardens in the kampong was a way for the residents to sustain their use of TMF, by bringing natural food sources to their back door. Most houses in a kampong have numerous compounds with well-kept lawns, flowering plants and fruit trees alongside herbs and vegetables, grown to provide food for family consumption and to be shared with the community. Ismail *et al* also noted that plants and fruit trees were frequently referred to as multipurpose plants, which not only provide food, but also have medicinal, cosmetics, and spiritual values. For that reason, such naturally occurring plants were transferred to the gardens, and are essential in the culture of the Malay community, as most recipes were created using the natural resources that grow in abundance in the local forests.

Usually, the sites on which houses were built were selected in accordance to traditional beliefs (Ismail *et al.*, 2003, pg. 19). In a traditional Malay house, the kitchen was normally located at the back of the house. During the pre-Islamic period, the Malay builders built their houses facing the sun, for prosperity and auspiciousness. With the conversion to Islam amongst the Malays, kitchens were

built facing the East, while the houses face the *kiblah*⁴, which is located in the West. However, in ancient building practice, the size of the woman of the house was the determinant of the dimensions of the spaces and other building elements of house construction (Khojasteh *et al.*, 2012, pg. 42). This was due to the fact that the kitchen and dining zones are respectable spaces mainly belonging to the female members of the family. The kitchen area for example, was designed based on certain activities of the females, who spent most time at home and involved in activities such as preparation of food, cleaning, circulation, storage, work and even particular entertainments (Khojasteh *et al.*, 2012, pg. 42). These observations further support those of Rahman (2014) and Abarca (2004), who observed that the cuisine culture is dominated by the women in their domestic setting. Abarca observed that women are the keepers and teachers of traditions for food in the family. Whereas Rahman noted that, apart from being the head chefs of the domestic kitchen, the women also play a key role in the preservation of traditions relating to traditional cuisine. Therefore, it can be suggested that women play an important role in every domestic kitchen, as they have a strong influence in determining the culture's cuisine of their family.

3.3.1 Customs and Traditions

Malays were originally animists. They believed, and many still do, in '*semangat*'⁵, the existence of spirits in every object. As a result, nearly all rituals related to Malay beliefs and traditions are accompanied by food offerings, both for the spirits, as well as for the living. Their lives were closely related to nature and food for sustenance, as well as for spiritual and emotional comfort. They respected the natural world of the seen, as well as of the unseen. With the arrival of Islam, most of these rituals and beliefs were abandoned. However, the continuing awe that the Malays have towards the forests, the rivers, the seas or the mountains is a vestige of their ancestral beliefs (Osman, 1989), and food has maintained its position in almost everything carried out by Malays, as it is still regarded as being integral to the myths of nature and, through them, the feeling of

⁴ Kiblah or qiblah is the direction of the Kaaba (the sacred building at Mecca), to which Muslims turn at prayer. Muslims face the kiblah which is towards the direction of Makkah when they say their prayers (Ali, 2007).

⁵ The "world within ourselves", according to the dukuns, pawangs, and bomoh – the various kinds of traditional specialists in magic, healing, and shamanism are none other than the soul (*semangat*), which lives as one with the physical body (Benjamin, 2002, p. 371)

belonging to a social group. In the same vein, Bessi re (1998) stated that people need a special feeling, such as belonging to a social group, to form unity, sociability, alterity, and thus the ability to create an identity.

Malay communities believe in the symbolic meaning of TMF on special occasions, such as weddings, rituals, feasts, and festivals. They also always share their experiences and knowledge of symbolic interactions between humans, foods and supernatural beings within their community. Interestingly, food such as the yellow glutinous rice, eggs, *sirih junjung*, *wajik* and *dodol*, were always the highlight in all communal activities in Malay culture, such as weddings, rituals, and feasts. TMF holds symbolic meanings and interpretations of life – in the form of folk beliefs and myths represented in the cultural and traditional values belonging to the Malays (Ismail, 2010, pg. 88). For instance, the yellow glutinous rice is one of the traditional foods that are often cooked and served on special occasions, as it is a symbol and carries different meanings, such as for special intentions and hope, in the Malay culture. It is a symbol of gratitude, appreciation, thankfulness on any important occasion for Malays (Mat Noor *et al.*, 2013, pg. 29). Other examples can be found on wedding occasions, such as in the presentation of *sireh junjung* (a symbol of relationship), eggs (fertility), and *wajik* (will bring sweetness, joy and happiness in the newlywed couple’s lives) (Muhammad *et al.*, 2013).

Tradition is also an important element in Malay society. Food is considered as a symbol of appreciation especially in Malay customs and traditions; explaining its prominent place in many festivals and rituals. Ishak *et al.*, (2013) observed that social interaction through food-related events, such as gatherings and festivals, promote further understanding and sharing of each other’s food culture and cuisines. For example, food is introduced as early as at birth, where the baby is fed with a little salt, sugar, dates, and *zamzam* water, accompanied by the recital of *zikr* and *Al-Quran*. This ceremony is known as '*belah mulut*'⁶, where it is hoped that the baby will be blessed throughout his or her life, and becomes a strong practitioner of the Islamic way of life. It is also an

⁶ Before a new-born baby is allowed to feed, the grandmother (or a relative) touches the baby’s mouth with gold, sweetness, and salt (the *belah mulut*, or “opening the mouth ceremony”) so that his/her life will be rich, sweet, and to be an effective speaker (Laderman, 1991, p. 134).

exercise for the baby's tongue, to facilitate latching during breastfeeding, while supposedly giving the baby the 'gift of the gab'.

During pregnancy, Malay women believe that before the delivery of their first child, a ceremony of '*lenggang perut*'⁷ needs to be conducted by the *bidan* (traditional midwife), who is engaged in supervising the birth and confinement. Rice flour paste, puffed rice, uncooked grains, saffron rice, and eggs are used ritually in this ceremony, while *rojak* (salad with peanut sauce), fruits, and foods for which the mother may have cravings for, are served to the guests (Manderson, 1981). Apart from these rituals, the Malays also believe in food taboo practices. Meyer-Rochow (2009) argued that food taboos are practised in many cultures. Food taboos or food prohibition may originate from religious, cultural, legal or other societal requirements, and this also applies strongly amongst the Malays who are predominantly Muslim. The Malay society believes that food taken in sensible quality and in balance is harmless. The same goes with food that affects people in different ways, which may be considered neutral by others (Manderson, 1981). As suggested by Ahmad *et al.*, (2016), specific food prohibitions may apply at different times within a person's life cycle and in some cases, are closely related to important circumstances such as menses, pregnancy, childbirth, lactation, weddings, and funerals. A young woman is forbidden to cook rice or prepare *tapai* (a type of fermented food) when having their menstrual period. Manderson (1981) stated that the woman was (and is) considered to be in an impure state during menstruation. If the taboo is broken, the *tapai* will turn into a red colour and have a sour taste. The same idea is related to cooking rice by menstrual women. Apart from that, the Malays also believed in other food taboos, such as a maiden should not sing in the kitchen for fear that they would be married quite late in life, or they will end up marrying someone who is much older than them.

Malay women are particularly bound by food restrictions derived from the traditional classification of food, such as "hot-cold", "windy", "itchy",

⁷ In most villages and rural areas, the seventh month of pregnancy is when the rocking of the abdomen, *lenggang perut*, is carried out. Certain materials are gathered and prepared, including seven different colored sarongs, one *gantang* (about three kilos) of rice, a ripe unhusked coconut, cotton yarn, resinous damar, seven white candles, a betel-nut box, and lastly, some massage oil (Moore, 1998, p. 44).

"poisonous", and "sharp" as presented in Table 3.1. It relates not to the temperature of the food or necessarily to its spiciness or its spiciness or its raw or cooked state, but to its reputed physical effect (Manderson, 1981, pg. 950). These foods may also contribute to bodily discomfort, as suggested by the terms used to describe them, and may inhibit healing process, such as of post-pregnancy. Support for this interpretation comes from Manderson (1981) in his study, where it was mentioned that the Malay women believe that hot food such as durian may affect the foetus, and the child could be born prematurely. On the other hand, *sambal*, a side-dish of pounded chillies, garlic, and prawn paste (*belacan*), could adversely affect an infant's stomach. Durians, green bananas (cold and windy), cuttlefish (itchy), and vitamin pills reputedly make delivery difficult. Vitamin pills may also cause jaundice; mutton (hot) may cause retardation; *agar-agar* (cold and wet) and windy foods such as certain breed of bananas, jackfruits, and gourds may make the baby weak and unhealthy. Rationally, Meyer-Rochow (2009) argued that food taboos seem to make no sense at all. However, these food taboos are acknowledged by particular groups of people as part of their way of life, which helps with the cohesion of these groups and helps those particular groups maintain their identities in relation to others, thus creating the feeling of "belonging". Although seen as unacceptable by some communities, such taboos are regarded as perfectly acceptable by Malay communities. Most Malays still observe these rules, showing how important it is for them, although the rules are inherited verbally from one generation to another, especially amongst those who are still living in a close-knit community such as in the Malay villages.

Table 3. 1 Classification of foods according to the traditional Malay community (Manderson, 1981)

Food classification	Details	Type of food
Hot	Classified as foods that heat and warm the body, generally healthy. But may cause fever, sweating, stomachache, diarrhoea, and insomnia.	Meat, spicy and oily food, and the <i>durian</i> fruits
Cold	Foods that cools the body, but may result in stomach upset, weakness and trapped wind (either flatulence or bloating)	Cucurbits, leafy vegetables, and most fruits
Wet	May make one 'sweaty'	Watermelon (if over-consumption)
Dry	May lead to a dry cough	<i>Rambutan</i> (if over-consumption)
Windy	Classified as cold and caused flatulence (e.g. to create a full or bloated feeling to cause oedema and vertigo)	Certain types of bananas, papaya, jackfruit and gourds.
Itchy	Cause general and localised body itching and rashes, pimples and pustules, and prevent the	Seafood and root vegetables

	healing of wounds.	
Poisonous	May also be hot foods or itchy foods, and again inhibit healing or exacerbate illness.	Hot foods (e.g. durian and chilli) Itchy foods (e.g. prawns, crabs, cockles and etc.)
Sharp	Retard recovery from illness and reputedly abortifacient	Shoots eaten raw as salad, pineapple, and <i>tapai</i> (fermented sourdough)

Homestays are usually located in inland areas such as Malay villages or ‘kampongs’. People in these rural communities are involved in the establishment, and continuity, of a ‘place identity’, developing a sense of place, and sense of belonging towards their living spaces, (Ismail, 2010) which includes the attachment to their village culture and traditions. These people are continually practising their kampong (village) values through a close-knit relationship with their communities. The results of Ismail’s work seem to be consistent with those of other research, which found that in the kampongs, strong emphasis is placed on secular values, which include customs, for example, the all-important traditional *adat* that villagers view as linked to their social and cultural identities (Raybeck and De Munck, 2010). Although extensive research has been carried out on life in the kampongs in Malaysia (e.g. Othman *et al.*, 2013 and Bhuiyan *et al.*, 2013), no single study exists that adequately addresses how to cater to tourists who are keen on learning about and experiencing cultural heritage and food. Most studies relating to homestays have focused on how to make tourism in rural areas as attractive as it can be. However, previous studies failed to specify how the homestays in Malaysia can play a vital role to combine tourism activities with other heritage elements such as TMF. Therefore, Sims (2009) suggests that the focus should be not only on how to get the attention of potential tourists to interact (and consume) this traditional heritage, but on the multiple meanings of TMF for tourists to have a deeper understanding of Malay culinary culture and tradition within their holiday experience.

3.3.2 The Background and Image of Traditional Malay Food

Authentic Malay food comprises traditional organic herbs and spices along with traditional cooking methods. Rahman (2014) traces the development of Malay cuisine as a reflection of Malay culture, historical background, and most

definitely the native ingredients of the Malay Archipelago. In his major study, Rahman (2014) identifies that the cooking techniques and practices in Malay food preparation share significant similarities with some of the regional cuisines of the wider Malay communities in the modern nations of Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore, and Southern Thailand. Traditional ingredients were mainly based on local natural resources, which made the Malay cooking such a culinary experience. According to Sumarjan *et al.*, (2013), Malay cuisine is made of food that comes predominantly from the forest and local agriculture, where people living in forested areas utilise wild animals, fresh native herbs and spices to create the taste of Malay flavour (as cited in Rahman, 2014). Hamzah *et al.* (2013) support this view, that every technique and ingredient employed in the Malay culinary has a unique aroma, taste, and flavour, based on the location where the food originates coupled with the assimilation process from the influence of colonialism. As a result, the finer points of Malay traditional cooking are continually being associated with the social and cultural context that influences the preparations and consumption of food amongst the Malays until today.

Zahari *et al.*, (2011) who studied food traditions in Malaysia, mentioned that the Malay communal affairs in the kampongs are firmly attached to community activities, which involve the preparations, cooking, serving, and consumption of food (p. 194). Raybeck and De Munck (2010) pointed out that, people were interdependent in the village, and this communal interaction or ‘membership’ was a key to both acceptance and survival. In reality, the image and identity of Malays support Yoshino’s (2010) findings, where all the related activities, employment, and culture started in the kampongs, before they were brought with the people when they migrated to other places. The values associated with their activities were typically common knowledge, beliefs, and practices that have been shared in the family and the rest of the Malay community. As a result, the village society was widely regarded as a ‘good unto itself’ as their *adat* enshrines the proper way to behave toward others and in varying situation (Raybeck and De Munck, 2010).

Traditionally, a mother is a housewife whose main responsibilities are on house chores such as cooking, washing and taking care of the children. The father is the head of the family, as well as the household. Women, however, are more

likely to be the upholder of the shared beliefs, knowledge and practices in Malay communities. The characteristics of a Malay family have been described in previous research (Manderson, 1981; Nor *et al.*, 2012), and were found to be consistent with those of their Western counterparts, particularly with regard to household responsibilities of the women and families in general (Abarca, 2007; Women and Henderson, 2012). Similarly, Nor *et al.* (2012) asserted that women have a firm adherence to beliefs and experiences concerning the transmission of food knowledge practices and food sharing (p. 83). Women were known to prepare and cook food as it is common for the family to eat together at home after the men came home from work and also during the weekends (Ali and Abdullah, 2012, p. 162). In the past, a Malay woman adhered to the traditional beliefs, norms, and practices based on Malay tradition, custom, and religion. Men did not belong in the kitchen and were not allowed to be involved in food preparation. The same scenario can also be found in other social norm, as the dishes were passed on from mothers to daughters, as it was a matter of honour and ritual. Thus, food expresses deeply ingrained traditions of warmth and hospitality, the love of socializing and entertainment (Roden, 2000). Additionally, in 1981, Manderson highlighted the complicated relationship that the Malay women have with their daughters.

According to these women, they would pass on the knowledge and beliefs to their daughters (but not their sons), so that they can look after their families; boys had no need of his knowledge because they go out to work, so they do not have to know about food. (p. 969)

Having said that, in a contemporary Malay household, the most prominent TMF practices are through the preparation, cooking, serving and consumption of food. It is considered as a family affair particularly in the village. This can be seen for example during the food pre-preparation process, in the cooking process and post-preparation process within a family. As observed by Wan Mohamed Radzi *et al.*, (1981), the raw materials in the preparation of TMF in the Malay community is correspondingly associated with men, whereas cooking food is connected with the female members of the family.

3.4 The Practices of Malay Communities in TMF

3.4.1 Tools and Equipment in Cooking

Tan (2004, p. 9) describes the ‘normal’ Malay kitchen in the following way. Usually, a Malay kitchen would have the smell of firewood, and the daily haze of burning charcoal mingled with the aroma of the pungent *belacan*, red chilli, and garlic being fused in massive heated woks, already blackened with use. In his analysis of the Malay food, Tan (2004) identifies that leftover food is kept in wooden cabinets with wire-mesh doors. He also observes that chillies and small shrimps were dried in the sun on rattan sieves called *nyiru*. As Tan (2014) states:

The kitchen served as a place where all family members, especially the mother and daughters, gathered to have chit chats, grind spices, stir pots and observe cooking methods. The women would work through the night steadily blending fragrant spices against the coolness of the gray-black lesung batu, squeezing handfuls of grated coconut flesh for milk, while carefully listening to the gentle rise and fall of the sizzle and hiss from giant cooking vats that billow steam through the night air.

Difficulties arise, however, when an attempt is made to present the traditional Malay cuisine as described by Tan in the above study within the homestay programme. The involvement of the locals in the homestay programme is believed to preserve the Malay culinary heritage in rural areas. The government seemed to believe that people in the rural areas in Malaysia are still keeping the customs and traditions, where all of these elements could be presented to tourists through their homestay programmes. However, as mentioned earlier, many providers suffer from severe limitations due to the lack of awareness by the homestay programme to consider these elements as an important contribution to their food tourism resource.

However, modern lifestyles as well as the introduction to quick and easy methods of cooking have impacted on Malay cuisine. For example, in the past Malay communities used banana leaves to wrap fish to be grilled, and placed it on top of the embers of a wood fire so that the aroma and flavour from the banana leaves would incorporate into the grilled fish. Hence, the secret of cooking comes

from the traditional elements themselves. However, with the introduction of modern techniques nowadays, the banana leaves are replaced with aluminium foil, and the fish is roasted in the oven as an alternative to the traditional way. Of course, the results of the two techniques are different in terms of taste. Although modern technology offers convenience and is known to require less cooking time, it is important for the younger generation to be taught, and to have the chance to experience, the knowledge of natural food that has been passed down by our ancestors. Collectively, these studies outline a critical role for the homestay programme in Malaysia to showcase these elements of TMF to tourists through the preparation of Malay food using traditional tools and equipment that can still be found in the villages. Muhammad *et al.* (2013) highlighted that traditional food practices together with food-related practices of older people of any ethnic groups in Malaysia, are on the verge of vanishing. Yet, it is hard to achieve such traditional practices in reality as there are a number of specific barriers to showcasing traditional food practices of the Malay villages. Each of these barriers is closely connected to each other and thus it is crucial to understand the mechanism of how these traditional practices can be preserved to the younger generation.

3.4.2 Recipes and Ingredients in Cooking

Another important part of TMF lies in the recipes as presented in cookbooks. Most of the recipes for Malay food are arranged according to the styles of cooking, rather than the main ingredients. For example, the ‘wet’ ingredients are mentioned first in the recipes, followed by the ‘dry’ ingredients. Brissenden (2003) explained that though it may be confusing at first, the format of the recipes is designed to aid menu construction. Apart from that, there is no exact measurement in a TMF recipe, as it is uniquely crafted by the cook following her instinct. In fact, the same dish may turn out differently if it were to be prepared by two different cooks. However, Brownlie *et al.*, (2005, p. 7) indicated in their study that a cookbook has to be treated as a cultural product, as the objectification of culinary culture, and as ‘constructed’ social forms, which are amenable to textual analysis. Therefore, cookbooks should not only contain recipes, but they should also consist of written tales of culinary culture that can be understood by the

readers. Such cultural artefacts relating to food need to be precisely understood in relation to their social and spatial contexts, to which an individual belongs.

Wright *et al.*, (n.d) defined recipes as the encoded form of cultural knowledge (Hocking *et al.*, n.d) that are consistent with the time and energy in preparing the particular food, by the individual making the recipe. Hocking *et al.*, (n.d) mentioned that the recipes are customarily handed down from old recipe books and objects that represent personal and family history. This tradition is valued and continued by the next generation, more often than not, by adding to the range of recipes. Women and Henderson (2012) found that memories of the family recipes sometimes could not become a reliable marker for a particular cultural identity, as they often compete with new surroundings and new ideas. Moasio (2004) claimed that old family recipes are being threatened by the new generation's attitude to reproduce the tradition. A relationship exists between new ideas in arranging the old recipes, with expectations of cultural continuity in the old recipes. For example, a new recipe discussed by a group of women who share pleasure in exchanging new recipes, talking through new ideas and variations in the recipes, while connecting with families and friends. Meanwhile, the old traditional recipes is a 'must-know' and should be followed in the ancient ways, as taught by mothers and grandmothers, with the expectation for the children to know and do the same in the preparation and cooking techniques (Wright *et al.*, n.d).

In addition, Malay communities have long been practising cooking tips or *petua* in preparing their food. This traditional rule of *petua* for cooking is transmitted from mothers to daughters so that traditional dishes can be prepared efficiently. In the past, the knowledge and skills of *petua* were only practised by Malay communities in rural areas. Zakaria *et al.*, (2010), in *Traditional Malay Medicinal Plants*, noted that it depends very much on the practice, belief, and knowledge that each one possesses. As parents and guardians socialize, each child learns about food tastes, skills in food preparation, selection and production that may be gained or taught explicitly (Kwik, 2008). This informal cultural education eventually contributes to cultural identity among Malays in the family and also in the community. In the context of this study, the connection between *petua* and

Malay communities is described in detail, as most of the *petua* are transmitted orally and are often undocumented (Wright *et al.*, n.d).

Malays utilize the various resources that are available around them. Based on their experiences and observations through the generations, they can identify the effectiveness of specific practices (Zakaria *et al.*, 2010). The *petua* should be practised regularly in the kitchen because not only does it those involved to cook effectively, but the food has been proven to last longer if the *petua* is followed correctly. *Petua* are a valuable guide for Malay cooking and some of Malays still practise them today. They have remained popular due to their effectiveness. On the same note, Mohd (1994, p. 5) mentioned that as for Malay traditional medicine, the knowledge of treatment methods and materials used were imparted orally and committed to memory, similar to *petua* in cooking. Most of the problems with medicinal skills are that they are only imparted to certain people. There is no written document to preserve this traditional knowledge. As such, the knowledge is ultimately buried with the dead practitioners (Mohd, 1994, p. 5). As Kwik (2008) mentioned in her study, the work of these people (usually women) is often unrecognized and undocumented, and the opportunity for information sharing and education to increase personal skills for health and community capacity can be lost. Specifically, to utilise knowledge in preparing TMF as a means for understanding Malay culture, one needs to also understand its cuisine and the traditional food-practices of the Malay community.

3.4.3 Methods and Techniques in Cooking

Malay cooking methods comprise of frying, sautéing, steaming, stewing, and boiling (Albala, 2011). Zibart (2001) described that in the past, wood stoves were kept away from the house, in small shacks clustered together in the shared back courtyard; and most dishes could either be cooked through smoke over an outdoor wood stove or cooked very quickly. Abarca (2004) expressed that the politics of culinary authenticity lies with two distinct cooking methods among members of a family, who share a common culture but no longer a common tradition. The grandmother is considered as traditional, therefore authentic, because her method of preparing “*chorizo con huevo*” is on an outdoor wood burning stove. In contrast, the method of cooking of her grandchild was not seen

as authentic, when she incorporated the microwave, which is a modern technology in preparing the same food. With that, a grandchild's method of cooking cannot be claimed as authentic, even though the recipes and the ingredients that she used are the same. One question that needs to be addressed, however, is whether the incorporation of modern technology in preparing traditional food is regarded as not authentic and not real?

Current examples in Malaysia shows that the charcoal burning stoves made of clay and wood are no longer used in the kitchens of most households or restaurants. The traditional equipment is difficult to find in cities, and may only be used in the rural areas and kampongs, particularly during wedding feasts. Hutton (2000) found that, modern equipment, such as the super-efficient food processor and blender, has replaced the traditional method of preparing Malay food. A study conducted by Muhammad *et al.*, (2013) revealed how technological advancement has eased the preparation of making festival foods in Malaysia. In fact, modern equipment such as the electric mixer and oven have modernise the preparation of traditional Malay food, such as the Malay cake known as *bahulu*. The traditional way of making *bahulu* is very tiring as the eggs whites need to be beaten with hand using a wooden spoon and coconut stick (functions like whisk) until foam is formed (Muhammad *et al.*, 2013). Then, the *bahulu* have to be baked using the charcoal firewood stove, where hot coals are placed on top of and under the *bahulu* mould (Wahid *et al.*, 2009), which is similar to electric or gas salamander grill. Fundamentally, the introduction of modern equipment and sophisticated technology, such as mixer and oven, evidently has shortened the preparation time of this *bahulu*. These modern and new appliances act faster and are more efficient as compared to the traditional methods and Muhammad *et al.*, (2013) made a case that the adoption of modern technology in TMF preparation has many advantages, such as easing the preparation of festival food. However, it has also had a significant impact in terms of cohesiveness, social bonding and interaction among the people in Malaysia.

3.5 Contribution of TMF to the Homestay Destination

This study provides an understanding of the diverse ways in which, how much emphasis is placed on the value of TMF in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng

Homestay, as a means of promoting and publicising their homestays in order to enhance the tourist experience? Local foods are a vital element that create the sense of place and heighten a destination's appeal (Demhardt, 2008; Seo *et al.*, 2013). In addition, food, according to Sims (2009), provides tourists with a novel experience and heightens visitors' desire for the perceptions of authenticity within the holiday experience. This thesis argues that local foods can ignite tourists' desire for authenticity within the homestay experience. TMF or local food is part of the variety of culture in Malaysia. It shows that local communities, especially in the kampongs, have a unique way in presenting their local cuisines to tourists. As described by Hsu (2014), food, unlike other natural resources, can be provided all year-round by utilising local ingredients. Moreover, Du rand and Heath (2006) in other studies, have emphasised that the way various ingredients are combined, cooked and eaten forms an essential element of a national cuisine identity, and a culinary destination. Despite such debates on the potential of food to promote a holiday destination, this thesis challenges the current understanding of these concepts, to be applied in Malaysian homestay programmes, by arguing that TMF has the multiplier effect of boosting the economy of the local communities as well as the more common claim of boosting the economy.

Long (1998) highlights that food is not only an essential part of tourism, but local food traditions are a resource for the development of tourism. As homestays are usually run in rural areas, the essence of kampong heritage lies in their quaint and laidback lifestyle and culture. Consequently, there must be an alternative for the diversifications of experiential culinary products in the homestay programme in Malaysia to offer to the tourists such as the food tours, cooking school lessons and beyond. Moreover, tourism products are not only focused on the popular types of natural resources, namely the sun, sea, and sand anymore (Hsu, 2014). Having said that, more niche markets need to be developed within the tourism industry, to extend the life cycle of tourism, and thus attract more inbound tourists from overseas (Hsu, 2014). There are similarities between the idea expressed by Hsu (2014) in this study, and those describe by Dah *et al.*, (2013) that the cultural food attributes can be showcased to tourists through its preparation and cooking, by homestay providers in Malaysia. The elements of food, for example, should be opened and shared either between the local communities from other states, or for the tourists to view as an attraction of the

homestay places, which is not only an opportunity to preserve and safeguard the kampong culture and heritage, but also opening avenues for income generation for the people in the rural communities (Dah *et al.*, 2013).

Detailed examination of authenticity by Frochot (2010) showed that the French tourism industry uses the authenticity of their food in its national and regional promotional strategies, by allocating specific food themes for each region. She found that food represents a ‘powerful’ and ‘eye-catching’ symbol of the quality of life and authenticity, and thus can be used for a specific destination positioning strategies. However, Muñoz and Wood, (2009, pg. 269) believed that authenticity is sometimes associated with the stereotypical cultural expectations, and the greater emphasis that people place on various atmosphere components when choosing an appealing, authentic environment in which to dine. This view is supported by Sims (2009), who wrote that the word ‘authenticity’ refers to the role it played within the tourists’ holiday experience. This could raise the question of whether the study of authenticity is only essential in the concept of a tourist destination, or the aspects of social context such as dining experience. The concerns of authenticity regarding TMF have yet to be discussed, and one tentative proposal might be that the use of food in tourism apparently could enhance the sustainability and the authenticity of a destination (Lin *et al.*, 2010).

In other areas of the concept of locality in the tourist experience, Sthapit (2017) showed that elements of authenticity are essential in linking tourists’ food memories with their travel experiences. She identified seven critical components that could prolong a tourist’s memorable experiences: local specialities and food attributes, authenticity, novelty, togetherness and social interaction, hospitality, service-scape, and food souvenirs. Sims (2009) proposed that the authenticity presented to tourists is explained as the real food experience, which has two meanings. The first one is that tourists are looking for local products that are not invented and ‘symbolise’ the culture. The second meaning is that, even if the tourists have doubts about the locality or the authenticity of the products, they still look for the locals (Sims, 2009). Therefore, the meaning of authenticity is more inclined towards the atmosphere, ambience and services of the dining experience, where the tourists are able to experience local food in an authentic setting.

The author now consider the potential of exploiting traditional values incorporated in food-related practices in preparing and cooking TMF for tourists and the younger generation of Malays in homestay programmes in Malaysia. Xiong and Brownlee (2018) emphasised that kampong food practices bring positive values from the past, for example, in the influential culture of sharing and togetherness, which in the end contributes to the formation of kinship, and community social bonding. The ‘kampong spirit’, for example, according to Van Esterik (1982), still exists in Southeast Asia, especially in Malay villages where reciprocal relations are fundamental to community survival. Resources such as garden produce, meat, and other foods can be shared with another household, in return for help during special occasions such as weddings and funerals. Such reciprocity forms social relations and citizenship within the community (Xiong and Brownlee, 2018). In the context of all that has been mentioned so far, this study investigates the contribution of successful kampong food-related practices in the rural areas or villages in Malaysia in improving the economy of the local people through the homestay programme.

3.6 TMF as a Meaningful Experience for Tourists in a Homestay in Malaysia

Previous research has established the influence of food on tourists’ quality of experience while visiting a destination (Long, 2004; Kivela and Crofts, 2006; Alderighi *et al.*, 2016; Trihas and Kyriakaki, 2016; Sthapit, 2017). Long (2004) noted that tourists can construct their own unique experiences by learning about the culture surrounding a particular cuisine, while engaging with the people involved in preparing and presenting the food. Butler and Hall (1998), on the other hand remarked that understanding the prime motivation for tourists visiting a particular place to experience food is crucial to understand the reason for their travelling. Henderson (2009, cited in Bell, 2015) emphasised how local food can be significant to a particular destination’s development. Local specialties, for instance, have the advantage of being fresh, as well as that they can be prepared and produced at any time of the day (Su and Horng, 2012), providing a certain flexibility to fulfil tourists’ requirements. Boniface (2003) characterised traditional food and drink as something inherent to a community, an old-fashioned, un-commodified ‘home-style’. She also described how those foods deemed as ‘classics’ must be produced or perceived as being produced in a small-

scale and in a non-mass-industrialised fashion (i.e. retaining the ‘exclusivity’ embedded in consuming these foods in a particular locale). Therefore, authentic traditional food becomes intertwined with its place of origin, and a place of origin is the location where that food is consumed at its best (Lin *et al.*, 2010; Lertputtarak, 2012; Jalis *et al.*, 2014; Bell, 2015; Okumus and Cetin, 2018).

To better understand the linkages between food, homestays, and the tourists who visit them, scholars have analysed the contribution of food towards meaningful tourist experiences at a destination (Kivela and Crotts, 2006; Lu *et al.*, 2015; Lertputtarak, 2012; Sthapit, 2017). Cohen and Avieli (2004) stressed that to understand the experience of tourists, it is better to delve into their perceptions of the local cuisine, especially in unknown destinations. To-date, several studies have investigated on how neophobic⁸ and neophilic⁹ food-personality traits can hinder or motivate tourists to try different foods at a destination (Kim *et al.*, 2009). Although tourists may be eager or willing to engage in ‘novel’ or ‘unusual’ experiences, feelings of aversion to new foods are heightened when they are encountered in an unfamiliar location (Mak *et al.*, 2012). Ji *et al.*, (2016; see also Mak *et al.*, 2012) noted that it is important for a destination to understand the tourists’ own food culture, and provide food that is congruous with that culture as doing so could serve to generate feelings of familiarity with the tourists’ home food, and thus reduce their aversion to trying new foods.

A study by Talhah and Hashim (2012) assessing a destination’s food image, tourist satisfaction, and tourist revisit intentions, found that two factors are significant in a destination’s food image in the homestay industry in Malaysia: food variety and food exoticness. These factors are critical in determining the uniqueness of the local food culture in a local community, and the associated need for this uniqueness to be understood clearly by tourists. Food’s newness, strangeness, and exoticness from the perspective of a cultural outsider, in this case, define authenticity (Abarca, 2004). Moreover, experiencing and learning about a culture through local foods which, in the context of this study, is through

⁸ Neophobic is a human natural tendency to dislike or suspect new and unfamiliar foods (Mak *et al.*, 2012). Kim *et al.*, (2009) defined food neophobia as the extent to which tourists are reluctant to try novel foods such as food products, dishes and cuisines.

⁹ Neophilic is a human natural tendency to search for novel foods. In this situation, tourists may typically be eager or willing to engage in ‘novel’ or ‘unusual’ experiences and eating unfamiliar food in the destination (Mak *et al.*, 2012) and experience food with more pleasure (Kim *et al.*, 2009).

consuming TMF cooked and prepared by the homestay communities, is a fundamental way to learn people's values (Jenkins and Jones, 2003, cited in Talhah and Hashim, 2012). Cuisine provides an instinctive connection with culture, and also cultivates perceptions of a region. Thus, building a connection between food and culture can be seen as constructing the distinctiveness of a destination, or a cultural identity for a particular area or place (Haukeland and Jacobsen, 2001; Santich, 2004). According to Talhah and Hashim (2012), food is one of the elements that have always been used in marketing strategies, to sell the identity and culture of a specific destination. The local community, as the ones who usually serves their cuisine, uphold the intrinsic value of the traditional recipes. Conversely, Sims (2009) argued that local food and drink products are a particularly effective means of creating an image, because they can be linked to the kind of tradition that tourists will wonder over during their holidays. Therefore, these studies suggest that there is significant potential for culinary heritage to play a central role in creating a particular image and identity for homestay sector in Malaysia.

Homestay destinations that can offer the most memorable and unique experiences are the ones more likely to attract more tourists, and thus ensure their longer-term viability to remain competitive in an increasingly crowded field (Raji *et al.*, 2017; Sánchez-Cañizares and López-Guzmán, 2012). It is therefore vital for homestay providers to understand tourists' perceived image of their destinations (Raji *et al.*, 2017). Tourists visiting homestay destinations, are those who are culturally motivated, and are at least partly, more likely to be interested in experiencing the local cuisines. Hence, knowing what 'images' related to food are held by tourists is essential in understanding their behaviour and attitudes towards the homestay destinations (Kim *et al.*, 2009; Bildtgard, 2013; Omar *et al.*, 2014; Okumus and Cetin, 2018). By recognising and acknowledging the factors of a destination's food presentation that influence tourists' satisfaction and intentions to revisit, homestay providers could amplify not only the overall homestay destination's image, but the specific food aspect as well. Subsequently, a specific food image could be utilised in the marketing and promoting of homestay destinations (Horng and Tsai, 2010). For example, Tourism Malaysia's (hereafter, TM) website promotes homestay as a place for tourists who are searching for more novelty and authentic experiences in local food and tradition:

Visitors will experience the full spectrum of village life. Start with home-cooking lessons, where the wide variety and sumptuousness of painstakingly prepared dishes can sometimes be enough to confuse most people! Learn how to prepare the food, which might include gathering vegetables fresh from the backyard, washing and cooking them. (Tourism Malaysia, 2017)

Jalis *et al.*, (2014) argued that texts used in marketing can provide an understanding of the role of specific words that could influence tourists to experience Malaysian cuisine. The quote from the TM website, for example, uses words like ‘village life’, ‘home-cooking lessons’, ‘painstakingly prepared dishes’ and ‘gathering fresh vegetables from the backyard, washing and cooking them’. These phrases stress the identity of TMF and cuisine in the rural areas where the homestays are located. Consequently, clear images of food, in marketing materials, could demonstrate to tourists the type of food, and associated activities, that they will encounter and experience during the programme. Specific words such as ‘sumptuousness’ can convey a ‘sensory appeal’ which, according to Jalis *et al.*, (2014), could develop a desire to experience a cuisine while visiting the country. Furthermore, Sims (2009) proposed that tourists need to have their own ideas about what a typical food experience of that place might look like and anything that fits this image – including the setting, the ambience and the food itself – is more likely to be identified as “authentic”. Overall, by producing more appealing images and descriptions about local food and dishes in the homestay, awareness of promoting TMF through the homestays as tourist destinations could be instilled.

3.6.1 Food as a Tourism Resource in the Homestays

The Malaysian homestay experience emphasised the concept of tourists staying in the homestay provider’s house, where interactions take place with the provider and family, who are in most cases living in the same premise, and with whom public space is, to a degree, shared (Mura, 2015). The holistic nature of homestays in Malaysia is based on budget accommodation for tourists, while at the same time getting to close to the culture and tradition of a particular ethnic group (Pusiran and Xiao, 2013). The programme is aimed at domestic and foreign tourists who are looking for a different travel experience, as the homestay

providers will be the *adoptive family* throughout the visit. Activities such as cooking and eating together, as well as being involved in other routines with the adoptive family, allow two parties, who are likely from different cultural backgrounds, to interact and learn from each other through such luxury experience (Bell, 2015; Kayat, 2011).

In an account of a home as an integral part of the homestay product in Malaysia, Bell (2015) suggested that the home is also a space for authenticity, through the combination of two elements; the home and food offer a site for self-expression, whereby the inaccessible information about the occupants and their usual way of life can be learned and observed. Jamal *et al.* (2011) found that emotional and experiential values were the primary sources of virtues derived from tourists' experiences. Thus, Bell identified that through cooking lessons, food is perhaps one of the last areas of authenticity that can be afforded regularly by tourists. In Bali, the hosts are not allowed to change the surroundings of their house and routine to accommodate for tourists' needs and demand for cooking lessons. Hence, by using their domestic household environment as a setting, they fully utilise the time and resources that they have in their surroundings, to generate income from tourism. The activities are also considered as one of the ways through which tourists can engage with authentic local domestic culture. The goal of the study is to explore ways in which the value of culinary heritage can be enhanced by the host community to strengthen their homestay products and activities, for a proactive promotion of their local food culture to tourists. Therefore, by reviewing literature concerning the advantages of using homestays as a gateway to local culture, the value and potential of food to bring tourists and locals together in a shared cultural experience can be determined.

Bell (2015) shared an example of how the local people in Bali adapt to tourism with very little capital outlay, by reusing the resources and facilities that they have, to provide cooking lessons for tourists. Most importantly, Bell outlined the way people in Bali open their household kitchens to earn incomes, a method which can be applied in homestay programmes in Malaysia. In another significant study, Jolliffe (2019) found that cooking lessons in Thailand contribute to the development of authentic experiences in the small-scale, niche, local and sustainable tourism that appeal to both domestic and foreign tourists. Table 3.2

below provides examples of how cooking lessons in Bali and Thailand could contribute to the development of cultural-based homestay tourism in Malaysia.

Table 3. 2 Comparison of cooking lessons in Bali, Indonesia and Thailand
(Source: adapted from Bell (2015) and Jolliffe (2019).

Factors	Bali – cooking lessons	Thailand – cooking lessons
Authenticity	Based on Bali and Indonesian heritage cooking and local knowledge.	Based in Thai heritage cooking and local knowledge.
	Using the existing outdoor kitchen (<i>warung</i>) belonging to the house owner, the cooking lessons create a sense of home through experiential authenticity.	Cooking lessons are carried out in the city (e.g. restaurants or cooking schools' facilities), or on rural farms near the city where visits to kitchen gardens and small local neighbourhood markets are part of the itinerary.
	Direct booking with the owner of the <i>warungs</i> . Tourists have to ask the locals about the cooking lessons.	Booking through local hotels, tour desks and agencies. Those taking the booking receive a commission.
	Tourists have to come by themselves to the <i>warungs</i> .	Participant are picked up from their hotels or from agency tour desks, and sent back at the end of the lesson.
Product	Signature Balinese culinary experience, specific according to destinations.	Signature Thai culinary experience as a whole, but not for specific destinations.
	Based on the locals' choice of food, mainly of Balinese cuisines. Participants can choose what to cook from the dishes listed by the host, and no personalisation for the cooking experience, except for what have been predetermined by the host.	Based on Thai's choice of food. The participants can choose what to cook from a list of five to seven courses, with personalisation of the cooking experience.
Experience	High participation in the lessons, as tourists participate in the cooking process together with the host. They also learn traditional cooking methods that lead to the co-creation of their personal food experience.	High participation in the lessons, as tourists participate in the cooking process together with the instructors. They also learn traditional cooking methods that lead to the co-creation of their personal food experience.
	The experience of picking up fresh	The experience of picking up fresh

	ingredients from the house compounds and surrounding areas, creates another value in tourists' food experience.	ingredients from local markets creates a different value in tourists' food experience.
Sustainability	Use of locally sourced ingredients and involvement by locals who own the <i>warungs</i> in this niche tourism.	Use of locally sourced ingredients and supporting the local neighbourhood markets, as visits are often included.
Safeguarding	Most sustainable, traditional, local food offered, hosts assist with cooking, and participants eat with the locals. Standardisation of course listing and increase of related offerings.	Most sustainable, traditional, local food offered, instructors assist with cooking and eat with participants. Standardisation of course listing and increase of related offerings.

Table 3.2 outlines how the cooking lessons and facilities for traditional food in Bali and Thailand contribute to the development of their food tourism. However, one of the more significant findings is that the cooking lessons do not only give the tourists tastes of local food tourism experiences, but also engage them by co-creating the experiential of culinary products with the local people using fresh and natural ingredients. Moreover, Bell (2015) and Jolliffe (2019) also pointed out that there are four outcomes namely: authenticity, product, experiences, and sustainability, that result from food tourism through the use of local knowledge and experiences. However, there is another outcome, namely safeguarding, that could result from these activities if it involves the local people. The deep involvement of locals could offer more than just authentic cooking experiences. The programme could reflect 'safeguarding' in the long run by contributing to the success of small local food markets and small farms in the rural areas, as well as improving the livelihoods by offering more employment to locals, who can use the traditional knowledge gained in their homes and communities, by sharing the expertise with the tourists (Jolliffe, 2019). The cooking lessons in Bali and Thailand were explicitly designed for tourists to learn about traditional food and their cooking process. Therefore, it has the traditional element to be promoted as a local heritage cuisine, especially with the involvement of the locals to guide the tourists in cooking their traditional cuisine.

3.6.2 *The Staged Authenticity and the Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*

Richards (2002) found that food provides an essential link between place, identity, culture and tourism. He also proposed that meals are a central part of tourists' journeys, and they provide memorable and meaningful experiences. Hence, food can become a distinctive element of the 'brand image' of a place. In this study, Goffman's (1959) 'front-stage/ back-stage' model will be used to determine whether it can be applied in the promotion of cultural-based food tourism in homestay programmes in Malaysia. The 'front space' of the homestay provider's house is referring to the spaces where the providers and tourists meet and interact with each other, while the 'back-stage' refers to the areas that provide privacy for the providers and tourists. Aziz and Selamat (2016) explained that the 'back-stage' is the place where the participants can take a break from the host-guest relation. In this study, activities that take place in, for example, the main hall, dining area, and kitchen, are the 'front-stage' point where the tourists and providers interact and communicate with each other throughout the programme.

The concept introduced by Goffman (1959) explained that the front-stage and back-stage represent different characters of self and others. In relation to the homestay programmes, Goffman's (1959) model demonstrated that the homestay provider have two different characters in representing the homestay to the tourists. Aziz and Selamat (2016) called this as an issue of authenticity in the host culture and tourist experience. In the front-stage, the host will somehow showcase the authentic life in rural areas such as through the decoration of their house, making bed accommodation and preparing full meals for the tourists. However, when the tourists are gone for other activities, or when the host has some personal time in areas within the house that they consider to be private, they switch back to their original character. MacCannell (1973, 1976) argued that the tourism industry and its settings may have prevented tourists from the search of a genuine, authentic human satisfaction. MacCannell integrated his work of authenticity with the model developed by Goffman, of the front-and back-stage notions.

Bell (2015) use the example of the Balinese *warungs* or the home cooking lessons in Bali, to explore further the Goffman front-stage and back-stage model. In her study, she focused on how guests participate in the kitchen through cooking

classes. The kitchen is a public area of the house, which is used by the host for these activities, while the rest of the house is understood to be off-limits to guests. Certain parts of the other domestic areas, even though private, are still visible through open doors and windows throughout those activities. However, the notion of Goffman's model of the front-and back-stages has slowly become natural and genuine experiences, with unique interactions between the host and the tourists. The majority of tourists were satisfied with their food experiences, and were unable to distinguish between the authentic and the contrived. The observation is in agreement with Cohen's (1995), which showed that tourists in the post-modern era no longer regard authenticity as an essential criterion for satisfaction — but place more value on how they enjoy the experience that derives from the products (Aziz and Selamat, 2016).

In order to understand the ideas by Goffman (1959) and MacCannell (1976) in this study, the concept of 'customised authenticity' introduced by Wang (2007) will also be examined. Wang refers to customised authenticity or staged authenticity as a commercialised version of such spaces. He explained in detail how the locals in Lijiang town, in Province of China, have renovated their houses and customised their homestay activities to re-create versions of ancient or traditional Chinese living culture. Nevertheless, tourists were satisfied with their experiences, and were unconcerned about the fake authenticity represented in the homestay. Wang (1999) asserted that if a product meets tourists' expectations of the exotic, as it is designed to be, then they experience satisfaction. Mura (2015), on the other hand, claimed that Malaysian homestays mainly impinge on the idea of a 'nostalgic', 'rural', and 'primitive' past, for marketing strategies. The production of an idyllic portrait of traditional life in the kampong, where people and places are depicted as 'traditional', and 'genuine' trigger the perceptions of existential authenticity (Wang, 1999). Wang described the experience as staged for tourist consumption. However, even though there are certain areas that are staged in homestay programmes in Malaysia, for tourists to experience 'customised authenticity', there is a process of negotiation between the object, the subject and a sense of home that we have to understand. The host can portray a 'fake authentic' experience in front of the tourists for a short period of time. However, there are a few instances when the host and tourists closely interact with each other, such as when eating together, or when the tourists request to learn

about the cultural aspects of the homestay activities (e.g. food, dance, music). The learning process of these traditional elements provides cultural discourses that link to the power of authenticity. Therefore, in this study, the relative concept of ‘staged’ or ‘customised’-authenticity’ is discussed in detail (see section 3.6.2 on page 74 and 11.3.6 on page 379), discussing how it influences the ‘authentic experience’ of tourists in consuming traditional Malay food, in homestay programmes in Malaysia.

3.7 The Power of Stakeholders in Homestay Development in Malaysia

The term ‘stakeholders’ was used by Freeman (1984, p. 46) to describe any groups or individuals who can affect, or are affected by, the achievement of an organisation’s objectives (Friedman and Miles, 2006; Bryson, 2004). The term was then redefined by Friedman and Miles (2006) to note how an organisation should be thought of as a grouping of stakeholders with the purpose of managing that organisation’s interests, needs, and viewpoints. The government of Malaysia has developed its homestay programme with the aim of improving the economy of the people in the rural areas. Kayat (2008) noted that a rural tourism master plan has existed since 2001, and that it has been recognised as an emerging tourism product under the homestay label. This may in a way explain why there is a dearth of literature discussing the involvement and roles of the various stakeholders in this tourism product (Kayat’s 2008 study was the first research into the subject). However, Kayat (2008) revealed that the influence and power of the primary stakeholders are actually the determinant of the success and/or failure of a homestay programme initiative. She claimed that the stakeholder’s interest in the development of homestay can be reflected in one or a combination of these three components: their power, or their lack of power, to affect the programme; their dependency on the programme; and the influence that they have on the development. However, the main weakness of the study is the failure to address in what manner have the stakeholders contributed to the development of the programme financially, and how much support given by them for the marketing and advertising of that programme. She was also unable to discuss in what manner the homestay programmes have built their particular brand through the local environment, economy and culture to attract more visitors and investment.

This thesis's examination of stakeholder involvement is critical, as stakeholders play an integral role in planning and developing homestay programmes in Malaysia. Rural tourism initiatives such as homestays, need continuous support from different parties and interests to ensure their success and sustainability. Successes are intimately bound up with the efforts and contributions from the federal and state governments, local authorities, as well as the homestay communities, requiring as it does a high degree of sustained commitment, coordination, and management. Ghasemi and Hamzah (2014) highlighted that the views from stakeholders, especially local communities, on tourism development are varied and are at all times based on their perceptions of benefits and expectations. Similarly, Kayat (2000) pointed out that the residents of one homestay in Langkawi expressed that some of them are economically dependent on the tourism industry and thus, have concerns about the programme. Whereas, another group of residents admitted that they are less economically dependent on the programme, and hence, they are not really concerned about it. In another major study, Wang (2007) found that the cultural heritage product in Naxi homestay in Lijiang was constructed with the efforts from different individuals, regardless of whether they are dependent or less dependent on the programme. The authorities of Lijiang believed that the heritage in Naxi homestay is authentic (stable, genuine, traditional, and preservable), and thus, were willing to speak about the authenticity of Naxi culture, their conceptualisation of it and the heritage preservation that was worth every effort from the perspective of the international community. However, the main contributors or the labours in safeguarding the heritage in this homestay not only consisted of the Naxi locals, but also the guests, the migrants (such as Kim who sells Naxi Sandwich and created the Sakura House), who played the role as contributors to the construction of the Naxi homes. Wang (2007) also believed that different parties have different understanding about the construction of homestay, but the variety customised authenticity have benefitted the tourists in getting an authentic experience in the Naxi homestay.

3.8 Conceptual Model

Collectively, the above literature suggests the critical role and various ways of how homestay providers in Malaysia can utilise their authentic cuisines to

promote and market their destinations. Although homestays in Malaysia do utilise local cuisines in their programmes, it is still in a limited way, and key factors such as the uniqueness of the cuisines are not being actively promoted by the primary stakeholders. According to Du Rand and Heath (2006), creating and developing unique culinary experiences is important in marketing destinations. Tourism destinations such as homestays in Malaysia may face challenges in promoting their local food, due to limited resources, capability, and expertise in highlighting their unique products. Therefore, by investigating and highlighting the varying roles that different stakeholders and agencies can play, better ways to promote local food in homestay programmes, while safeguarding this cultural heritage for future generation can be identified.

There are many different opinions and strategies that have been developed for promoting local cuisines in homestays, however, this study specifically investigates the ways of how TMF can play an integral role in providing positive and memorable experiences for homestay tourists. Providing an overarching framework from which the various stakeholders can draw upon to cooperate in the development of local food as a valuable product, it is hoped that the study can be a means for homestay providers to focus more clearly on which aspects of the culinary heritage can be put forward by their host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities, so that they can proactively promote their local food culture to tourists. The conceptual model proposed for the development of homestay programmes in Malaysia is shown in Figure 3.1. It comprises three mutually symbiotic relationships for the primary stakeholders (federal and local state government, NGO's, and other private agencies in Malaysia), the providers, that is the homestay providers from the homestay provision, and the receivers, which are made up by the tourists visiting the homestays.

First and foremost, the primary stakeholders act as enablers in the development of TMF in homestays. For this, four vital factors have been identified as the unit of analysis: 1) power; 2) influence; 3) support; and 4) guidance. Many of the stakeholders have different perspectives towards the programme, which can change over time. The roles of the stakeholders are also crucial, as their viewpoints on TMF and their assessment of TMF to be the potential cultural product and service in the homestay programme must be

addressed. Apart from that, each of the stakeholders' group have different motives, goals and objectives that need to be identified, to understand whether TMF can be upheld as the leading cultural product in homestays.

Secondly, the homestay hosts, who perform as providers, play an essential role in promoting TMF to the tourists. However, in reality, they are the main contributors towards the development of homestay programmes in this study. Four key essential factors have been identified as the unit of analysis for the providers: 1) practices; 2) authentic; 3) image and identity, and 4) commitment. The development of TMF relatively involves the practices of the homestay providers in preparing TMF, and their efforts in promoting it to tourists. Having said that, issues among the providers in promoting TMF should also be addressed in this study. The providers are evaluated on how they use TMF to benefit the local economy through food production and consumption. Through this framework, the capability of the homestay providers is also assessed in order to understand their competence to attract tourists to visit their homestay through TMF, and thus, be more attentive to tourists' demands and interest in consuming the local food.

Thirdly, the framework will look at the tourists, who play the vital role as receivers, to provide constructive feedback on their expectations and evaluation of their TMF experiences in the homestays in Perak, Malaysia. Feedbacks or any issues raised by the tourists need to be delivered to the homestay providers and stakeholders, so that they can effectively address it to deliver better products in the future. Four factors have been identified as the unit of analysis for the tourists: 1) feedback; 2) satisfaction; 3) expectation; and 4) experience. Thus, this thesis aims to guide the stakeholders and related parties on how to consume the local food served in homestay programmes in Malaysia, so that the culinary activities in the programmes can provide genuine food experience to the tourists. Another focus of this chapter is on the contribution of the stakeholders in developing local food in homestay programmes in Malaysia, particularly in the planning process of developing activities related to local food in the programmes as a means to enhance the homestay destination, so that it can attract tourists to visit these homestays, as indicated in Research Aim 2 and 4 (see Chapter 1, pg. 16 and 18). Overall, by promoting the uniqueness of this local food image and identity, the

prospects for developing a viable and sustainable homestay programme as a rural tourism product for tourists can be enhanced (see Figure 3.1).

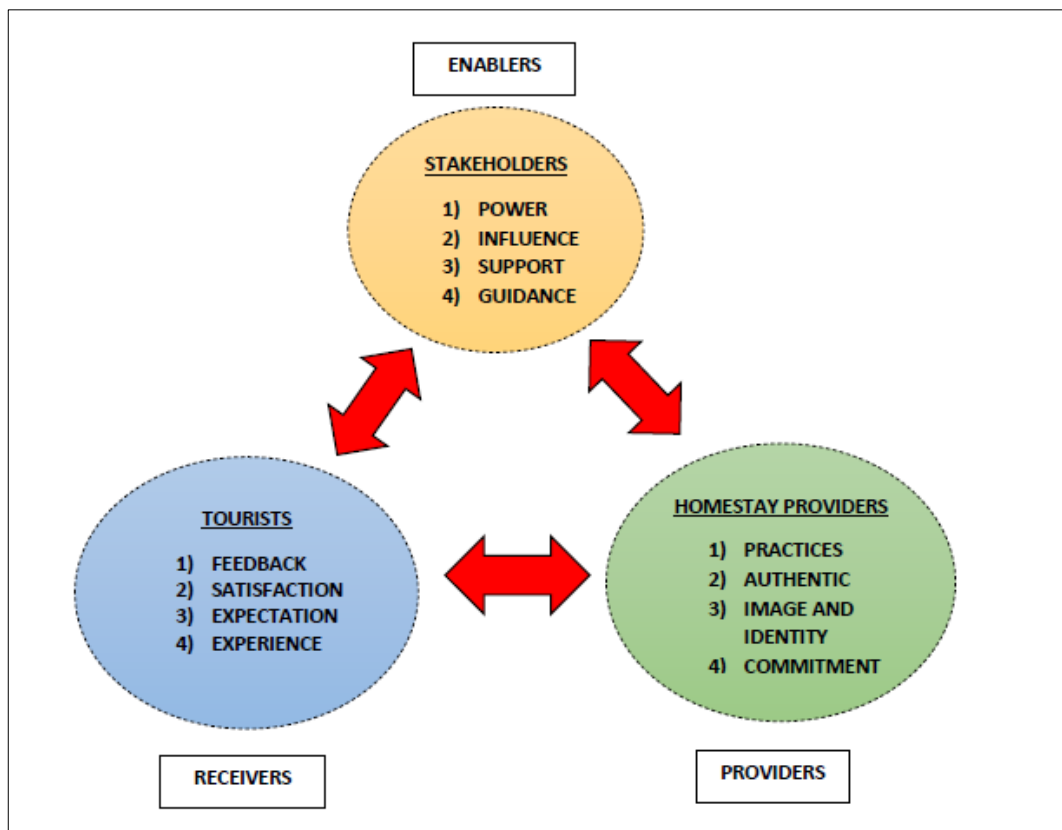


Figure 3. 1 Three components that contribute to the body of research and the potential development of homestay programmes in Malaysia

Previous research discussed in this chapter suggested that TMF could play a major role in the promotion of homestay programmes: firstly, as a value-added product and service in the homestay industry; secondly, as a unique image and brand-identity marker of specific homestays to construct their destinations, and; thirdly, as a medium to develop their marketing strategies as well as promotional activities. It is suggested that TMF could become a fundamental feature in the overall package, sparking the interest of tourists seeking novel experiences enjoyed when consuming rich and authentic traditional food in rural areas. Consequently, the key stakeholders, especially the homestay providers, could develop the awareness on the potential that local food has in contributing to tourists' experience. Figure 3.2 shows the connections between, and the implications of, TMF for the development of homestay products and services in Malaysia.

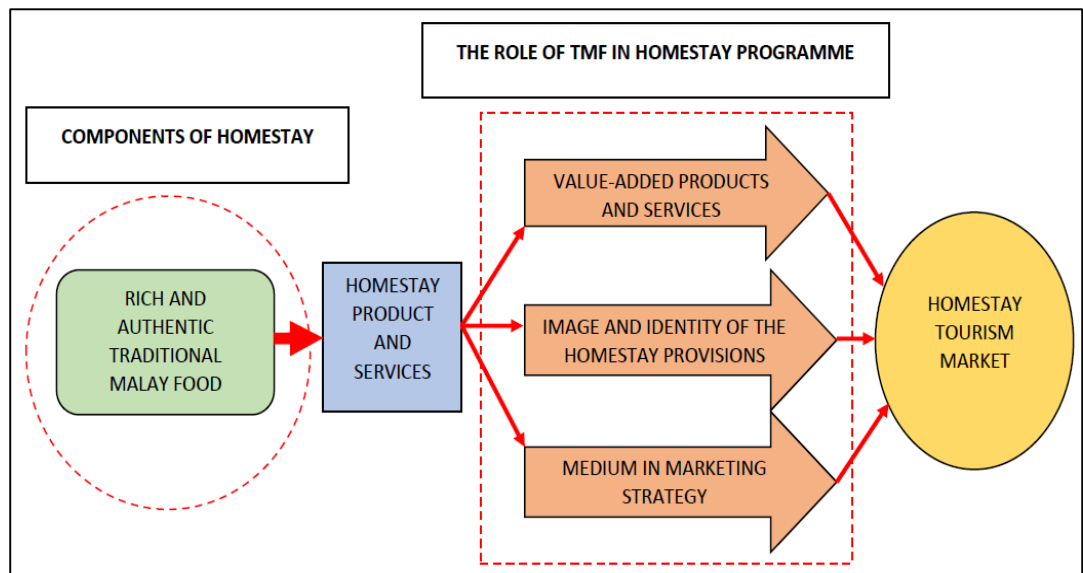


Figure 3. 2 The association between TMF and the development of the homestay programme in Malaysia

3.9 Summary

In summary, this chapter has given an account of, and the reasons for, the widespread use of traditional food as a niche market for the development trend in food tourism. In this chapter, it has argued the potential of homestay programme in Malaysia to be used for tourists to seek out authentic local experiences through indigenous food traditions. The above discussion suggests how locals have had to utilise their cultural resources as one of their primary assets to showcased to tourists, as a fundamental part of their overall aim to enhance their socio-economic status. It was also shown that the government and all related homestay organisations have to actively explore the strengths and opportunities that local food culture and tradition might offer when devising their homestay promotional plans and marketing strategies. The results of this research support the idea that the homestay providers need to also be proactive by identifying local foods that could become a unique and vital asset in the promotion of their particular homestays. This kind of speciality food could have a significant and visible impact on the development of homestay programme, not only as an added value but also in terms of branding their homestays as something that visitors can easily relate to and set apart, in differentiating a specific destination from its competitors. In the same way, culinary culture could also improve the financial prospects of the homestay organisation and the community, by encouraging the utilisation of every food-related resource available in their areas, such as the

tropical as well as seasonal fruits and vegetables. These results add substantially to our understanding of the homestay programme, and how their providers need to be more creative in presenting their food authenticity so that they are able to distinguish themselves from other destinations.

Chapter 4. Methodology and Methods

4.1 Chapter Outline

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in this research. The goal of the thesis is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be utilised by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities.

The thesis has four Research Questions with related Aims:

RQ1: What are the elements of UNESCO's and ASEAN's homestay programmes that can be applied to Malaysian homestay programme, in using and revitalising culinary heritage as a strategy to promote cultural tourism?

Aim 1.1 To explore the way the culinary and heritage aspects of UNESCO's and ASEAN's homestay programmes can be used to strengthen the Malaysia Homestay Experience Programme developed by the Malaysian government.

RQ2: To what extent, and in what ways, do stakeholders integrate local food as a strategy in promoting homestay?

Aim 2 To investigate the way stakeholders champion and support the use of local food in homestay programmes in Malaysia, with the intention that the culinary activities in the programme can be used to attract tourists to visit homestays in Malaysia.

RQ3: How much emphasis is placed on the value of TMF in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay, as a means of promoting and publicising their homestays in order to enhance the tourist experience?

Aim 3 To review the way TMF is used in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay as a specific asset to their homestay programmes.

RQ4: What are the essential elements of TMF that might enhance tourists' homestay experiences, and that would make TMF a central part of the homestay programme?

Aim 4 To investigate the different aspects of local culture that particularly appeals to tourists.

To answer these research questions a qualitative methods approach was deployed, which allowed insights into how TMF might be made a primary motivation for tourists to visit homestays in Malaysia. The two case studies focused on two community-based homestays with a combined analysis of information from stakeholders, homestay providers, and homestay tourists. The methods used allowed an understanding to develop of how TMF might play an integral role in promoting the homestay programme in Malaysia and contribute to developing more creative and innovative ways to showcase the traditions of local people in rural areas. Analysis of methods of safeguarding culinary heritage used by UNESCO and ASEAN countries provided clear examples for how of the homestay industry in Malaysia might develop. The literature review helped to develop an appropriate framework to form the structure for this study and provided an alternative perspective on the study in addition to the case-studies.

A case study approach was adopted to conduct this study. Overall, it helped understand the practices and challenges of the homestay provision in preparing and promoting TMF in the homestay programme as a means of competing with the commercial tourism industry in Malaysia. Case studies were carried out in two selected homestay programmes in Perak, Malaysia namely Kampong Beng Homestay (KBH) and Gopeng Homestay (GH). Subsequently, qualitative data were collected from the stakeholders: national and government officials, homestay providers, and tourists. This data was also cross-referenced with participant observations. There are, however, certain drawbacks associated with the use of qualitative methods in assessing the information from tourists. General demographic data such as age, gender, occupation and frequency of tourists visiting homestays cannot be collected easily through qualitative methods. Therefore, the results employed through the open-ended interviews have been quantified in tables, graphs and figures. The following sections in this chapter discuss specific aspects of the methodology used in this study such as the choice of methodology, research design, data collection process, and research plan.

4.2 Research Settings and Background

The case study research was undertaken at two established homestay programmes in Perak, Malaysia. All homestays in Malaysia share the same original concept as devised by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture (MOTAC) but all have different strategies for their events and activities. The homestays all offer different packages based on their specific culture and traditions. The homestay programme in Malaysia is managed and coordinated by national government under MOTAC. The ministry is responsible for national policies, programmes and coordination of all the activities that relate to the arts, culture, and tourism. MOTAC is headed by the union Minister of Tourism and their headquarters is located in the Federal Territory of Putrajaya. Under MOTAC headquarters, next in line and in importance is the MOTAC office in every state office in Malaysia. Its role is to act as a conduit between the Ministry of Tourism and the state tourism apparatus. Each of the MOTAC State Offices have their own director and organisation. The State Office is directly involved in tourism development in that particular State and reports back to the headquarters in Putrajaya. The homestay programme is managed under a special homestay unit, in the Industry Development Division under MOTAC, Putrajaya. The Division is responsible for the development and strengthening of the structures, functions and roles of organisations associated with the tourism service industry. It encourages the industry to upgrade and diversify tourism products, activities, facilities, and services based on the strengths and uniqueness of local resources; to develop and promote domestic tourism, upgrade human resources, promote tourism investments and formulate regulations and guidelines to enhance the quality of tourism facilities. Consequently, the MOTAC State Office is responsible for all the related matters as mentioned above in the state or region. The process of administration and management of every homestay programme in Perak, for example is reported directly to the MOTAC State Office. Then, the person-in-charge will convey all the information pertaining to the State homestay programme and its development to the homestay division unit in the headquarter office in Putrajaya. In Perak as a whole, 10 registered homestay programmes have been recorded by MOTAC with the total number of 39 villages, 292 registered homestay providers with 396 number of rooms (MOTAC, 2016). Ten homestay

programmes are located in each of the districts in Perak including GH in Gopeng and KBH in Lenggong. The leader of each of the homestay programmes, also known as the head of the homestay, are elected by the members of their registered homestay providers in that particular homestay programme (see Chapter 1, pg. 10), and usually serve in this position until they wish to stand-down. Under each of the homestay programmes, the leader looks after the registered homestay providers who are also recognised as a host family permitted to host tourists in the programme. The providers are officially registered with MOTAC under their resident village that is listed as part of the official homestay programme. Thus, each homestay programme has one leader. The leader manages their own homestay but is also in contact with the MOTAC state office and supporting organisation such as NGO's from various state-level and national bodies.

4.2.1 Case Study 1: Kampong Beng Homestay, Lenggong, Perak, Malaysia

Kampong Beng, Lenggong, is a well-known homestay destination in the state of Perak, Malaysia. Aziz *et al.*, (2014) stated that Kampong Beng has the potential to become a prestigious tourist attraction, given enough investment, as its natural resources and value-added elements can produce memorable tourist experiences, thereby motivating tourists to both recommend the location and also return themselves. The village is approximately 9,797 hectares and is composed of six smaller villages (also known as kampongs in standard Malay): Durian Lubuk, Dusun, Beng Daam, Sekolah, Durau, and Batu Ring (see Figure 4.1).

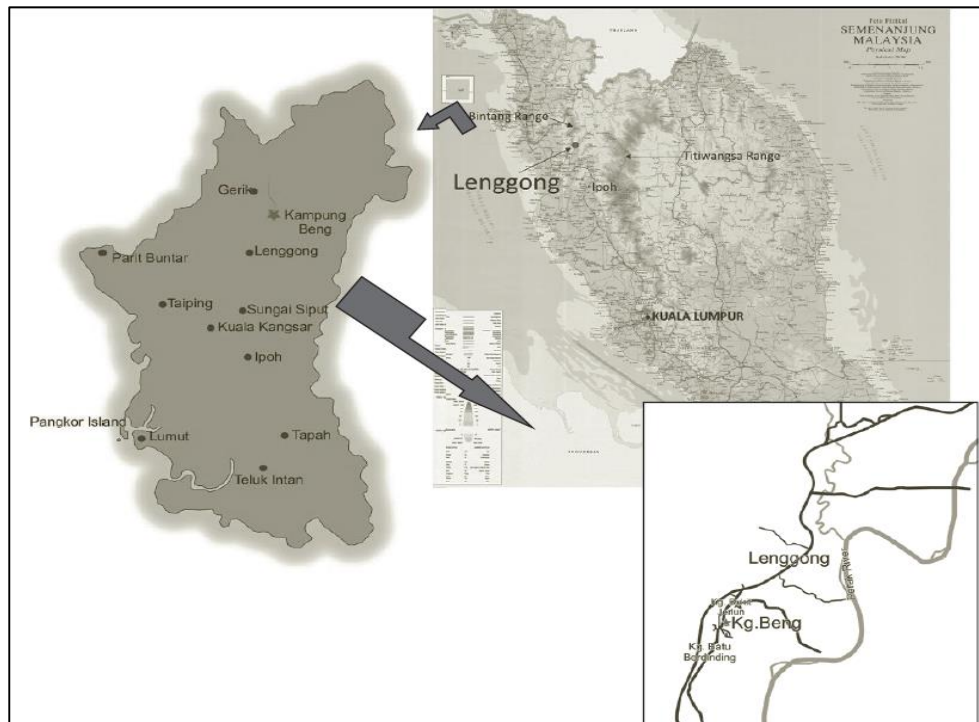


Figure 4. 1 Location of Kampong Beng in Lenggong, Perak, Malaysia
 (Source: Aziz et al., 2014)

Figure 4.1 shows Kampong Beng’s location at Mukim Durian Pipit, a traditional Malay village located near Chenderoh Lake. Nearby attractions include Piah Forest Reserve, Piah Mountain, and Titiwangsa Mountain, near Bintang Hijau Forest Reserve.

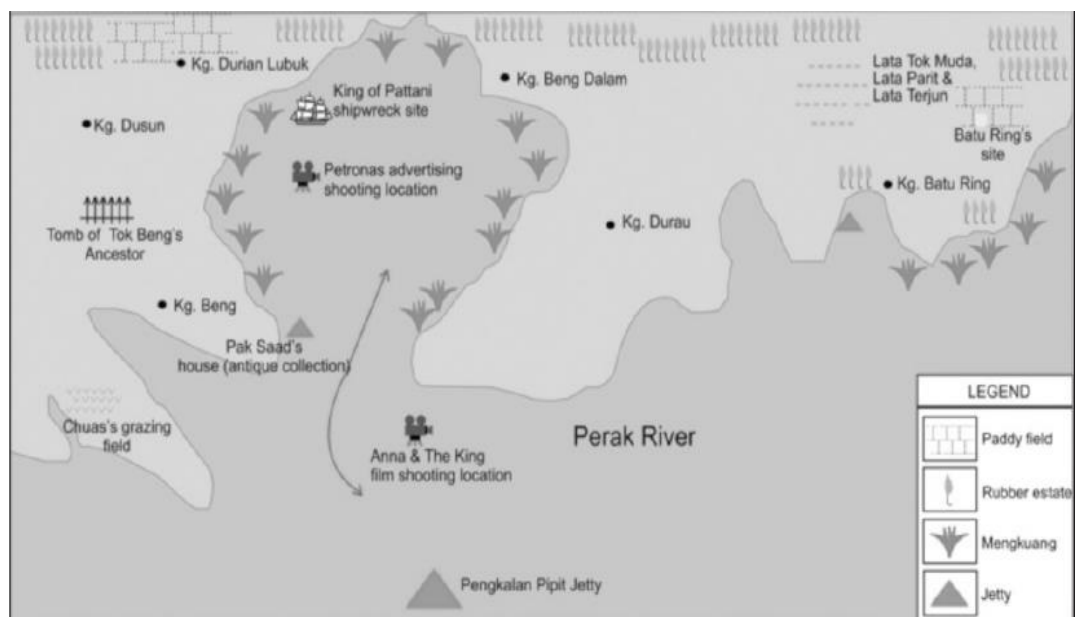


Figure 4. 2 Map of Kampong Beng, Lenggong, Perak
 (Source: Aziz et al., 2014)

Figure 4.2 shows a map of Kampong Beng with its local attractions and touristic assets. Kampong Beng consists of eight traditional villages that are registered as a homestay programme under MOTAC and with the Perak council. The Kampong Beng homestay programme was recognised as the best homestay in Perak in 2009. It is a cooperative homestay involving forty-two houses from eight villages. Tourists come to Kampong Beng from other parts of Malaysia and foreign countries like the United States, Japan, and Europe. In 2012, Perak received the highest number of domestic tourists, at 5.7 million. Accordingly, the state targeted 6 million tourists for the year 2014. Kampong Beng is one of the tour rail packages offered in the Malaysian Experience Homestay by Rail programme, introduced by Visit Malaysia in 2014. The package includes accommodation, transportation, food, and tourism activities. The homestay programmes are promoted through websites, brochures, and by word of mouth. The cost of staying in a homestay is roughly RM70 (approximately £13) per night, of which RM50 (approximately £9) is given to the provider, and the remaining RM20 (approximately £4) goes towards the cost of transportation and for the development of the programme.

One of the unique features of the Kampong Beng homestay is its dependency on boats and *sampans* (traditional Chinese flat-bottomed boats) as the primary mode of transportation. The homestay programme includes boat transfers to Kampong Beng, a welcome drink, full board, and meals throughout the day, as well as a range of activities with providers and villagers. These activities include a village tour by boat, visits to the Lata Tok Muda waterfalls, rubber tapping demonstrations, cultural performances, and an opportunity to purchase souvenirs. Aziz *et al.*, (2014) revealed that Kampong Beng has a diversity of internal attractions and activities inside its region, such as waterfalls and jungle trekking, fishing, boating, local cuisine, deer farm, handicrafts, traditional fishing tools, historical and related sites, memorable sites and legendary and mystical elements. Likewise, the external features of Kampong Beng, such as Kota Tampan Archaeological Museum, limestone caves in Lenggong Valley and Bukit Bunuh (which was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2012) also increase the appeal of this homestay programme.

4.2.2 Case Study 2: Gopeng Homestay, Perak, Malaysia

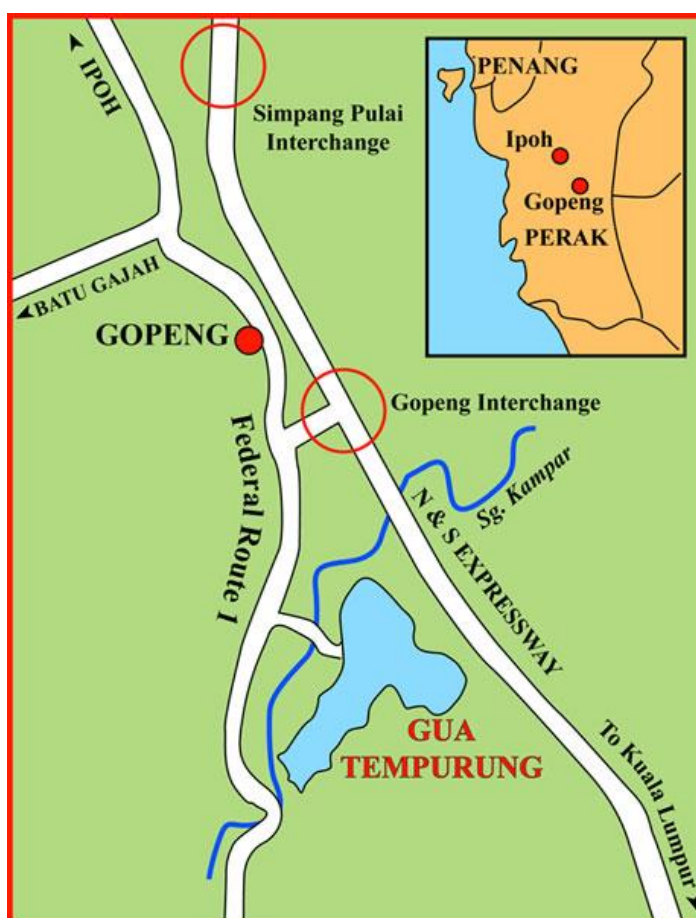


Figure 4. 3 Map of Gopeng in Perak, Malaysia
(Source: <https://imetcal2.une.edu.au/web-data/Caves/Malaysia/GTempur/GTemp.html>)

The second case study is Homestay Gopeng, located in Gopeng, Perak, Malaysia (see Figure 4.3). Gopeng was a principal mining town in the State of Perak during the late 19th century. In fact, it was regarded as the most important mining town in the Kinta Valley until about 1890. In the 19th century, the town was bustling with tin mining and had attracted Chinese immigrants to live and work in Chinese-owned tin mines belonging to the legendary Eu Tong Sen and also British and French mining companies like the Straits Trading Company, Osborne and Chappel, and Tekka (Abdullah, n.d). The massive influx of Chinese migrants dwarfed the local Malay population. Apart from the indigenous people living in the more mountainous terrain nearer to the Main Range, there were communities of Indians from South India and Rawa as well as Mandailing¹⁰ from

¹⁰ The Mandailing is a traditional cultural group from the interior north-west of the island of Sumatra in Southeast Asia. The Mandailing people are also found in Malaysian and Singapore,

Sumatra, Indonesia (Khoo and Lubis, 2005). Many of the Indians lived and traded in the town centre while the Rawa and Mandailing communities resided in the villages of Gunung Mesah Hulu, Gunung Mesah Hilir, Rawa, Jelintoh, Sungai Itik, Jahang, Pulai, Gunung Panjang and Kota Bharu Estate. The population of the township grew to 10,000 in 1887, of which 90% were Chinese and Malays and 10% were Indians (Abdullah, n.d). In 1893, H.W.C Leech erected 28 wooden shophouses in Kampong Rawa to cater for the needs of the Malay merchants (Khoo and Lubis, 2005).

The Gopeng Homestay is a collection of traditional Malay houses offering homestay services for discerning travellers and adventure seekers. The population in this area comprises Rawa communities as well as original Malay people in Perak. It is spread out in three Malay villages in Gopeng, namely Jelintoh, Sungai Itek, and Pintu Padang. These communities are located along the Gopeng-Kampong Ulu Geruh road with the imposing Main Range (The Titiwangsa Mountains) looming high in the east. One major attraction is the preponderance of trees and shrubs, giving one a feeling of being close to nature. Sungai Kampar River, which flows in a south-westerly direction, provides some staging points for white-water rafting and other forms of water activities, for which Gopeng is famous. Guests can become involved in traditional Malay handiworks like basket-weaving, making of bird cages, making of *bedak sejuk* (rice-based face powder), amongst others. Trips to Kellie's Castle, Herbal Garden, and the iconic Gua Tempurung (Tempurong Cave) can be arranged upon request. Gopeng Homestay could use their mixture of unique features to make the homestay programme more attractive.

4.3 Pilot Study

The research used a pilot study to test and refine aspects of the final data-collection project, for example, design, fieldwork procedures, data collection instruments, and analysis plans (Yin, 2011). An in-depth interview was conducted with seven domestic tourists (see Table 4.1) that had experienced staying in the

having migrated to the Federation and island Republic between the 19th and 20th centuries (Lubis, 2010).

Malaysian homestay programme. The participants chosen were those who had stayed at least overnight in the homestay and had participated in a field tour and other activities, but for the most part in food-relevant activities. The researcher identified the chosen participants through ‘snowballing’: the identification of further informants by existing participants (Kibria, 2000). In this case, the researcher asked participants if they knew of any family or friends who had stayed in homestay programme in Malaysia. The pilot study was conducted in December 2015. Initially, the pilot study was used to test preliminary interview questions in order to gain insights into the tourists’ feedback and expectations in consuming TMF at the homestay programme. The tourists’ insights regarding their experiences with local food served at the homestay programme that they had visited allowed for the refinement of the research questions for the actual data collection, particularly in shaping the objectives for this study from the tourists’ perspectives. Yin (2011) detailed the advantages of doing pilot studies in qualitative research, such as the information garnered from a pilot study could range from logistics topics (e.g., learning about the field time needed to cover specific procedures) to more substantive ones (e.g., refining a study's research questions). Whatever the purpose of the pilot study is, the participants in a pilot study must know that they are participating in a pilot study. Silverman (2013) emphasised that the initial pilot interviews could allow researchers to practice before they carry out final interviews. The results from the pilot studies were analysed, and a decision was made to redesign the actual research questions that were finally used in the real fieldwork data collection for the two case studies in homestays in Malaysia.

Table 4. 1 Profile of Participants for Pilot Study

Participant	Gender	Age	Marriage status	Education
Participant 1	Female	46	Married	PhD
Participant 2	Female	41	Married	PhD
Participant 3	Male	42	Married	PhD
Participant 4	Female	30	Single	Master
Participant 5	Female	37	Married	Master
Participant 6	Male	52	Single	PhD
Participant 7	Female	47	Married	Master

4.4 Reasons for Choosing a Qualitative Method Design

In selecting and developing a qualitative method design, following Maxwell and Loomis (2003), the researcher considered five interconnected components to be applied in this study: (a) identification of the study's purposes (see Chapter 1, pg. 16); (b) formulating a conceptual framework setting out what should be achieved in the study; (c) aiming to answer the research questions developed in the first stage of the study; (d) finalising which research methods would be deemed suitable for use in this study in order to answer the research questions and aims; and (e) considering the reliability and validity of the study. Although the research questions are central to the selection and development of the research methodology, the interrelationships among the components need to be considered throughout the design process. In this thesis, the goal is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be utilised by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities. Answering the research questions and aims, should also lead to an understanding of how the homestay programme in Malaysia might promote and safeguard the culinary heritage as a strategic element in promoting their homestay to local and international tourists.

Focusing on one data source would not be sufficient for this study. Therefore, the research has been enhanced through secondary data sources to allow the data gathered from the in-depth interviews to be refined through the use of observations (Creswell and Clark, 2007). The two approaches, interviews and observations, in qualitative methods are combined, and equal priority is given to each in addressing the research issues.

Merriam (2009, p. 216) emphasised that by using different sources of data means we can compare and cross-check all the data collected through observations at different times or in various places, such as interview data collected from people with different perspectives or follow-up interviews with the same individuals. Hence it was deemed that the use of more than one qualitative technique to collect and corroborate all the data would be more likely to lead to reliable and valid data for this study.

All of the qualitative data from different sources were triangulated to give a holistic overview. Data were first obtained from the qualitative information from the stakeholders, followed by a series of in-depth interviews with the homestay providers, leading to the collection of open-ended interview data from the tourists. In this way, an understanding of the issues from the stakeholder's was obtained first, which in turn was used to inform the subsequent interviews and observation data from homestay providers and interviews data from homestay tourists. This connection occurs by using the results of the first component to shape the collection of data in the second component by specifying the research questions, selecting participants, and developing data collection protocols or instruments (Creswell and Clark, 2007). This generalised research design applied in the three distinct interactive phases of the study is illustrated in Figure 4.4. All of the qualitative data were triangulated following completion of each of the three phases.

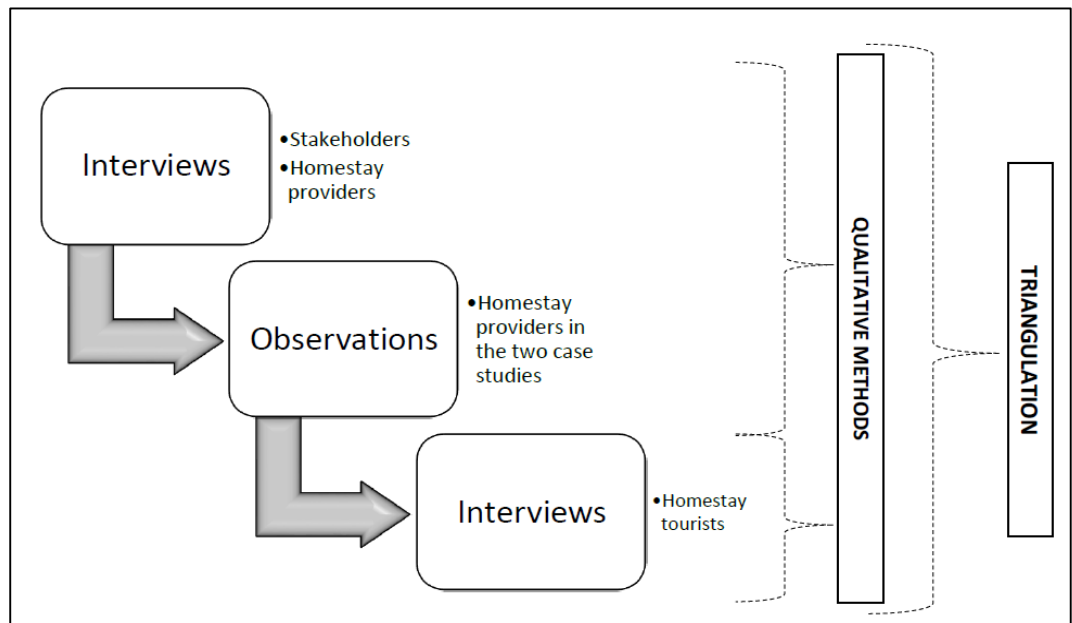


Figure 4. 4 The generalised research design applied in this study

4.5 Research Design and Process

The complete research design used in this study is illustrated in Figure 4.5 below. There were four research questions that needed to be answered in this study (see above, pg. 83) through the collection and analysis of data gathered

through the qualitative methods discussed here. Figure 4.5 illustrates how the main aims of the study were achieved through the designated research design and process, along with the research methods used. The research started with observation, to understand the nature of the homestay provider's way of life and practices in preparing and cooking TMF for homestay tourists. During this observation the researcher became submerged in the culture, customs, and people in the homestay. The researcher stayed in Kampong Beng Homestay three times for three days each, and Gopeng Homestay four times, also for three days each. Some of the things that the researcher observed, needed to be clarified by the providers, so that actions could be understood through their perspectives. By doing ethnographic interviews, the researcher engaged with the local providers and was able to question them about their knowledge, skills, and practices in preparing TMF in their homestay. The researcher also triangulates these qualitative techniques to better understand how homestay providers recognised the opportunity provided by TMF for their homestay programme. All of the interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. Tourists in both homestays were interviewed using open-ended interviews. The audio recorded interview data were then manually transcribed as verbatim transcriptions. The verbatim transcripts from the in-depth interviews and open-ended interviews were analysed using a thematic analysis before the researcher organised all of the results for further discussion. Figure 4.5 shows how the data were derived and analysed so that a conceptual model could be built which frames the safeguarding of TMF food through the homestay programme from the perspectives of the stakeholders (national and government officials, homestay providers, and tourists). This study implemented thematic analysis research design to analyse the collected data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

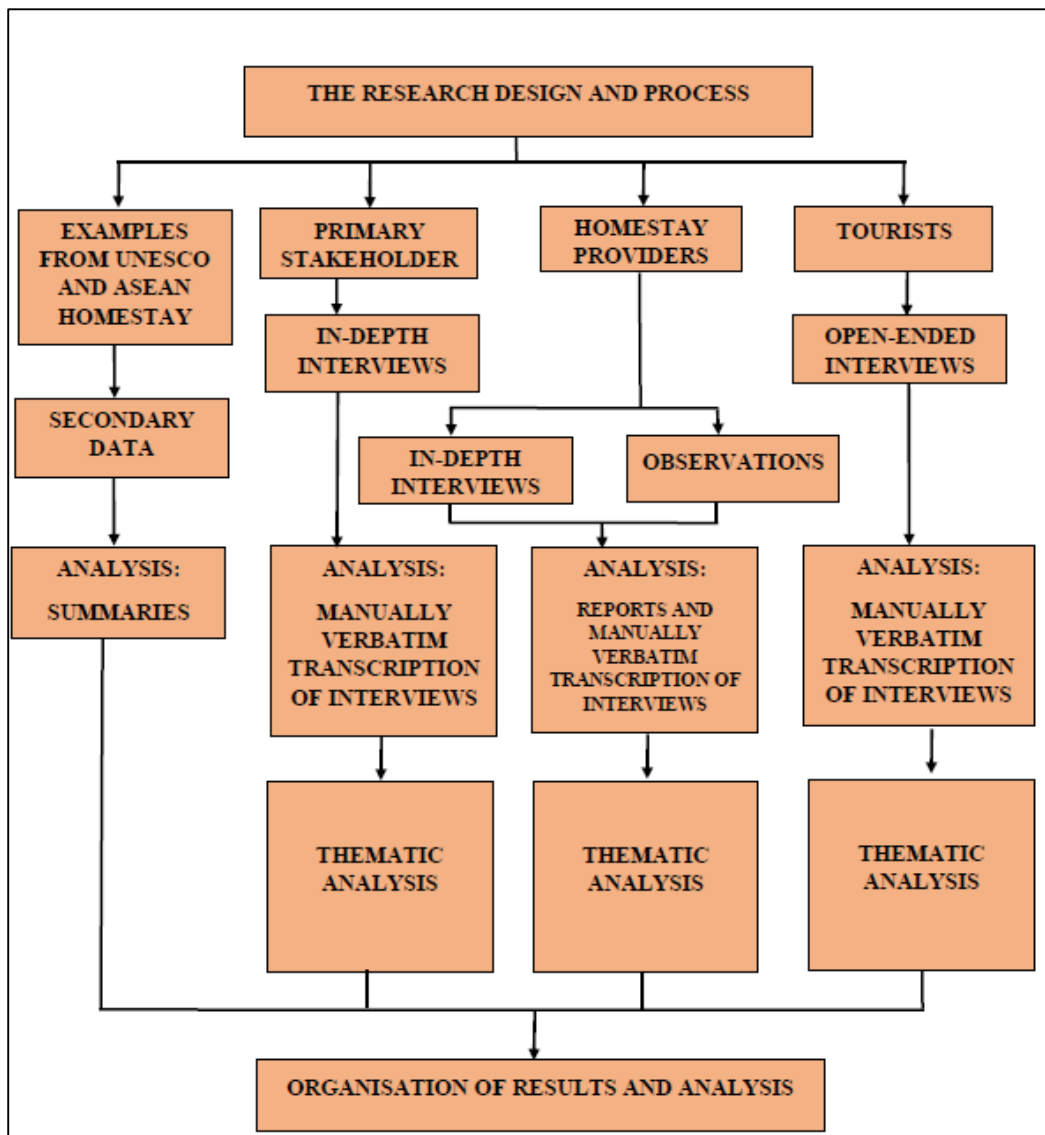


Figure 4. 5 The complete research design and process for this study

4.6 Case Studies as a Strategic Research Methodology

The use of case studies as the primary method for this research is congruent with Yin's (2009) views. She identifies that "Case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over the events, and when the focus is on the contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context" (Yin, 2009, pg. 2). Yin suggested the term refers to an event, an entity, an individual or even a unit analysis. It is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context through the use of multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, Bromley, claims that case studies allow researchers to:

Get as close to the subject of interest as they possibly can, partly through direct observation in natural settings, partly by their access to subjective factors (thoughts, feelings, and desires). Besides, case studies tend to spread the net for evidence widely, whereas experiments and surveys usually have a narrow focus.

(Bromley, 1986, p. 23, quoted in Merriam, 2009)

Following Yin's (2015) advice, multiple case studies are widely seen as producing more reliable and valid results than a single case study. Multiple case studies are a single empirical inquiry or study that contains two or more cases. The numerous cases provide a broader array of evidence that permits one to cover either the same issues more intensely or a wider range of issues. This results in a stronger project and raises the chances of producing reliable results compared to a single-case design (Yin, 2015, p. 131). This study used only two case studies due to time and cost constraints.

Given the above, the case study design was identified as the most valuable method to study the complex phenomena of the homestay industry as well as investigating the potential of TMF to be one of the important cultural and heritage products in this tourism programme. The case-study approach was used to gain a holistic and in-depth insight into the practice of the homestay providers concerning their traditional food practices in preparing the food, along with the storyline on how the providers acquired the knowledge of these cultural foods. The feedback and opinions from the tourists that had been staying in the two selected homestays also helped identify the potential of TMF to be an important part of the homestay offer in the future. The homestay programme has always been tied up with the government interest in economic development of rural areas.

4.7 The Data Collection Process for the Qualitative Research

The method of data collection for the qualitative study was telephone calls, email, and utilising acquaintances to make contact with national and regional government officials, homestay providers, and tourists to participate in this study. The research into the background and current status of the homestays was undertaken first in order to obtain detailed information about the case studies.

Then, a number of telephone calls were made to obtain verbal permission from the leader of the homestay to arrange meetings to discuss interviews in their homestay. Following this, permission and consent letters were sent to the leader by email, detailing the nature of the study, the purpose of the interviews and observations, and the credibility of researcher institution (i.e. Newcastle University). Soon after the leader replied to the emails, telephone appointments were arranged. Arrangements also were organised for the researcher to stay at both homestays for the duration of the data collection process.

Permission to conduct observations and the in-depth interviews was obtained from the leaders of the two homestays. However, the process was rather complicated and tedious because the permission needed to be obtained first from the homestay providers each time an observation and interview process was to take place. An initial meeting with the providers was arranged by the leader. Then, the researcher subsequently continued the process through a formal and appropriate greeting and informal introductory chat with the providers. Firstly, the provider needed to understand the aims of the study. Therefore, a brief presentation was given and then a consent letter was given to the providers once they had decided to participate in the study. As soon as permission had been formally granted, the researcher made an appointment with the providers at a convenient time to conduct the interview and also make the observations in the kitchen and house compound. A brief explanation about the observation in the homestay provider's kitchen was also given to the leader of the homestays before the actual observations were conducted.

4.7.1 Embedded Unit of Analysis

The strengths of this study lie in combining existing research and the primary data collected during the fieldwork. The knowledge and practices of the homestay providers needed to be identified to ensure that they were in line with the study's aims and objectives. The unit of analysis in this study are the homestay providers and tourists that came from the two community-based homestay programme. The connections between the primary stakeholders, homestay providers, and tourists is central to this study as each of them hold

different views and perspectives towards the development of local food as a homestay cultural product. The background and experiences of each homestay provider in this programme were used to establish their individualities as a hosts in providing TMF to tourists. The practices of these providers concerning their traditional food knowledge and how this was shared with the tourists was identified and analysed. The role of the providers in maintaining their cooking techniques, skills and knowledge of local produce and dishes was investigated to understand how they promote traditional food to the tourists while sustaining the authenticity of the food in an original setting. Additionally, the cultural values that bind the community together were examined in order to gain insights into the role that food and their cultural representation of it through the homestay programme play in bringing the community closer together. In conclusion, the constituent elements of cultural traditions demonstrated by the providers were examined from the perspective of the tourists in order to gain insights into their experiences of staying with the homestay provider and consuming TMF in a homestay setting.

4.7.2 Sampling and Instrument

Purposive sampling

It was determined that purposive sampling was most appropriate to use in this study to approach the primary participants: the stakeholders, providers, and tourists. Following Hays (2012), these participants were selected because they met the essential and pre-determined criteria. The stakeholders for the study were selected according to how they are directly and indirectly involved in the formation of Malaysian homestay programme: MOTAC Putrajaya, MOTAC Perak, Tourism Perak, the Department of National Heritage, the President of Perak Homestay Association, local agencies, and NGOs such as Perak Homestay Association (PHA) and Railway Tourism Association of Malaysia (RTAM). The criteria for choosing them was their roles and responsibilities in planning and developing the programme as well as supporting the homestays in different ways. This sampling technique met the purpose of this study since in a purposive non-random sample the number of people polled was less significant than the criteria used to select them. As Wilmot (n.d) noted, the characteristics of individuals were

used as the basis of selection, most often chosen to reflect the diversity and breadth of the sample population. Therefore, in this context of the study, the participants were chosen based on their interest and concerns relating to the two homestay programmes that had been selected as case studies in this research.

The selection of providers was done primarily by choosing suitable homestay providers on the basis of their having different backgrounds and experiences in hosting tourists in their homestay programmes. The criteria for selecting the sample were that the homestay providers must:

1. Be currently participating in the homestay programme as registered homestay providers.
2. Be resident in the location permanently.
3. Have knowledge and skills about preparing local food and specialty dishes.
4. Have experience of hosting and providing TMF to tourists and visitors through the homestay programme.

The criteria for selection of the tourists were that they must have had experience of staying with host families, have consumed local food, and have participated in the cultural and heritage activities in either or both of the selected homestay programmes. Underpinning these criteria was a willingness to share their experiences and an assumed honesty in offering constructive feedback and opinions about this rural tourism product.

The decision to choose Perak as the geographical area for this study was made based on the historical nature of the area including traditional Malay villages, vernacular houses, an old fort, and royal tombs, as well as other attractions such as arts, crafts, cultural and agricultural heritage being available as tourism products (Rashid, 2015). The selection of Kampong Beng Homestay as one of the case studies was made based on the criteria as mentioned above (see page 86) as well as other factors such as KBH was located adjacent to the Lenggong Valley that was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS) on June 30, 2012. Its close proximity to the WHS gives an added value for KBH's marketing plan and promotional activities set up by the national and regional government of Malaysia. After the first location of the study was identified and

agreed by the supervisory committee, then the selection for the second homestay was made. Consequently, GH was chosen based on Table 4.2 below that shows the total number of the registered homestays, villages, providers, and rooms in every homestay programme in Perak. The nearest figure for the total providers and rooms that could match the full number of KBH was GH. Therefore, after the meeting with the supervisory committee, it was decided to choose GH as the second case study. Besides, the distance between KBH and GH is around 51 kilometres or 32 miles. Therefore, based on this attributes together with researcher accessibility to this location, these two case studies were chosen.

Table 4. 2 The statistics for the homestay providers and number of room in the state of Perak (Source: Homestay Unit Division, 2017).

NO.	HOMESTAY	VILLAGE	NO. OF PROVIDERS	NO. OF ROOMS
1	Homestay Bukit Gantang	1. Kg. Bukit Gantang 2. Kg. Kubu 3. Kg. Pauh 4. Kg. Cheh	27	45
2	Homestay Sg. Klah	1. Felda Sg. Klah	23	39
3	Homestay Bagan Danuk	1. Kg. Tanah Lalang 2. Kg. Sg. Pergam 3. Kg. Teluk Pemikam 4. Kg. Sg. Nipah Baru 5. Kg. Sg. Berul 6. Kg. Sg. Balai Baru 7. Kg. Sg. Payung 8. Kg. Sg. Ular 9. Kg. Rungkup Kecil 10. Kg. Simpang Empat Rungkup 11. Kg. Sg. Nipah Darat 12. Sg. Balai Darat 13. Kg. Sg. Haji Mohamad	58	85
4	Homestay Selama	1. Kg. Bagan Baharu 2. Kg. Pdg. Lalang 3. Kg. Garok 4. Kg. Sg. Siputeh 5. Kg. Telok Mas	31	41
5	Homestay Gopeng	1. Kg. Jelintuh 2. Kg. Sg. Itak 3. Kg. Pindu Padang	49	51
6	Homestay Kg. Beng	1. Kg. Beng 2. Kg. Durau 3. Kg. Batu Ring 4. Kg. Dusun	42	54
7	Homestay Maju Manik, Teluk Intan	1. Kg. Sg. Manik 2. Kg. Tanjung Keramat	15	28
8	Homestay Kg. Pendiati, Bota Kanan	1. Kg. Pendiati	14	20
9	Homestay Lubuk Merbau, Kuala Kangsar	1. Kg. Labu Kubong 2. Kg. Kuoh Huhu 3. Kg. Lane	19	19
10	Homestay Chenderoh, Kuala Kangsar	1. Kg. Chua Hilir 2. Kg. Kati 3. Kg. Kuala Terap	14	14
11	Felcra Berhad Seberang Perak, Perak	1. Felcra Bandar Baru Seberang Perak 2. Felcra Changkat Lada	13	13
	TOTAL	41	305	409

Snowball sampling

Snowballing sampling was used to locate additional participants from the group of key stakeholders, registered homestay providers and local tourists staying at either or both of the two selected homestays. Snowball sampling according to Snijders (1992, pg. 59) is an informal way to reach a population, and sometimes as a more or less formal sampling method with the purpose either to make inference with regard to the population of individuals or to make inference about the network structure in that population. The process began by contacting the first participants from the group of stakeholders, including the leaders of the two selected homestay programmes. An interview with these individuals led to contacts being made with other key players in the industry. Then, a group of varied stakeholders was identified on account of their potential contribution to answering the research questions and aims of this thesis.

The selection of the homestay providers was made in discussions with the leaders of the programmes. The leaders identified suitable providers within the homestay programmes who might participate in the study. They suggested local providers who are expert in preparing local food and specialties. The snowballing progressed from there by asking the providers to recommend their acquaintances who might be willing to share their knowledge and experience for the benefit of this research. These techniques were very important to ensure that researcher was able to identify participants who were knowledgeable about local culinary traditions and proficient at preparing traditional food and were also keen to share their experiences and knowledge. Finally, the snowballing method was then used to identify tourists that were staying at the homestay at the time researcher did her fieldwork and who were willing to participate in this programme.

4.7.3 Participant Observations

Participant observation, according to Bogdan (1973), refers to a research approach characterised by a prolonged period of contact with subjects in the place where they usually spend much of their time. Typically, during this type of study, systematically collected field notes are taken by the researcher, and these notes are

recorded after each observation when the observer is no longer in the presence of the subjects (Bogdan, 1973, p. 303). Additionally, this type of study also involves recording several data sources, including interviews with participants and observations of the community (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982; Davis, 1986). Theoretically, Becker and Geer (1957) suggested that taking into account the results gathered from the perspective of the participant, observation can improve the accuracy of the interviewing method used by the researcher. Sometimes, the researcher might ordinarily miss or misunderstand the kind of things that he or she is being told in the interview. Therefore, complementing an in-depth interview with additional participant observation can provide an additional source of data to cross-check against the data gathered from the interview. This approach was thus deemed appropriate for this study, seeking as it does to explore local food heritage and food practices of local communities at two homestays.

The observations were carried out in the homestay providers' home kitchens at Kampong Beng Homestay (KBH) and Gopeng Homestay (GH) (see Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 below). Soon after consent was given, the observations began with informal conversations with the providers in their homes. The casual conversations were conducted to determine more about the routine of the providers in preparing traditional food and their cooking practices. Each direct observation was carried out in the provider's home for approximately half a day or until a particular cooking process was completed. An open-ended interview was conducted during this stage with the same providers on the cultural significance of their cooking and the symbolic character of the tools and equipment they use in food preparation and cooking. Following this, the second phase of data collection-discussion about ingredients – took place. During these interviews, observations continued despite the fact that the providers were busy preparing the food. During observations, the providers shared specific tips about how they prepared the dishes along with cultural insights into the wider preparation process. Then, after all related information had been collected regarding the practices and traditional food knowledge of the providers in the kitchen, the information was written-up. The significant contribution of these preliminary observations is that a number of valuable insights into customs and traditions regarding the providers' preparations and cooking of local foods were

observed, written-up, and later analysed. Participant observation was thus deemed an appropriate technique to understand the meanings and interpretations of the providers' actions in preparing traditional food in a normal setting. The observations were also valuable as they could be incorporated into the data gained from the in-depth interviews and thus serve to more fully answer the research questions and fulfil the objectives of the study.

However, while collecting data through these techniques, it was decided that observation alone would not be sufficient. Hence, after each observation, the researcher asked further questions to get a fuller understanding of what had been observed. As Spradley (2016) explains in *The Ethnographic Interview*, ethnography is the work of describing a culture. The essential core of this techniques is to understand another way of life from the native point of view. Rather than studying people, ethnography means learning from people. The collaborative nature of doing observations and interviews with the homestay providers offers a deeper understanding with respect to this study. Instead of collecting 'data' about people, the researcher seeks to learn from peoples, to be taught by them. Some of the meanings are directly expressed in language; many are taken for granted and communicated only indirectly through word and action (Spradley, 2016). Therefore, by linking these two techniques, the researcher blends into the communities of the homestay providers.

Table 4. 3 List of Observations at Kampong Beng Homestay

Participant	Gender	Age	Occupation	Origin
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 1	Female	62	Housewife	Kampong Beng
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 2	Female	57	Businesswomen	Taiping
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 3	Female	54	Businesswomen	Kamunting
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 4	Female	64	Businesswomen	Kampong Batu Ring
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 8	Female	57	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring

Table 4. 4 List of Observations at Gopeng Homestay

Participant	Gender	Age	Occupation	Origin
Gopeng Homestay Provider 1	Female	73	Housewife	Sitiawan
Gopeng Homestay Provider 8	Female	51	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 10	Female	84	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 6	Male	62	Businessman	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 9	Female	63	Housewife	Taiping

4.7.4 Field Notes

During the observations, field notes were taken and recorded. The field notes covered mainly the interactions between the homestay providers and their families in the home kitchen as well as other related activities taking place in the homestays. Subsequently, aspects of the food preparation and cooking process were analysed. Additionally, the homestay provider's facial expressions and body language were also recorded in the field notes to investigate the relationships between cooking, knowledge, skills, and information dissemination between the homestay providers and their families in their home kitchens. Field notes have been used to record private thoughts, ideas and queries regarding the research observations and interviews since the early 1900s (Phillipi and Lauderdale, 2018). However, such notes became a central component when scholars in the nursing field began using their field notes as an additional layer of data, to be interpreted and analysed in ethnographic methodology. Since then, most qualitative research methods encourage the researcher to take field notes to enhance the data, providing a richer context for analysis (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the field notes functioned as a 'research diary' before and after each of the observations and interviews, a written record of a significant amount of important information concerning practitioners' understanding and interpretation of cultural practices. Furthermore, these notes also allow the researcher to explore in-depth the study context and can be used in the subsequent analysis, including the secondary review and meta-synthesis (Phillipi and Lauderdale (2018). Overall, all the field notes were taken by hand and served as a journal or diary throughout the entire fieldwork process.

The practicality of using multiple methods in this study enabled the researcher to check one source against another for consistency and validity (Dufon, 2002). The field notes taken from the participant observations helped the researcher to comprehend the overall process of food preparation and cooking and its significance to the local community and their wider culture. For example, the researcher was able to observe the *Adet Bojojak* ceremony at Gopeng Homestay. The transcriptions from the interviews with the Rawa local community served as evidence to support the community's beliefs and their understanding of the

traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. Overall, all the data in this study were triangulated and coded according to the research questions before being classified into various categories so that certain themes could be identified (Dufon, 2002).

4.7.5 Interviews

The participant observations were complemented by in-depth interviews conducted with fifteen key stakeholders, thirty respective homestay providers including the leader from each homestay programme, together with twenty-eight homestay tourists from the two community-based homestay programme (see Table 4.5, Table 4.6, Table 4.7, Table 4.8 and Table 4.9 below). Altogether, seventy-three participants participated voluntarily in this study. As Bogdan (1973) explained, participant observations should be supplemented by interviews, which should take the form of a loose conversation between people who share similar interests (as opposed to a formal meeting). The researcher will obtain more information about the topic that he or she is exploring if a close relationship can be established between interviewer and interviewees. Therefore, by implementing this approach, a researcher will be able to develop more relevant questions and probe much more deeply and accurately into the subject matter.

Despite the criticism that this method can trigger biases on the interviewer's part, this approach is perceived as appropriate since it offers the flexibility of modifying the inquiry based on the participants' background and experience. The participants were informed of the rules and procedures to be observed during the interview, such as audio-taping of the sessions and copious note-taking by the interviewer. The participants were assured that all responses would be held in full confidentiality. On average, each interview took about one and a half-hour to two hours, depending on how the questions were asked and then followed up. As Yin (2011) explained, in a single interview the conversational mode can last up to two hours due to encouraging the participants to express themselves in words based on their experiences. All the discussions were recorded with the permission of the interviewees and then manually transcribed verbatim to ensure that no data was lost since not everything could be

written down during the interviews. As Hart (1989) demonstrated, it is impossible for the researcher to note everything down due to the speed of the conversation and the fact that the interviewer should be active and engaged with the interviewees. Recording and transcribing provided for enhanced accuracy and reliability of data. Halcomb and Davidson (2006) noted that this technique allows for authentic representations of the participants' verbal contributions. Verbatim transcription can facilitate the development of audit trails of data analysis and brings the researcher closer to the data. All the data were reviewed for accuracy and the data collected were coded and analysed manually.

The principal technique for data collection in this study is in-depth interviews. The suitability of this approach vis-à-vis structured interviews is due to the need to elicit detailed individual descriptions of the lived experiences of the participant stakeholders. Beyond that, it is also beneficial for identifying the homestay providers' traditional food practices and the application of their knowledge and skills in promoting local food in the homestay programme. This type of interview is suitable for this study as most of the participants were, in fact, reluctant to share some of the personal issues and challenges that they were facing with the key stakeholders or other important people involved in the programmes. Thus, the use of in-depth interviews with probing questions functioned partly as an ice-breaking measure to ensure that the participants were more comfortable with all the questions asked during the interview sessions.

Seidman (2006) asserted that the purpose of doing in-depth interviews is to value the experience of the interviewees, not to predict or to control that experience. The participants were interviewed in their offices and homes rather than outside as the interviewees opened up quickly and spoke freely in familiar surroundings. As Yin (2011) noted, the venue of the interview setting depends upon the location that is readily convenient for the participants. In this study, seventy-three participants from a variety of the groups of participants were interviewed using purposive sampling techniques. The participants that participated in this study were deemed to be individuals who could contribute useful knowledge and share relevant experiences in the Malaysian homestay programme. The number of participants was increased until new interviews

seemed to yield little additional information (Schutt, 2006). Taylor *et al.*, (1998) stated that one would have an idea that this point has been reached when interviews with additional people produce no genuinely novel insights. Particularly, with the combination of techniques from observation and ethnographic interviews with the homestay providers, the researcher had a better understanding about the provider's customs, traditions and way of life.

Following the interviews with stakeholders and homestay providers, open-ended interviews with the tourists was done, inquiring into such factors as the purpose of their visit and key motivations for staying in the homestays (see Appendices B on page 474 for full text interview guides). Then, questions about their awareness, perceptions, and experience in consuming local food were asked in order to evaluate how much TMF they had come across during their stays. These queries were designed to assess the current circumstances regarding the supply and demand for culinary heritage in the homestay programme. The interviews was conducted in both homestays using simple random sampling. This sampling was chosen due to the short study duration and difficulty in tracing past visitors.

Several other questions were included in the interviews besides the main focus (i.e. the tourists' primary purpose for visiting the homestay). Queries such as an evaluation of the characteristics of the homestays, opinions about engagement with the host family, and experiences of other cultural and heritage products and activities in that homestay other than consumption of local food were covered. The questions was available in Malay and English so that it could be administered to either international or domestic tourists. However, as the duration of fieldwork occurred outside the international tourist season, only domestic tourists who had experience of staying in either or both homestay programmes selected were included in the data collection. The fieldwork was carried out from April to the end of June 2016 due to personal considerations such as local weather and financial challenges.

Table 4. 5 List of Participants from Stakeholders

Participant	Gender	Age	Occupation	Organisations
Participant Stakeholder 1	Female	50	Principal Director	Government 1
Participant Stakeholder 2	Female	30	Assistant Director	Government 1
Participant Stakeholder 3	Male	35	Honorary Secretary General (HSG)	NGO 1
Participant Stakeholder 4	Female	35	Administrative officer	Government 2
Participant Stakeholder 5	Female	28	Assistant administrative officer	Government 2
Participant Stakeholder 6	Male	35	Administrative Officer	Government 3
Participant Stakeholder 7	Male	56	Chief of Director	Government 4
Participant Stakeholder 8	Female	52	Former President	NGO 2
Participant Stakeholder 9	Female	46	Academician	Lecturer
Participant Stakeholder 10	Male	45	Coordinator	Homestay 1
Participant Stakeholder 11	Male	67	Coordinator and Head of Village	Homestay 2
Participant Stakeholder 12	Female	51	Committee members	Homestay 1
Participant Stakeholder 13	Male	70	Former Head of Village	Homestay 1
Participant Stakeholder 14	Female	29	Tour Operator	Travel Agency
Participant Stakeholder 15	Male	33	Owner	Private Homestay

Table 4. 6 List of Participants - Homestay Providers KBH

Participant	Gender	Age	Occupation	Origin
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 1	Female	62	Housewife	Kampong Beng
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 2	Female	57	Businesswomen	Taiping

Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 3	Female	54	Businesswomen	Kamunting
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 4	Female	64	Businesswomen	Kampong Batu Ring
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 5	Female	65	Pensioner	Kampong Batu Ring
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 6	Female	63	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 7	Female	60	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 8	Female	57	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 9	Female	54	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 10	Female	53	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 11	Female	59	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 12	Female	57	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 13	Female	60	Housewife	Kampong Beng
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 14	Female	52	Housewife	Kampong Beng
Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 15	Female	51	Housewife	Kampong Beng

Table 4. 7 List of Participants – Homestay Providers GH

Participant	Gender	Age	Occupation	Origin
Gopeng Homestay Provider 1	Female	73	Housewife	Sitiawan
Gopeng Homestay Provider 2	Female	63	Religious teacher	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 3	Female	58	Businesswomen	Lumut
Gopeng Homestay Provider 4	Female	54	Businesswomen	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 5	Female	60	Pensioner	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 6	Male	62	Businessman	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 7	Female	69	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay	Female	51	Housewife	Gopeng

Provider 8				
Gopeng Homestay Provider 9	Female	63	Housewife	Taipng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 10	Female	84	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 11	Female	60	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 12	Female	56	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 13	Female	53	Housewife	Sitiawan
Gopeng Homestay Provider 14	Female	61	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 15	Female	63	Housewife	Gopeng

Table 4. 8 List of Participants – Homestay Tourists KBH

Participant	Gender	Age	Occupation	Origin	Race
Kampong Beng Tourist 1	Female	28	Administrative Officer	Kuala Lumpur	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 2	Female	26	Administrative Officer	Pulau Pinang	Chinese
Kampong Beng Tourist 3	Female	36	Lecturer	Kelantan	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 4	Female	42	Lecturer	Kelantan	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 5	Female	44	Research Assistant	Johor	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 6	Female		Librarian	Putrajaya	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 7	Female	21	Student	Negeri Sembilan	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 8	Female	21	Lecturer	Kuala Lumpur	Indian
Kampong Beng Tourist 9	Female	21	Lecturer	Johor	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 10	Female	21	Student	Pahang	Chinese
Kampong Beng Tourist 11	Female	22	Student	Pahang	Chinese
Kampong Beng Tourist 12	Female	24	Student	Selangor	Chinese
Kampong Beng Tourist 13	Female	30	Research Assistant	Terengganu	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 14	Female	21	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Indian
Kampong Beng Tourist 15	Female	26	Administrative Officer	Selangor	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 16	Male	22	Student	Pulau Pinang	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 17	Male	22	Student	Malacca	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 18	Male	23	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 19	Male	22	Student	Kedah	Malay
Kampong Beng Tourist 20	Male	22	Student	Kedah	Malay

Table 4. 9 List of Participants – Homestay Tourists GH

Participant	Gender	Age	Occupation	Origin	Race
Gopeng Tourist 1	Female	37	Lecturer	Selangor	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 2	Male	20	Student	Selangor	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 3	Female	26	Housewife	Perak	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 4	Female	32	Senior Administrative Executive	Perak	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 5	Female	32	Senior Executive Coordinator	Negeri Sembilan	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 6	Female	37	Manager	Pulau Pinang	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 7	Female	37	Manager	Selangor	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 8	Female	45	Businesswoman	Perak	Chinese
Gopeng Tourist 9	Male	23	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 10	Male	20	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 11	Male	22	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 12	Male	22	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 13	Male	21	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Malay

4.8 Approaches to Data Analysis

The two research techniques (observations and interviews) were triangulated so as to enhance the validity and reliability of the study's findings and reduce errors linked to each method on its own, for example loaded interview questions, biased or untrue responses. It is advisable for the studies to use multiple ways of collecting data to provide cross-data validity checks (Patton, 1999) such as member-checking, triangulation, peer reviews, thick description and external audits (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Member checking was utilised in this study with the former President of Homestay Perak Association regarding the homestays' customs and practices, particularly at GH to check the validity of the study. By using this technique, the validity procedure shifts from the researcher to participants. The researcher had taken the data and interpretations back to the participant (the former President) in this study so that they can confirm the credibility of the information and narrative account (Creswell and Miller, 2000). Accordingly, this helped me to garner more insights, understandings and interpretations of each of the homestay programmes. Member checking was utilised to increase the credibility and reliability of the study, allowing participants

to either confirm or edit their responses accordingly (Creswell, 2007; and Mohamad and Chan, 2011).

As this study involved three different types of participants from different categories, it was important to explore the inter-relations amongst them. Therefore, it was crucial for the researcher to interview each of the participants to gather their insights, such as the challenges in promoting TMF in the homestays and the concerns in delivering authentic culinary heritage to the tourists. The tourist views regarding their experiences in consuming local food and the cultural heritage in the homestays were also evaluated.

4.8.1 Transcription

All the recorded interviews were manually transcribed verbatim. By doing this, the researcher was able to become more familiar with the subject matter and gain deeper insights into the interpretations proffered by the interviewees. It also helped the researcher to smoothen the process of data interpretation. All the interviews were conducted in *Bahasa Melayu*, the official language of Malaysia, and transcribed directly in the original transcription. Subsequently, all the conversations were translated into English by the researcher and thence referred to as ‘translated transcription’. All the translated transcriptions are presented in quoted form in the results and analysis chapters (i.e. chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10). All the participants were given pseudonyms to ensure that their identities remained anonymous in the discussion of the results. For example, the stakeholders are referred to as Stake 1, Stake 2, and so on, while the homestay providers for each of the case studies are referred to as GHP1 and KBHP1, prefixes for Homestays Gopeng and Homestays Kampong Beng. Then, the tourists for each of the case studies were referred to as GHT1 and KBHT1, pertaining to tourists at Gopeng Homestay and tourists at Kampong Beng Homestay. A similar process applied to the data from the direct observations with the homestay providers in each of the case studies. The photographs taken of both of the homestays were also presented in the results and analysis chapters (i.e. chapters 8, 9 and 10). As Coffey and Atkinson (1996, p. 7) described, displaying the data is considered the second process in illustrating how compressed data are presented in graphic or visual

form to show what those data stand for. Hence, the elaboration of results and analysis in this study was integrated with photographs to enable the latter to be used as an evidence for the study.

4.8.2 Approaches to Analysing Spoken Discourse

The final step of data analysis in this study involved an open coding process whereby key themes and patterns were identified and coded. The data from the interviews and observations, were organised before the coding process. Then the categories were created according to the three different groups of participants in the study: the key stakeholders, homestay providers, and tourists. The process helped the researcher to establish links between the coding and the categories before moving on to the final stage of analysis, namely the construction of themes. These themes were presented in three different chapters, which are discussed in detail in Chapter 7, 8, 9 and 10. A summary of the data analysis process is shown in Figure 4.6.

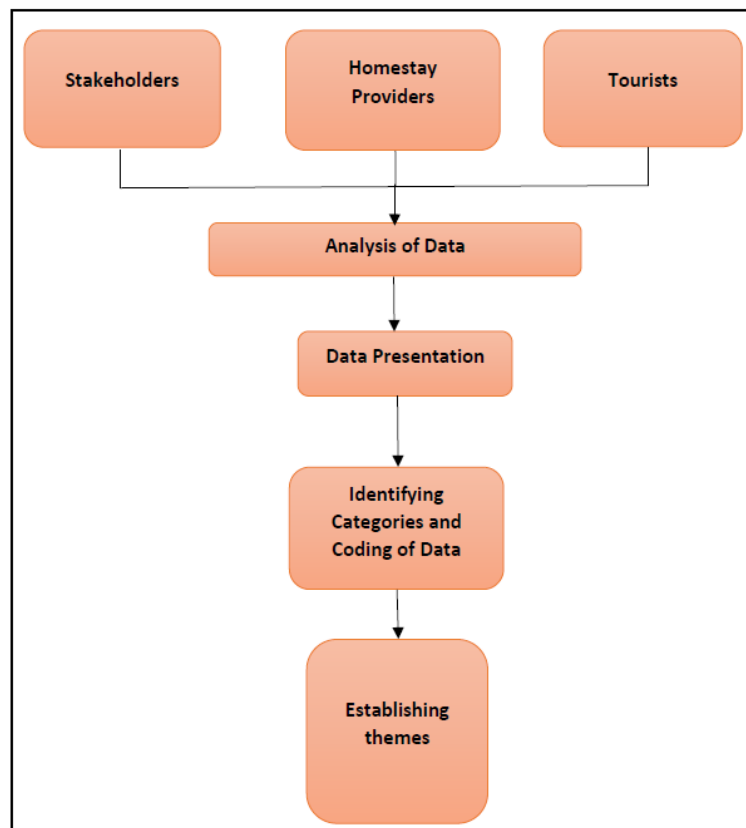


Figure 4. 6 The summary of data analysis

4.9 Challenges Involved in the Study

This study faced several challenges. Data were collected from a small number of homestay providers, which in the end will affect the generalisability of the findings. Furthermore, only two homestay programmes in Perak participated in this study, which are taken to be representative of the entire Malaysian homestay industry and experience.

Time constraints in doing the field work in each of the homestays was a further challenge. The method of data collection involved two different qualitative techniques - participant observation, and interviews (in-depth interview, and open-ended interviews) – which required the careful planning of the timeframe for the entire data collection process. In addition, as the usual timeframe to complete the data gathering takes longer than expected, which is more than three months, a backup plan was arranged with both leaders of the programmes to make arrangements for data collection after the actual fieldwork had taken place in June 2016. All the telephone calls were made from UK to arrange for more interviews with the participants (notably the tourists) whom the researcher was unable to meet when in Malaysia. For that reason, the researcher had to call a number of participants from the UK in order to complete the data collection. A further challenge was the extra financial cost incurred when researcher was forced by circumstances to spend longer in each of the homestays than planned so as to better familiarise with the local people, their lifestyles, and their activities. Related to this, employing two research techniques necessitated multiple visits to the selected homestays in order to facilitate appropriate relationships with the local communities, which in turn, on the positive side, provided for deeper involvement and thus richer data.

A final challenge was the work involved in arranging the interviews with Malaysian government officials. This process became entangled in excessive governmental officialdom and bureaucratic formalities. The difficulties involved in setting up appointments was in nearly all cases a challenge. Sometimes, the official was not available when researcher telephoned to try to arrange interviews, leading to multiple calls and much time-wasting. Moreover, the researcher often

had to wait for the officials to respond to proposed interview dates, as they were usually busy with their governmental duties. This led to more delays. In addition, the researcher also had to follow the established procedures set by the government in order to obtain official information on homestay statistics from the related government offices. In conclusion, due to all of these challenges, the researcher was determined to formulate a different approach to ensure official participation in the interviews, such as asking for references from important stakeholders involved in the homestay industry.

Chapter 5. Intangible Cultural Heritage Expression through Homestay Programmes

5.1 Introduction

This thesis explores how culinary and heritage activities can popularize a specific cultural destination, through initiatives such as the homestay programmes developed by the Malaysian government as a form of ‘alternative tourism’. Homestays and their community are a perfect platform to showcase to tourists the rich cultural - including culinary - heritage of Malaysian people. Rural homestays allow tourists to experience the locals’ way of life, making them distinctive from conventional tourism interactions and settings (Dolezal, 2011; Muslim *et al.*, 2017). The interaction between tourists and the local community can be further enhanced through culinary traditions, local culture, agricultural production and the natural resources found in the area (Riley, 2005; Smith and Costello, 2009). As noted by Ignatov and Smith (2006), local cuisines can enhance tourists’ satisfaction with the socio-cultural heritage of a destination. Food and beverages, as tangible cultural products, can be a means for a truly authentic cultural experience for the tourists (Okumus *et al.*, 2007).

Food, as an aspect of culture, is recognised in the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Convention by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), which seeks to ensure that nations and local communities respect and endeavour to safeguard culinary heritage. The purpose of the convention is not only to raise awareness at the local, national, and international levels, but also to be a platform for international cooperation and assistance. This chapter discusses examples from the national and international levels of how culinary and gastronomic heritage are incorporated into homestay activities, through marketing and promotional plans. The outcomes offer valuable insights into how traditional Malay food (hereafter, TMF), as an integral aspect of culture and tradition, can be promoted and safeguarded by attracting tourists seeking meaningful cultural experiences through Malaysian homestay programmes. Thus, the primary objective of this chapter is to understand international, ASEAN’s homestay programmes, strategies to safeguard culinary

heritage, and how these strategies, which have been incorporated in the promotion of cultural heritage internationally and in ASEAN countries, can be applied to Malaysian homestay programmes.

5.2 Terminology and Concepts in Tourism

Novelli and Robinson (2005) divided tourism into two categories: mass tourism and niche tourism. Mass tourism is geared towards the conventional travel business, involving a large number of tourists in staged settings, and is by far the more popular category. Niche tourism, on the other hand, involves smaller number of tourists, and focuses on ‘special interests’, culture and activity-based programmes. It may also involve the notion of ‘authentic’ experiences, getting close to local culture and/or the natural environment. Niche tourism is itself categorised according to ‘micro-niches’ which, according to Novelli and Robinson (2005), are cultural (heritage, tribal, religious, educational, genealogy and research), environmental (nature and wildlife, ecotourism, adventure, alpine, geotourism, and coastal), rural (farm/barns, camping, wine, gastronomy, sport, festivals and events, arts and crafts), and urban (business, conferences, exhibitions, entertainment, galleries, and art). The operational definitions of the terms used in ASEAN homestay programmes are provided below. However, the following sections only discuss the terminologies relevant to this study, and those commonly used throughout this thesis, such as community-based tourism (CBT), ecotourism, community-based ecotourism (CBET), youth tourism, culinary tourism, and sustainable tourism.

a) Community-based tourism

Goodwin and Santilli (2009) agreed that Brohman (1996) has provided the most comprehensive definition of community-based tourism (CBT) – tourism which strives to strengthen the institutions designed to promote and safeguard the economic, social and cultural well-being of a community. CBT promotes a balanced and harmonious approach to development with other components of the local economy, the quality of development, both culturally and environmentally, and the divergent needs and interests of a community. CBT is based on the recommendations of the World Tourism Organisation’s (WTO) guidelines in the

context of sustainable tourism development, through which the destination community must benefit in the long run (Salazar, 2012). CBT aims to preserve the unique character and culture of an area, foster cross-cultural learning, respect cultural differences and human dignity, distribute benefits fairly among community members, and contribute a fixed percentage of income to community projects (Kontogeorgopoulos *et al.*, 2015).

b) Ecotourism

Wearing and Gartrell (1999) defined ecotourism as a “community-based activity where community members are fully involved in the management of its resource, focusing on tourism, as well as the management of their own lives”. Weaver and Lawton (2007, p. 1170) suggested that ecotourism satisfies ‘three core criteria’. The first is that the attraction should be predominantly nature-based. Secondly, the visitor interactions with the attractions should only be educational. Thirdly, the experience and product management should follow the principles and practices associated with ecological, socio-cultural and economic sustainability. Similarly, Reimer and Walter (2013) stated that all definitions of ecotourism aim to promote environmental conservation or ecological sustainability of some sort or another – hence the ‘eco’. The focus here is on preserving the natural attractions that draw in tourists.

c) Community-based Ecotourism

Khanal and Babar (2007) defined community-based ecotourism (CBET) as tourism that is managed by the community to preserve the local natural environment, with decisions made by the local people and profits directly going to the community. Reimer and Walter (2013) claimed that CBET can help resolve the contradiction between conservation imperatives, and the local and native rights to the territory.

d) Ethnic tourism

Ethnic tourism has many definitions, but one that is widely accepted is that proposed by Smith (2012): “Ethnic tourism is marketed to the public concerning the ‘quaint’ customs of indigenous and other exotic peoples, exemplified by the case studies on the Eskimo, the San Blas Indians of Panama and the Teroja in

Indonesia”. In the same vein, Yang *et al.*, (2008, cited in Yang, 2011) noted that ethnic tourism refers to tourism motivated by a tourist’s search for exotic cultural experiences, including visiting ethnic villages, minority homes, and ethnic theme parks. Tourists are likely to engage in ethnic events and festivals, watch traditional dances or ceremonies, or shop for ethnic handicrafts and souvenirs.

e) Cultural tourism

Wood (1984) defined cultural tourism as a scenario in which the role of culture is contextual, with a function to shape tourists’ experience of a place in general, without a particular focus on the uniqueness of a specific cultural identity. The focus is more on artefacts, buildings, vehicles, food stalls, and clothing, rather than on the actual cultural activities of the people.

f) Heritage tourism

To-date, a small number of studies have explored heritage tourism and the association between history and culture. Garrod and Fyall (2000, p. 683), for example, viewed heritage tourism as “tourism centered on what we have inherited, which can mean anything from historic buildings to artworks, to beautiful scenery”. They also contended the association between sustainable development and heritage. They cited Pearce’s definition of sustainable development as a process which ensures that “we pass onto the next generation a stock of natural and built capital assets no less than the stock we have now” (Pearce, 1992, cited in Garrod and Fyall, 2000). In this sense, both heritage and sustainability concern ‘inheritance.’

g) Youth tourism

The concept of Youth Tourism has been broadly explained in literature, with no precise definition accepted universally (Demeter and Brătucu, 2014). The idea was designated for young travellers who prefer budget accommodations, enjoy meeting other travellers independently or in an organised manner, have flexible travel schedules and stay away longer than a standard holiday (Haigh, 1995 as cited in Demeter and Brătucu, 2014). The WTO defined youth tourism as all travel by young people aged between 15 and 29 years (WTO, 2008); although in a later study they opted to use ‘less than 25 years’ as the cut-off point. Horak

and Weber (2000, p. 38) also posited that nowadays young people might be financially independent before 25, due to study grants and part-time jobs. Usually, by the age of 15 they begin to separate from their parents and travel more independently. The most appropriate definition would be that, ‘less than 25 years’ given by the WTO, which fits the characteristics of this concept. Demeter and Brătucu, (2014) described that people at this age are motivated, in part or in full, by a desire to experience other cultures, build life experiences and/or benefit from formal and informal learning opportunities outside one’s usual environment.

h) Culinary tourism

Folklorist Lucy Long gave the first definition of culinary tourism in 1998. It is still widely used and defined as “the intentional, exploratory participation in foodways including the consumption, preparation, and presentation of a food item, cuisine, meal system, or eating style considered to belong to a culinary system not one’s own” (Long, 1998, p. 21). Helstosky (2014) stated that culinary tourism is sometimes used as a synonym of gastronomic and food and wine tourism. It has gained popularity around the world, particularly in Europe, where it started in the late 1990s. The WTO (2017) added an economic factor in their definition of culinary tourism as an authentic experience of a sophisticated lifestyle in a pleasant environment, associated with the good life and the economic well-being of consuming exclusive, high-quality locally grown products.

i) Sustainable tourism

The WTO (2004) defined sustainable tourism as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, and the environment and host communities”. Its foundation include: making optimal use of environmental resources; maintaining essential ecological processes, and; helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity. Cultural factors can be added to the environmental focus: respect for the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conservation of their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contributing to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance. The objective is to ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable

employment, income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, while alleviating poverty.

5.2.1 Summary

Homestay programmes in Malaysia is a niche tourism initiative developed by the Malaysian government to improve the social and economic position of the rural population. The above sub-sets of tourism relevant to homestays in Malaysia are community-based tourism, ethnic tourism (for certain areas and states such as East Malaysia or Malaysian Borneo that are also known as Sabah, Sarawak and Labuan), cultural heritage tourism, heritage tourism, and culinary tourism. Much of this study is related to how community-based homestay programmes in Malaysia revitalise important aspects of their cultural heritage products into ‘culinary tourism’. Homestay programmes in Malaysia are focused within local cultural heritage. However, there is a significant potential in the culinary aspects of culture, especially on how the homestay providers use the local value and significance of their TMF to tempt tourists to be part of the culture and heritage of their homestay. Thus, by knowing the proper terms and terminology for TMF, stakeholders, including the homestay providers, can better understand and explain the nature of their programme and activities. Furthermore, it is important for the homestay providers to recognise the power of attraction of their TMF, and the importance of communication, to turn homestays into tourists’ preferred destination.

5.3 The ASEAN Homestay Programmes and their Efforts in Safeguarding and Sustaining their Culinary Heritage in Tourism Context

Clause III of the 2003 ICH Convention states that the process of safeguarding ICH derives from the involvement of state officials, education, awareness-raising, capacity-building and, lastly, the participation of communities, groups, and individuals. This section analyses a number of national level examples of activity which draw on these factors. The examples are drawn from the ten ASEAN member states (Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Malaysia)

as shown in Figure 5.1. The focus is on how these countries promote traditional local food in their homestay programmes to expand the domestic tourism market, through the efforts to plan and develop initiatives centred on local food to expand rural community-based ecotourism (CBET).

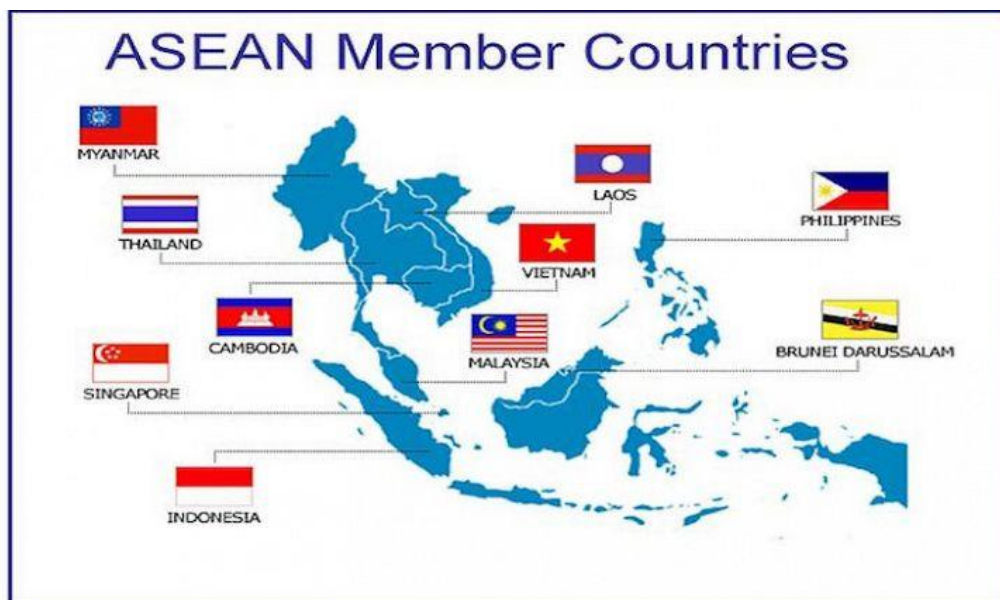


Figure 5. 1 Map of ASEAN Member Countries
(Source: <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/asean-countries.html>)

5.3.1 The Philippines

Homestay - Initiated by the Philippines Department of Tourism (DOT) in 1986, to provide alternative accommodation and home-cooked food to Filipinos and foreign tourists travelling on a limited budget by involving local homes in selected areas; following the bed-and-breakfast model. Besides promoting homestay at the local level, the government also aims to protect the local culture, tradition, and environment, while empowering the locals by creating income and employment opportunities (Karlsson (2017). She added, the authority of the homestay development in the Philippines lies in the hand of Local Government Unit (LGU).

Experience – Accredited homestay programmes should allow tourists to experience hospitality by host families, which is absent from standard hotels and other commercial lodging facilities. The willingness of the homeowners to share their homes with strangers during festivals makes the product appealing to a

specific tourism market (Guevarra and Rodriguez, 2015). The Municipality of Sariaya in Quezon, for example, promotes their homestays as places to develop a sensory perception of nature and culture and make sense of these elements.

Tourists were given ideas and experiences to ‘dwell on’ and become part of the visited community through shared memories. Nevertheless, Karlsson (2017) stated that many of the homestays providers in Bohol especially are not ready to host tourists due to lack of skills and knowledge such as in cooking, hospitality, business management, and cultural costumes.

Food – In Sariaya, the homestay was famous for its local noodle dish, which was peculiar and unique in its culinary content, and the way it was eaten; by slurping mounds of noodles from a small square of banana leave as its container. Tourists were served this food during their stay, making it the identity of the homestays. The locals were proud to showcase their local breakfast and other traditional products. Marketing such foods is important to Sariaya’s economic, cultural, and environmental sustainability (Sims, 2009, cited in Guevarra and Rodriguez, 2015). Similarly, Guevara and Rodriguez (2015) posited that by promoting Sariaya’s food products, particularly authentic local food, the community could establish food as a critical aspect of tourism to the region. However, in Karlsson’s (2017) study, the hosts revealed that preparing food for the tourists was stressful, as they were not comfortable to serve the same food that they eat to the tourists and eating together on the same table with them, which also true of their children. The tourists also felt uncomfortable as the hosts kept asking them what they want to eat, while they expected to eat the same food as the host.

Authenticity – From Karlsson’s (2017) study, the effectiveness of homestays in the Philippines providing authentic food experience to tourists can be questioned. The government believed that by developing the concept of sensory perception of nature and culture to tourists in their homestays, the tourists would have the opportunity to experience the local life in Boholanos, for example. However, with the hosts’ lack of implementation, the experience was not really shared with the tourists. To be effective hosts must develop stronger communication skills and be more enthusiastic in providing knowledge surrounding food to tourists. They must

be able to provide the facilities and services, while engaging more interactively with the guests to let them experience their daily life (Karlsson, 2017).

Power – The development of homestay programmes was the mutual efforts of the DOT, Tourism Office, and the LGU in each province, with the local community as the main providers. In reality, the DOT only provided training for homestays hosts, while tourism development was the responsibility of the Tourism Office and the LGU (Karlsson, 2017), where uneven power distribution has affected the development of these homestay programmes. The poor relationship between the provincial governor and the mayor for the LGU, due to political issues, has weakened their cooperation. Therefore, Karlsson (2107) suggested the need for an effective implementation and regulation of a national law on homestay programmes. It was also noted that hosts must form a strategic partnership with the local government, such as meeting the DOT accreditation requirements, so that the government can help them promote their homestay.

5.3.2 Singapore

Homestay - Singapore offered a unique style and concept of homestay programme, known as 'urban homestay'. This is questionable, given that its' defining characteristic is that tourists are accommodated in private homes surrounded by the hustle and bustle of a big city, instead of the original – rural, traditional village – concept of a homestay (Henderson, 2004). Though Henderson *et al.* (2004) believe that a highly urbanized and industrialized environment like Singapore might be unsuitable for a homestay experience, the current trends indicate otherwise, based on the country's distinctive form of government housing. Another emerging trend of the homestay programme in Singapore is the provision of facilities and guardian services to international students, as a facilitation process designed to enable young people to adapt to Singapore's education system and society (Herald Homestay, 2015), which is in line with Singapore's intention to be a 'regional hub of higher education' (Chan and Ng, 2008) and, building on the success of its education system, an innovation hub (Sidhu *et al.*, 2011). However, too little attention was given to food tourism development in Singapore. Henderson (2004) pointed out that Singapore is not a typical food tourism

destination as urbanisation has used most of the rural landscape, leaving little space for farming. Food trails are constrained, and scenic rustic landscapes associated with culinary tourism are also absent. Henderson (2012) highlighted that there is ambiguity on the existence of Singapore national cuisine. Situated at the southern tip of Malaysia, the cuisines could be the same as those of the Malays, which might be similar to Indonesian as well.

5.3.3 *Indonesia*

Homestay – In Bali, a homestay usually means staying in an owners' compound of several small dwellings called 'villas', which are typically built with private courtyards (Putra, 2012). A family rent out their bedrooms, bathroom and terrace area in these villas to guests, while they occupy the remainder of the property. The guests do not stay or eat in the same dwellings as the owners. The family provide meals to the guests, clean their rooms and maintain the gardens (Bell, 2015). Balinese homestays are of a small scale, emphasising the sense of domesticity (Bell, 2015), following the definition of homestay in Indonesia, *losmen*, which means budget accommodation constructed within villages or small towns, operated by the locals (Che Dat *et al.*, 2013). Hampton (2003) stated that tourists' accommodation in Yogyakarta mainly comprised of *losmen* developed from existing houses in the kampong.

Experience – The CBET programme in Bali offers a concept of a relationship with rural life through the Tri Hita Karana philosophy, with the main focus to include education in visitors' experience. During visits to village environs, gardens, plantations, and forest trails, tourists receive detailed explanations on agricultural production, resource management, and environmental issues. Nusa Ceningan Homestay, for example, invite tourists to join farmers in their boats on the coral reef to learn about seaweed farming practices. Tourists also get to visit coffee plantations and learn how organic coffee is produced. Similarly, in Dukuh Sibetan, the cultivation of snake-fruit is demonstrated. The village of Tenganan, famous for its cloth production and its palm leaf writing technique, where tourists can also learn about its local history and unique cultural practices. Byczek (2011) reported that the majority of visitors rated the services regarding local food and

drink experience in the CBET programme in Bali as ‘very good’. However, the level of experience and satisfaction gained by tourists, according to Mohamed *et al.*, (2011) depends on elements such as expectation, perception and values; resulting in some of the destinations having ‘staged’ authenticity to meet tourists’ expectation. Nevertheless, the package appears to provide a great experience through attractions that are well planned and delivered, so that tourists leave the place highly satisfied, and the local community gains the economic benefit in the long run.

Food – In Bali, the cooking lessons conducted in *warung* in Malay and Indonesian were well renowned among tourists. While accommodating a handful of guests in a few villas, the family still went about their ‘ordinary lives’, like hanging their washing. They prepared the food for themselves and the tourists in their kitchen (*warung*), which is always built on an outside villa space (doubly used for their small family-owned businesses like local cafés). The cooking lessons took place in this *warung*, where the owners taught the tourists staying in the villa how to prepare local food. The lessons offered in the *warung* are popular tourist products, attracting tourists to participate in communal activities. However, much needs to be done to reach its highest potential. In reality, such cooking lessons still receive limited demand from cultural tourists to Bali’s rural hinterlands (Ignatov and Smith, 2006), which may be attributed to the lack of awareness among tourists of such educational opportunities in the destination due to poor marketing, or a perception that it does not offer a valuable experience. As a result, hands-on learning is as yet to be regarded as a main priority by cultural tourists.

Authenticity – The CBET programme in Kiadan Pelaga offered a wide range of activities to visitors, such as trekking tours, demonstrations of local farming practices, and art and craft production. The stakeholders collectively agreed that tourists should gain insights into their everyday ways of life and involve themselves in every activity such as learning to cook and consuming local food for an authentic experience. Bell (2015) indicated that the cooking lessons in Balinese homestays, allowed tourists, especially westerners, to get a taste of authentic Bali. Bell emphasised that the ambience of Balinese courtyard features,

such as the water and lily pots, lotuses, Hindu figures, frangipani and shrines for offering, contribute to an authentic experience of beautiful Bali. Through the commercial *warung*, tourists managed to get the taste of local authenticity. These observations support previous research into this brain area, which links food and authenticity (see Cohen, 1988; Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Cohen, 2008; Abarca, 2004; Sims, 2009; Mak *et al.*, 2012; Okumus *et al.*, 2013; Kim *et al.*, 2009; and Lu and Fine, 1995). According to Reynolds (1993), as cited in Bell (2015), food is perhaps one of the last areas of authenticity that is highly affordable by tourists. Therefore, the cooking lessons can be a way for tourists to engage with an authentic local domestic culture.

Power – Despite the beauty of Bali and the taste of local authenticity as presented by Bell (2015), Sukmajati (2010) asserted that in the 1970s and the late 1990s, most of the locals in Batavia did not have any role in tourism, because it was controlled by certain groups with huge economic capital. Hampton (2003) observed that the locals were not a prime consideration of the country's decision-makers when it came to tourism development; locals were not expected to be the main actor in Indonesian tourism industry. Timothy and Wall (1997) noted that the central planning department in Jakarta has little coordination with the tourism departments; indicating the lack of the government's interest in participatory planning (Timothy, 1999). Highlighted by Hampton (2003), little direct role was played by the state apart from transport improvements in the 1970s, in backpackers' tourism in Sosrowijian, Yogyakarta. Many of the providers started their tourism business by obtaining capital from family members or their savings. The government did not plan for international tourism in this area, making the locals the leading player in tourism, while the government and other parties were only the enabler (Mohd Nor and Kayat, 2010). Further evidence in Goodwin and Santilli's (2009) study, shows that the local community in Candirejo Village in Central Java have successfully operated their tourism through the local economic enterprise (co-operative). Beginning with 10 homestays with no local restaurant, they managed to expand their homestays to 22 houses with six *warungs* (local restaurants). The community are now better off with stable income and 63 jobs created. All the income and profits are shared and managed in the co-operative. However, they did have challenges in terms of minimal strategic planning and

insufficient promotion and marketing. Hampton (2003) asserted that in reality, small-scale tourism largely impacts the local economy, with lesser effects globally. This is supported by Goodwin and Santilli (2009), who highlight that small and independent tourism providers usually survive longer in the medium and long run.

5.3.4 Brunei Darussalam

Homestay – The Homestay programme in Brunei is underdeveloped, and in its infancy compared to neighbouring countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand or Indonesia (Ahmad, 2013; Ahmad, 2014 and Hamdan and Low, 2014), with limited academic literature on the programme, except for the development of ecotourism (Hamdan and Low, 2014; Ahmad, 2014). Nevertheless, there are a small number of homestays focusing on youth tourism and ecotourism. Brunei is internationally and regionally recognized following the success of their ASEAN youth homestay programme in collaboration with the ASEAN-Korea Centre. Therefore, Brunei’s Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism planned to focus primarily on upgrading and improving existing tourism packages, such as homestays through ecotourism (Hamdan and Low, 2015), with the aim of making them affordable, value for money, entertaining, memorable, and enjoyable. This programme is constructed for tourists to return to and visit Brunei repeatedly (Norjidi, 2018), and to diversify their economy as outlined in the Brunei Vision 2035, where emphasis is put on the development of two homestay programmes, Seri Tanjung Homestay and Lubok Mas Homestay, by offering the opportunities for tourists to experience ecotourism and be involved in volunteering activities for river and forest conservation. These two homestays were awarded the ASEAN Homestay Standards Award in 2016 (Hamdan and Low, 2015).

Experience - Kampong Sungai Bunga is located in one of Kampong Ayer’s modern resettlement villages. Known as the ‘Water Village’, it was dubbed as the ‘Venice of the East’ by Antonio Pigafetta in 1521 (Ahmad, 2013; Chen *et al.*, 2013), and is one of the most famous homestays in Brunei. This village comprises houses built on stilts above the Brunei River, estimated to be over 1000 years old. Kampong Ayer offers tourists an opportunity to explore and learn about the local

culture, tradition, and riverside lifestyle in a natural setting, distinguishing itself from almost any other homestay in South-east Asia. In 2016, Brunei hosted 22 ASEAN and 12 Korean university students in two of their homestays, in a collaboration between the ASEAN-Korea Centre (AKC) and the Brunei Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism (MPRT), emphasising experiencing hands-on Bruneian culture. The participants learned traditional performances and cooking traditional cuisines, while experiencing the lifestyle of the people in Brunei. Traditional games, kite making, local fishing, and boat racing were all part of the activities organised. At the end of the programme, the students shared their memorable moments, particularly on their experiential learning in the water village homestay in Kampong Ayer.

Food – Kampong Ayer offers tourists their handicraft and food products such as *bahulu*, *cacah*, *cincin jala*, *jit manis* and *sapit*, which were sold by *Padian* women traders from their boats along the Brunei River. Apart from selling these foods and other household items from the river, they are also involved in the cottage industry, such as making decorative food cover (to keep out flies and other insects), baskets, mats, fans, silver jewellery, wood carving, and textile weaving. Participants of the ASEAN youth homestay programme were encouraged to be involved in cultural activities such as cooking Malay dishes and cakes, to find out more about the culture of the Malay inhabitants in Kampong Ayer (Ahmad, 2013). In promoting tourism, many agencies and tour operators offer special tours on boats around Kampong Ayer in the evening, followed by having dinner of authentic Malay cuisines with a local family in the village.

Authenticity - Ahmad (2013) reported that the *Padian*, women traders who had paddled their boats along the Brunei River selling food and household items, were no longer there (Ahmad, 2013). This was due to Kampong Ayer's famous fishermen struggling to sustain their lifestyles and traditional local economy undermined by multiple factors, including pollution and waste disposal problems, lack of facilities and services to attract tourists, as well as crime and drugs. He also claimed that the authenticity of Kampong Ayer was gradually diminishing due to modernisation (as cited in Jones, 1997). The new housing settlements offered to the locals following a fire incidence are not of traditional house design

or architecture. Many of the locals have moved to other places, and their house in Kampong Ayer were rented out to non-family members and foreign workers. In this comprehensive study of homestay in Kampong Ayer, Ahmad (2013) concluded that if this trend continues, the homestay will no longer have a village with distinctive Malay Bruneian architectural heritage. He pointed out that the touristic value of Kampong Ayer as the Venice of the East would be affected seriously by this scenario.

Power – Grabowski (1999) once said, Brunei is a small country with interesting, but not outstanding natural and cultural attractions. Since the 1930s, Brunei relies solely on its oil and gas industry as the source of income, resulting in the struggle to develop other sectors, such as tourism, even though it is one of the world's largest industries (Ahmad, 2014). However, after 1997, the Sultanate's critical priority is to diversify its economy, through which the Tourism Strategic Overview towards Brunei Vision 2035 was developed. Though there were some efforts made towards diversification, there has been little progress in terms of projects that get off the ground or significant new engines of growth (Bhaskaran, 2007 as cited in Hamdan and Low 2014; Grabowski, 1999, Ahmad, 2014; Ahmad, 2013). In another major study, Hamdan and Low (2014) reported that the government's initiatives and its objectives for ecotourism development were misaligned, with more focus on mass and cultural tourism, rather than ecotourism or sustainable tourism.

Additionally, he also highlighted that the absence of networking among the various stakeholders and agencies in Bruneian tourism industry. The findings of the study are consistent with those of Ahmad (2014); despite Bruneian's government efforts or initiatives to develop ecotourism, there is still little progress made. However, Brunei's long-term potential for ecotourism remains strong, although Hamdan and Low (2014) again pointed out that without stakeholder collaboration, public-private partnership and legal measures, Brunei tourism will not achieve its tourism master plan objectives fully. The Brunei Tourism Board (BTB) and the Brunei Tourism Development Department (BTDD) are two government entities responsible for executing the national tourism master plan. Nevertheless, Hamdan and Low (2014) believed that it seems unrealistic for

Brunei tourism authorities and stakeholders to work alone and bear sole responsibility in developing its tourism industry. Grabowski (1999) said that the future of Brunei's tourism seems bright, assuming that the government's commitment to development is continued and supported by decisive actions, not only by the Ministry of Tourism and Natural Resources, but also by other ministries (notably Education, and Youth and Sport), and the ruling royal family. The government has allocated a total annual budget of US\$6.4 million for tourism (Kuncinas, 2013). Nevertheless, without proper execution, any project will fail (Hamdan and Low, 2014), highlighting that new or extended collaborations with local communities are central in pursuing an integrated approach to boost business opportunities in Bruneian ecotourism.

5.4 CBET for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Mekong Region

The Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), formed in 1992, comprises 300 million people in six countries through which the Mekong River passes: the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), the Union of Myanmar (Burma), the Kingdom of Thailand, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and Yunnan Province in the People's Republic of China (Leksakundilok, 2004). The GMS was founded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), with the aim of developing economic cooperation and deepening economic ties between members. This was prompted by the ongoing transformation of some member states' economies, from socialist command to more market-oriented systems, seeing a marked liberalisation of foreign trade and private investment. Greater economic activity has also been witnessed in the tourism sector, widely considered a prominent branch of the economy which could serve to reduce poverty and inequality while at the same time contributing to the conservation of cultural and natural resources.

The CBET project for the GMS came following the 2nd GMS Summit held in Yunnan, China, in July 2005, where tourism was seen to be able to enhance cooperation among GMS countries. The GMS countries share a similar natural environment and culture. Most tourist destinations are located in rural areas where community livelihood is closely tied to the Mekong and other great

river ways. Buddhist and river cultures are reflected in everyday life and the human-made environment, making it an attractive tourism destination, where it receives a share of tourists who are visiting other countries in South-East Asia. The following sections discuss how the five member states of the GMS promote alternative tourism, with a particular focus on traditional food.

5.4.1 Thailand

Homestay - The rising demand for alternative tourism in Thailand began in the early 2000s, particularly volunteer tourism, wildlife tourism, and ecotourism (Kontogeorgopoulos *et al.*, 2015). Community-based Tourism (CBT) packages were managed and owned by the community for their benefit, while enabling visitors to learn and increase their awareness of the local way of life (Suansri, 2003; Kontogeorgopoulos *et al.*, 2014), by promoting their authentic lifestyle along with their cultural heritage. The wish for foreign visitors to get close to and interact with Thai people in their natural rural environments in more authentic ways is reflected in the types of tourism packages on offer to tourists. In Mae La Na, the members of the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) set up a homestay programme with well-organised infrastructures to attract the tourists (Breugel, 2013). Thirty families participated in the programme and their homestays won the national Homestay Standard Award held in Vietnam. Their cultural activity groups, namely traditional dancing, weaving, and traditional medicine, were very active organizing events such as food preparation and tour guide trainings, while also selling craft products and providing traditional Thai massage service to tourists.

Food - In an investigation into food promotion in two villages in Chiang Mai (Sikhiram, 2014), it was found that the villages have the potential to be developed as popular tourist destinations due to their local food distinctiveness. The food is cooked using ingredients that are only available around them, and the cooking was demonstrated by groups of local women with the expertise and knowledge of food preparation, which was also a means to maintain their traditional rural culture. The local food was mainly cooked for their families, with some being served to the tourists in the guest houses and homestays. The villagers grew

vegetables such as onions, celery, and lettuce in buckets in front of their homes, and fences were used to grow herbs such as chayote, ivy guard, galangal, lemongrass, and kaffir lime leaves. The plots of land used for homestays were expanded to cope with tourists' demand. Bruegel (2013) found a similar pattern in Mae La Na homestay, where a group of women were preparing and cooking for a larger group of tourists in their homestays. Locally sourced produce have not only reduced the cost of buying food, but also established a 'food identity' that tourists can relate to. In addition, locally made kitchen utensils, such as the Khantoke food set (see Figure 5.2) were used, further attracting the visitors. Sikhiram's (2014) study showed how food safety and food security can be used to promote local culinary tradition, thereby contributing to a sustainable tourism industry for a rural community.



Figure 5. 2 Khantoke food set was popular particularly in Chiang Mai, Thailand
(Source: <https://www.123rf.com/stock-photo/khantoke.html>)

Experience – Language was found by Breugel (2013) as a challenge in CBT tourism planning in Thailand, as it restricts the locals from communicating with the tourists. In his *Comparative study between two communities in Thailand*, Breugel (2013), a lack of knowledge about the tourism industry and low proficiency in English, have been the limiting factors for local participation. Even though they received help from several international NGOs with the necessary English skills, language is still a big issue for the locals. He also revealed that

most homestay providers do not communicate with the tourists, as most interaction was through (full-time) guides and coordinating CBT members.

Meanwhile, Boonratana (2010) highlighted that CBT projects in Thailand should be free from 'passive' participation. She argued that participants of CBT programmes should engage more actively, by experiencing the locals' daily activities and rituals, learning and cooking local foods, learning traditional local knowledge, or assisting with local socio-economic development projects. Tourists should enjoy the local attractions, using services and facilities, purchasing local produce and handicrafts, or observing local performances. She also suggested that it should be obligatory for the hosts to provide meaningful learning experience for the tourists, allowing them to obtain authentic, hands-on knowledge and understanding of the local culture, tradition, and rural lifestyle. Only then will they have respect for local knowledge, and even acquire new skills such as cooking local food and producing handicrafts (Boonratana, 2010, p. 288). This, however, is highly debatable as how can the locals interact with the tourists effectively when they have language barrier and a lack of knowledge of the tourism industry?

Boonratana's arguments would have been stronger if she has proposed solutions to these issues. The same issues have been identified by Bruegel (2013) in Mae La Na homestay. In response, the management encouraged Western tourists to participate actively in activities, such as helping the locals with rice cultivation when the season come, and volunteer in teaching English language at school. This has resulted in more interactions with the tourists, and consequently making the locals see the importance of learning other languages to improve their CBT projects. The Mae La Na management also sought help from the Thai Research Fund (TRF) to provide them with training in improving their knowledge of the concept of CBT. It is important for homestay owners to understand the concept and principles of the CBT programme, so that they can distinguish themselves from other destinations offering similar products and services.

Authenticity - In another study, Walter and Reimer (2012) reported on a CBET project in Koh Yao Noi Island, located in southern Thailand. Walter and Reimer

(2012) believed that local knowledge cannot be separated from the local people, community or place; it is embodied in their daily practices, cultural beliefs, as well as relations with the natural environment and with each other, a notion applied on two case study sites - Chambok (next to Kirirom National Park) in Cambodia, and Koh Yao Naoi in Southern Thailand. The CBET project emphasised the use of learning materials for tourists, such as recipes for local food, local maps, simple guides to local language, as well as charts of tropical reef fish, forest products, unfamiliar fruits and herbal medicines. The local map is important because it allows guides to present local spatial perspectives to tourists, who may then begin to frame their understanding of their ecotourism experiences through a local lens, rather than the more typical 'tourist gaze'.

Apart from the above, different common learning methods such as storytelling, experiential learning, residence in local homes, and participation in the family and cultural life of the community, have also been used in each programme. The agenda is designed by tourists depending on their interest; hosts and guides, depending on their expertise. In this CBET project, for instance, visitors staying in a Muslim Thai-Malay household learn to speak Southern Thai dialect in exchange for English lessons, sample local seafood curries, steamed fish, and wild vegetables, and learn about local hygiene practices and table manners. Additionally, they also learn about Islamic salutations and compare Muslim, Buddhist, and Christian faiths, exchange songs, music, and photographs, and learn about the family history told by the families, and share information and stories about the cities, and occupations in their home countries.

The most significant result from this project is how the visitors (mostly Thais, with a growing number of foreign tourists) enjoy long-term relationships with the locals, not only in return visits to host families, but also in such actions as helping the village children attend vocational schools outside the community, staying in touch with guides through emails and phone, and promoting the CBET project and local environmental conservation efforts through NGOs, media and personal networks. Since 2009, about 250 ecotourists participated in this homestay in each month, with several hundred more visitors participating in shorter-term ecotourism activities as well. Kontogeorgopoulos *et al.*, (2015) stated

that the main reason for the growing demand for ecotourism and volunteer tourism experiences, is the wish among foreign visitors to interact with Thai people and Thai natural environments, in more authentic ways. By providing tourists with a glimpse into facets of Thai life, concealed from the majority of other packages, alternative tourism experiences promise a certain level of authenticity.

However, Bruegel (2013) identifies that while tourists are seeking and appreciating the authentic environment in the homestays, the locals might be more interested in the economic gain from these ventures. This is consistent with Wang's (2007) research, where it was found that Naxi women were asking for money from tourists, when they take pictures of the women in their traditional clothes, chatting in front of a house. It can thus be suggested that the authenticity of the homestay has been exploited by the locals for income generation. This leads to the question of whether Naxi authenticity has been customised based on object-related authenticity to meet the tourists' demand or to enhance the imagination of tourists' existential experiences.

Power – To date, Bruegel (2013) has written the most complete comparative study of the community-based tourism projects in Thailand involving two pioneer CBT groups in Mae La Na and Koh Yao Noi. The homestay in Mae La Na benefitted greatly from tourism with economic and cultural gains, apart from other positive impacts, as compared to Koh Yao Noi. In Mae La Na, the local community was actively involved in, and have total control over their projects. Many of them were involved in tourism activities such as cultural dance performances and cooking demonstrations, even though they have fewer tourists compared to Koh Yao Noi. The Mae La Na homestay was initiated by their group leader and supported financially by an NGO called Project for Recovery of Life and Culture (PRLC), with Tour Merng Tai (TMT) as the primary tour operator. Through this NGO, networking was created with government agencies and the private sector, to strengthen their CBT knowledge and capacity.

Meanwhile, the Mae La Na homestay also actively participated in capacity building activities, such as cross-learning experiences and study trips to other

communities with CBT projects. As a result, they understood CBT management better, and were able to set up proper activities for tourists. Due to high demand from tourists, the Mae La Na CBT group decided to engage with another NGO, Thai Research Fund (TRF), to assist them in enhancing their knowledge and understanding of Thai society, and to strengthen their local community. After the successful CBT implementation in Mae La Na homestay, PRLC and TRF have collaborated and formed the Thailand Community Based Tourism Institute (CBT-I) and were involved in many CBT projects around Thailand. The Koh Yao Noi homestay on the other hand was involved with external actors in their tourism development, namely the investors of the island, due to its status as a mass tourism destination.

The government did play some roles in helping Koh Yao Noi with their illegal fishing industry. However, due to pressure from the locals, NGOs and media, the government paid more attention to the tourism development in this place, and helped them to build their tourism industry. Bruegel (2013) reported that many stakeholders who have different tourism projects in Koh Yao Noi were having conflicts with each other, indicating the failure in the connection between CBT and mainstream tourisms in this place. The disputes affected the locals, resulting in low involvement in the tourism industry. The locals still have full control over their projects; however, they are not the main actors as there are many stakeholders with higher power and stakes in the island. Overall, the local community do benefit from the economic impact, although they have also experienced negative cultural and environmental impacts.

5.4.2 Vietnam

Homestay - There has been a boost in Vietnamese tourism since the onset of the ‘*doi moi*’ (the process of renovation), which officially started in 1986 (Hoan, 2015). The homestay programme in Vietnam combines a family typically offering accommodation in a traditional village home which include meals, cultural performances, and local tours, where in return, tourists are expected to purchase their handicrafts. While the homestay is still a niche product within the broader accommodation sector in Vietnam, it has developed according to a market-based

approach. The aim is to provide a supplementary source of income to rural communities, whose other livelihood options may be limited and seasonal (Vietnam Homestay Operations Manual, 2013). Vietnam is particularly noted for its ethnic tourism development, and homestays are often found in the mountains in the northern and central regions, where many ethnic minorities live.

Food - One part of the Vietnam Homestay Operations Manual (2013) is the section on food and beverage services and cookery. The manual explains in detail how the operator should prepare and correctly serve food and beverages following prescribed before- and after-meal services, and these include how to prepare the dining area, serve meals and drinks, and clearing away at the end of meals. Under the cookery section, the manual details the importance of serving local cuisines, so that it appeals to tourists, by creating a positive cultural experience which draws on the uniqueness of their culinary traditions. The Vietnamese operators also are given directions in the manual on how to choose and store food carefully, as well as how to practice good food and kitchen hygiene. Guidelines for serving and experiencing Vietnamese culture and cuisines during breakfast, lunch and dinner are also given in the manual, jointly with ideas on how to provide 'fusion' dishes that combine traditional Vietnamese and Western ingredients, to make them more recognisable to tourists (Vietnam Homestay Operations Manual, 2013).

Experience - To-date, only a small number of studies have been carried out to explore the connection between local food and tourists in homestay programmes in Vietnam. A survey by Nate-Chei (2011) provided a brief explanation of the food utilised to demonstrate the hospitality of the White Tai, an ethnic minority living in a number of villages in the Mai Chau district, in the northwest uplands of Vietnam. These locations have been made accessible for ethnic tourism. Nate-Chei (2011) noted that these tour agencies mostly bring tourists to these homestay villages. Tour guides play a significant role in the Vietnamese tourism industry, but most prominently in the homestay tourism market. Truong *et al.* (2014) identified that the most critical barrier for local tourism sector is the lack of foreign language proficiency. The older generation, for example, did not receive formal education and can only speak their ethnic language and basic Vietnamese.

Even, most local women and children can only speak Basic English, and cannot write in English. 'Foreign language' according to Vietnamese people, is the English language, while proficiency means, 'speaking fluently'. Nate-Chei (2011) also highlighted the huge barriers between homestay hosts and foreign tourists. They were forbidden from having any direct interaction with the foreign tourists when serving the food, with communications only made by the tour guides. Surprisingly, the White Tai women were capable of cooking nice food that appealed to the tourists. They were well-trained in food preparation, while the people in general were hospitable. They like to make friends with the visitors. They welcome Vietnamese tourists who passed by their houses, or stopped at their souvenir shops. If they like the visitors, then they invite them into their house and serve tea, while continuing their chat with them. However, the limited interaction and communication between the hosts and the foreign tourists have made them unable to demonstrate their genuine culture of hospitality.

Authenticity and Power – Nate-Chei (2011) also found several issues concerning the attitudes of the tour guides in the White Tai villages, where they act as intermediaries in the same way as the front desk clerk of a hotel might. In her study, she noted that the tour guides and drivers (from the tour agencies in Hanoi), insisted on being provided with free accommodation and meals when they bring any tourists to the homestay village. She also remarked that the foreign tourists brought to the village by the tour agencies were not treated as guests, because the tour guides did not want the tourists to have meals with the homestay providers. She refers to this scenario as a 'vertical relationship' (Nate-Chei, 2011. p.42), in which the tour guides acted as cultural brokers between the tourists and the homestay providers, where tourists were not treated as guests, but rather, as clients or customers, while homestay providers adopted the role of servants. Usually, the White Tai communities would be happy to serve the visitors with local food, and the guests would sit around the table with their family to have meal together. Anyone who shares a meal with the White Tai family is considered a guest. However, due to the boundaries created by the tour guides, the homestay providers had to stay away from the tourists, except when serving food and drinks. The tour guides dominated most of the conversation with the tourists, leaving the homestay providers with very minimal interactions with the tourists.

This was also true during the cultural shows, even when the tourists were dancing together with the homestay providers. Nate-Chei (2011) concluded that the White Tai culture would remain as a ‘cultural product’ to satisfy demands for authenticity from the tourists in this homestay, as a result of the tour guides preventing a host-guest relationship from developing between the homestay providers and the tourists, when there was a need for the tourists to have a comprehensive understanding and knowledge on the local culture. Henceforward, she suggested for the homestay providers to take control of their cultural products, by interacting directly with, and delivering high-value experiences for tourists. That would mean breaking the monopoly over access to tourists, currently in the control of tour agencies.

5.4.3 Cambodia

CBET - Although ecotourism was first developed throughout Cambodia from the early 1990s, Reimer and Walter (2013) stated that tourists did not start visiting the country in large numbers until around 2000 (Ven, 2016), resulting from the protracted civil war and negative publicity surrounding Cambodia. The increasing number of tourists was first recorded in the capital and, following that, the site of Angkor Wat. Alternative tourism, such as eco-tourism, was a tiny niche market (Reimer and Walter, 2013). However, the CBET started to grow following the development of community-based ecotourism projects by NGOs, with the first established in 1998 at Yeak Laom Lake, in the Ratanakiri province. The CBET project is now thriving and locally-managed, with 15 CBET sites dotted around the country by 2013 (Reimer and Walter, 2013). The programme has received strong endorsement from the government, on account of its commitment to the principles of sustainability and conservation, and its aim of sustaining residents’ livelihoods (Ven, 2016). The Chiphat CBET project, for example, was derived from the informal ecotourism ‘curriculum’, specific to the particularities of a place and community, reflecting multiple aims of environmental conservation, cultural preservation, and the promotion of community livelihoods (Honey, 2008; Leimgruber, 2010). Chiphat is located upriver along the Prek Phipot River banks, within the rainforest of the Southern Cardamom Protected Forest, near the border with Thailand (Walter and Reimer, 2012).

Food, Authenticity and Experience - Reimer and Walter (2013) revealed that the traditional culture of Chiphat has to some extent been revived. Apart from the discovery of their ‘Mountain of Ancient Jars,’¹¹ more contemporary Khmer culture was taught to homestay visitors, through the short hikes to local farms, where they learn to grow rice, bananas, jackfruit, and various seasonal crops. Tourists can also visit a village family who demonstrate and explain the fermentation and production process of local rice wine. Tourists are also regularly invited to attend weddings, seasonal celebrations and have opportunities to eat the traditional dishes, while listening to folklore myths from the locals, some of which were on the project’s website, though most of the information gathered remained in ‘raw’ form. These sites provide comprehensive information on the Chiphat CBET project: (<http://ecoadventurecambodia.com>), the Cambodian Community-based Ecotourism Network site (www.cbcben.org), as well as other travel websites and blogs. Tourists can also travel by land and water to more distant cultural and natural attractions, such as the bat cave and waterfalls, each complemented by stories of their mythical origins. The locals were ready to talk of spirits that inhabit the forest, and share their personal experiences with the healing powers of *kreu khmai* (Khmer traditional healers). Production of local Khmer handicrafts, along with new crafts, was revitalised, accompanied by newly organised Khmer music performed regularly. The CBET cooking group prepared traditional food in woven food containers for ecotourism picnics. Conventional fish traps, rice baskets, and other implements – authentic versions and smaller replicas – were also sold to tourists (Reimer and Walter, 2013).

The CBET project in the rainforest-based area in Chambok were Walter and Reimer’s (2012) second case study. It adopted the same concept as that of the Koh Yao Noi in Thailand, based on an explicit ecotourism curriculum and visitor learning. The visitors experienced Cambodian cultural exchange, enjoyed ecotourism activities, while cooking, chatting and relaxing with friends made on previous visits. The strengths of this project are evident through the repeat visits by tourists. Visitors who have gone home sent photos to their adoptive families, as

¹¹ It is an archeological dig or a dig houses over 600-year burial site that contains a half dozen well-preserved funeral urns and wooden coffins, and is now a popular attraction for visiting ecotourists to the Chiphat CBET project (Reimer and Walter, 2013, pg. 130).

well as donated money, sports equipment, and supplies to the village school. The also financially supported some of the local development activities. Although these two CBET projects present a good model and framework for engaging locals in tourism, in safeguarding the natural environment and cultural knowledge, Walter and Reimer (2012) highlighted that in practice, much of the visitors' learning was still ad hoc. The projects were designed without enough conscious effort given to the development of an ecotourism curriculum. The little attention to the educational function of CBET also happened in all ecotourism forms, indicating a lost opportunity, not only in education, but also for added value in ecotourism projects marketing (Weaver and Lawton, 2007, cited in Walter and Reimer, 2012, p. 1172). Therefore, the Cambodian government, particularly the Ministry of Tourism, should be more assertive in developing a clear focus on differentiation strategies and aggressive marketing activities to promote Cambodia as a tourist destination.

Power – The Chambok CBET project is a unique example of a successful community-based ecotourism project where people were enabled to generate income from tourism and convinced to protect their natural resources (Prachvuthy, 2006). The project was established in 1998 by Mlup Baitong, a British NGO, to address deforestation problems, with a focus on educating the general public on the conservation of natural resources. Mlup Baitong was able to build the capacity of the Management Committee (MC) members, while providing continuous training sessions for the villagers, to remind them of their responsibility for implementing the activities under this project. Mlup Baitong has also insisted on an even distribution of power among the nine villages in the management committee, where 13 representatives were elected, including two advisory positions for the Commune Council and the National Park representatives. The by-laws stated that at least three of the MC seats are reserved for women. Various stakeholders, including officers from the Provincial Department of Tourism, the Provincial Department of Environment, Kirirom National Park and the Provincial Governor, were invited to a series of meetings to obtain consensus and final agreement on the crucial documents governing this CBET site. The beneficiaries were divided into three main categories of MC members, service providers and community members. Mlup Baitong has

developed good cooperation with relevant government institutions from the beginning of the project, and received good supports from them. The CBET project belongs to the community members. A proper community management committee and by-laws have been established through a participatory approach. Equitable involvement and benefit-sharing among community members were carefully taken into account during project implementation. This approach has encouraged community members' participation, support and cooperation in avoiding internal conflicts. The approach of the Women Self Help Group (WSHG) has been combined with women's income generation through tourism services such as food preparation, souvenir selling, bicycle rental and ox-cart rides, which has been viewed as an effective way to promote gender balance. Mlup Baitong planned to gradually phase out its support for Chambok by 2009, through the micro-project approach, which has the potential to contribute to the preservation of natural resources in addition to boosting income. Although this approach only began in 2006, it was an appropriate mechanism to strengthen MC members' ownership, and to sustain the project while training others to enable them to take over the present MC responsibilities in the future (Prachvuthy, 2006).

5.4.4 Lao PDR

CBET – Similar to many developing countries, the government of Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) or Laos, focused their attention on ecotourism development in the rural areas, particularly in protected areas, in order to create employment opportunities and raise income for the locals (Ounmany *et al.*, n.d). Laos has a strong potential in the ecotourism industry, as it has the second highest in number of ethnic groups (68) in Southeast Asia after Myanmar (135) (Khanal and Babar, 2007). Ethnic tourism was relatively new in the country, and their road system was still underdeveloped. In the late 1990s, only hill-tribe trekking tours were introduced to tourists, covering tribal villages in remote areas, such as in the North-Western Namtha Province, which were only accessible by walking (Cohen, 2008). Cohen deduced that the ethnic tourism in Laos was modelled after Thai examples back in the 1970s, with the three-day and two-night tour as the main attraction. In another CBET study conducted by Harrison and Schipani (2007), it was found that the Mekong Island of Don Det in the Siphandon (Four Thousand

Islands) region of Champassak, Lao, was one of the most visited provinces due to its location near the Cambodian border. Most tourists visiting the province passed through the Siphandon region on the way to or from Cambodia, and stayed for a few days to experience the peaceful Mekong villages. Laos' ecotourism has become an important economic activity, as the culture and nature-based tourism makes up over half of the total value of the entire Laos tourism industry revenues (Khanal and Babar, 2007). For that reason, it was proposed that Laos focus on CBET for their tourism development, rather than the conventional or mass tourism, with the aim to channel the economic benefits to poor people.

Food - Interestingly, most of the guest houses in Siphandon Island have restaurants which were invariably run by women. Harrison and Schipani (2007) reported that most of the village earnings from tourism came from sources such as accommodation, restaurants and boat trips to other islands (and to view the Irrawaddy dolphins of the Mekong River). In the study, it was reported by the local restaurants that they obtained some of their supplies such as vegetables, fish and poultry, locally from Don Det Island; from their kitchen gardens or neighbours; and the remaining from Ban Nakasang, a market town a short journey by boat from the village. The locals owned large boats with an outboard motor, an excellent asset for the villagers as they provided good income during peak tourist seasons, and even during the low season, they were a source of additional revenue. The success of this niche tourism can be seen in the employment opportunities created by guest houses and restaurants. It also created a bigger market for their crops and opportunities to be sharecroppers on land owned by wealthier farmers. Kim *et al.*, (2014) identified that the natural resources provided food and products for the locals to eat and sell, where their participation in community-based tourism impacted positively on the economy of the locals. They were also aware that this programme allowed them to learn about environmental conservation, besides protecting the natural resources in their locality. Therefore, it can be concluded that the tourism sector is a valuable source of income for many of the local communities in these villages.

Experience – The National Tourism Development Plan in Laos emphasised the promotion of a niche market to include 'special interest tourism' (e.g. bird-

watching, butterflies, orchids, weaving, and Buddhist culture), and ‘adventure tourism’, with the aims to optimise limited marketing opportunities, and highlight the quality of Laotian historical, culture and environmental attractions to benefit tourism while their tourism infrastructure was still at infancy (Leksakundilok, 2004). Champassak for example, offered a fascinating glimpse of a quiet, river-oriented village life in communities that were reported to be self-sufficient; growing most of their rice, sugar cane, coconut and vegetables, harvesting fish from the Mekong and weaving textiles as needed for tourists' attraction (Harrison and Schipani, 2007). As a country rich in natural resources, culture and heritage, Lao offered an attractive ethnic tourism package for their CBT projects. Sontikul *et al.*, (2009) highlighted that the locals in Laos were mainly farmers. They used the example of pro-poor tourism development in 13 Viengxay (a region in north-eastern Laos famous for its caves) villages, which were expected to be directly and indirectly affected by tourism development. Across these villages, tourism was in its infancy, as there were only four guest houses, each with its own restaurant. The tourism activities here involved renting rooms in guesthouses, retail of local artefacts, weaving, and selling of items such as pineapple seeds, alcohol, noodles, and clothing. The people also focused on farming and their agrarian lifestyle, as it was not only the most fundamental aspect of their culture and identity, but also the origin of the staple product in their diet – rice. Monetary income was not necessarily seen as the basis of well-being for these people, and they do not consider themselves as impoverished, as long as they have ample quantity of farm produce. Even so, the villagers offered tourists food and drink, sometimes showing them around the caves without asking for money (Sontikul *et al.*, 2009). Recent research also showed that villagers did not consider hospitality as a means of income. According to Sontikul, the act of offering food is considered as a symbol of Laotian culture and tradition. However, despite offering their rich culture and heritage experience, community participation in tourism was minimal (Kim *et al.*, 2014). Low educational level, particularly in English language, among the locals, has resulted in the lack of confidence to participate, and was the cause for very limited tourism planning in Laos.

Authenticity – Trupp (2014), in his study of the Akha experience, an eco-community-based tourism programme in Northern Laos, highlighted that ethnic

tourism was the driving force behind the cultural perpetuation or revitalisation among the locals. The attractions comprised cultural elements such as the people themselves, traditional dress, Akha food, music, religion, courting rituals, marriage rituals, architecture, and cultural artefacts. The villagers were well-aware that through this tourism, they have to provide an authentic cultural experience and genuine hospitality. They also believed that even if the village was commercialised for tourism purposes, tourists could not help them to preserve their culture. The Akha people themselves have to keep their culture by safeguarding their nature and local wisdom by passing them down to the younger generation. However, Leksakundilok (2004) stressed the possibilities of commodifying nature and culture (community identity), when the development must be economic profitable, thus neglect the environmental and social dimensions of the destination. However, Cohen (2016) explained that hospitality in Laos was still in the process of commercialisation. Thus, the broader effects of tourism on the ethnic groups have yet to be investigated. Nonetheless, Leksakundilok (2004) pointed out that when authenticity, exoticism, pristineness, rarity, and remoteness were used as ecotourism selling points, there is a need for stringent guidelines that should be adhered to strictly.

Power – According to Ounmany *et al.* (n.d), the ecotourism development in Luang Namtha was initiated by international development agencies. In October 1999, the first community-based ecotourism project in Laos was launched through the Nam Ha Ecotourism Project (NHEP). It was a collaboration work between the Lao National Tourism Administration (LNTA) with the UNESCO Regional Office in Bangkok, and their funding partners, involving many stakeholder groups, including donor organisations, the Luang Namtha Department of Information, Culture and Tourism, the Nam Ha National Protected Area (NHNPA), as well as the communities at the provincial and village levels. Due to its success, the model was replicated in Ban Na and Ban Hathkhai, located in the southern part of Phou Khao Khouai National Protected Area (PKKNPA). However, behind the success story, Ounmany *et al.* (n.d) discovered that the benefits were not evenly distributed among tour operators, provincial tour guides, and the communities inside the NHNPA, such as the local guides, farmers, and cooks. Harrisson and Schipani (2007) claimed that CBT and the private tourism

sector are interdependent in Laos. They assumed that a successful model such as the NHEP could be a template to be applied throughout the country. Accordingly, they suggested further research should be conducted in exploring the correct modes of tourism development for different locations in Laos. Additionally, the private sector also received very little support from the government or NGOs. There was a general mutual mistrust between governmental/NGO bodies and private tourism operators in Laos (Harrison and Schipani, 2007, p. 98). In another study by Suriya (2010), it was found that village leaders would not select participants from the villagers' group for CBT projects, if they could not provide the standard service to tourists. Even though CBT projects are aimed at villagers for additional income, with the authority possessed by the villager leaders, many poor villagers did not get to participate in this programme. Suriya (2010) also highlighted that the villagers' carrying capacity was limited. They did not have enough capital nor the skills necessary for tourism activities.

The comparison of these two outcomes is consistent with those of Garrod *et al.* (2012) study. There was not enough organisational effort in promoting heritage conservation and tourism through stakeholders' engagement at the World Heritage Site (WHS) of Luang Prabang. For instance, their participation in decision making was very minimal, and this also applied to the resident community. Garrod *et al.* (2012) believed that it was due to two main reasons. First, the 'stakeholder workgroup' established did not include any residents but was comprised entirely of government representatives, with the justification that residents' involvement was a relatively new concept in Laos. Second, the assumption among tourism industry groups that the residents lacked the knowledge or skills to participate effectively in decision making. Aas *et al.* (2005), as cited in Garrod *et al.* (2012) argued that this situation was common in developing countries. They also acknowledge that more work needs to be done in the area of stakeholder management in the developed-country context, whereby the local people must have control or ownership principles for the ecotourism initiatives in their area.

5.4.5 Myanmar

Homestay - A study by Lusby and Eow (2015) revealed that, under the law, it was illegal for local Myanmar residents to host foreigners in their homes, including in homestays. There was a widespread frustration among the residents towards this policy that regulated CBT activities such as homestays, and restricted the opportunities for the community to benefits from their local economic potential, thus limiting the CBT programme in Myanmar. They also acknowledged that these restrictions were the primary barrier to CBT implementation. However, Myanmar has recently been famous for domestic tourism for pilgrimages and festivals. A growing number of guesthouses, hotels (for foreigners), and homestays were developed to cater for tourists with religion as the primary reason for travelling and visiting Myanmar (Michalon, 2018). In Lwe Nyein village, 100 out of 140 families offered free-of-charge homestay services for the pilgrims (tourists) in basic dormitories, which can accommodate up to 50 people. The houses were full during the festivals. Homestays have started to gain more popularity, as pilgrims were requesting for more privacy (Michalon, 2018).

Food – There are relatively few food-related studies in Myanmar, with an absence of literature discussing or mentioning these activities in the homestays. Only Michalon (2018) identified that licenced guesthouses in Myanmar were allowed to provide food for tourists. Thus far, Dutton (2015) found that not much has been done with respect to gastronomic tourism. In the Inle Lake region in Myanmar, there were two estate wines in Myanmar called Aythaya and Red Mountain showcasing the local gastronomic culture alongside the literary culture. She indicated that the gastronomic culture in Myanmar was not as significant as it was in Laos and Cambodia, and yet it is twice or three times as expensive to travel there. However, in the Myanmar Tourism Master Plan 2013-2020, culinary tourism has been mentioned as part of their aim to attract 7.5 million visitors for 2020. Dutton concluded that Myanmar is more famous for regime politics than tourism development.

In another major study, Hudson (2007) found that tourists were generally in favour of tourism in Myanmar, but uncomfortable due to some profound political and ideological dilemma in Myanmar's military government. Myanmar also has been referred to as the 'land of fear' (Marshall, 2002) after several international organisations urging people to avoid travel to Myanmar. The action of boycott over travelling to Myanmar by the international organisations is to prevent the military junta from obtaining hard currency and global legitimacy it needs to survive (Hudson, 2007, pg. 385). Besides that, a study by Singh (2014) stated that the conflict of anti-Islam in Myanmar had created a new tension with ASEAN countries, especially between Muslim majority ASEAN states such as Indonesia and Malaysia, with non-state actors also active condemning and punishing Myanmar. The violent conflict between Rohingya¹² Muslims and Rakhine Buddhists that erupted from 2012 onwards failed to produce a concrete plan for Myanmar and its prospects as a destination. Even though the United Nations (UN), Muslims leaders from OIC (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation) countries and ASEAN countries has come forward to intervene in Myanmar's conflict resolution, but it was failed in its attempt to stop the violence. UN Secretary General's office also claimed that there was a long-standing problem of discrimination toward the Rohingyas by many in Myanmar, including people in the government (Kipgen, 2013, pg. 304). Therefore, in other words, the tourism industry in Myanmar needs to be addressed primarily on their political issues as it could affect the country in the future.

Experience - Many scholars have noted that Myanmar was becoming increasingly popular due to its rich Buddhist culture and heritage (Smith, 2010), with ancient Buddhist temples being famous tourist attraction (Timothy, 2011). In a wider context, Burma was described as one of the last countries in the world to be relatively untouched by outside influence, a country where traditional dress is still the norm. Wall and Aung's study is an example of early research into eco-tourism in Myanmar in 1997. They found that Myanmar is a beautiful place to set

¹² Rohingya have been described as Muslims who reside along and near the boarder between Myanmar's Rakhine State and Bangladesh's Chittagong Division. They also known as 'Bengalis' due to the Rohingyas' origin from the former Bengal state during the British Raj of India (Singh, 2014, pg. 7). Rohingya is not included among the 135 ethnic groups in Myanmar and never recognised by the government. Myanmar people called Rohingyas as Bengali Muslims from Bangladesh (Kipgen, 2013, pg. 300).

up eco-tourism business due to its natural environment that can be found throughout the country. At that time, there was no entity to develop ecotourism except for an NGO that only focused on the environment. They believed that Myanmar needs to start an eco-tourism business so that they can preserve their environment and culture, besides making known Myanmar's cultural heritage through cross-cultural exchange with eco-tourists.

Authenticity – Thett (2012) claimed that Myanmar's tourism authorities and businessmen have been falsely staging 'authenticity' for ethnic tourism in the past. They portrayed the image of ethnic people wearing traditional dress in a festive mood and created the image of a happy 'union of Myanmar' in one village. However, in reality, the ethnic groups were struggling to stand for their rights and autonomy. Wall and Aung (1997) reported that one ethnic group has caused domestic war and terrorism. They were against the government policy in pursuit of freedom. Therefore, there was no authenticity in the ethnic villages that have been set as tourist attractions by the government. In another study, Michalon (2018) described that the meaning of authenticity in the places of attraction was not the same for locals as it was for foreigners. For example, Westerners preferred a pagoda that was crowned with a picturesque collection of slender gilded, offering a beautiful view of the lake, which to them, was a symbol of authenticity. However, to the locals, those pagodas were not meaningful from a religious point of view, as they preferred sacred features and the legendary significance of a place.

The same was observed in the showrooms of weaving centres. Only the foreigners were fascinated as they came to observe the production process, where they got to touch the tools, fibres and raw metals, while listening to the staff's explanation about manufacturing. According to Michalon, the tourists had witnessed a highly valued authentic experience and become part of it. Conversely, the locals who came for pilgrimage were not looking for authenticity or the past. Their only purpose was to buy souvenirs. There was also a difference in the choice of souvenir between locals and foreigners. The foreigners preferred to buy locally made original silver jewellery and antiques, something that would remind them of Myanmar. However, the locals wanted something that has the local

identity, specific of the place that they visited. Thus, they bought trousers, shirts and shoulder bags embroidered with a leg-rowing fisherman in Shan as a symbol of Inle Lake, or a Shan flag.

Power - As a further manifestation of how relatively closed Myanmar has been (politically and economically), Smith (2010) noted that tourism was limited and strictly controlled by the military regime. They have governed the country for over 50 years, restraining tourists from exploring the country (Khanal and Babar, 2007). This is not saying that there was no tourism during the era of oppressive military rule. Over 20 years ago, for example, Myanmar organised 'Visit Myanmar Year' in 1996, promoting the tourism industry after the formation of the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism in 1992, and the Tourism Development and Management Committee in 1994 (Hall and Page, 2016). However, it was only recently, following the relaxation of military rule and concomitant opening up to the world that Myanmar had a more rigorous tourism development, which include generating information for tourists on less visited areas. Since then, Myanmar has been actively involved in regional as well as sub-regional cooperation efforts for both intra-regional and inter-regional tourism development.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism of Myanmar signed the Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam Tourism Co-operation (CLMV) in order to boost their tourism industry. Despite significant issues faced by the country – especially decrepit tourist infrastructure and relative poverty - Myanmar received half a million tourists in the first half of 2012 (Thett, 2012). In the same year, Myanmar introduced the Myanmar Responsible Tourism Policy that was framed together in the Myanmar Tourism Master Plan to create mass tourism. However, Thett (2012) claimed that Myanmar was still mired in human rights governance issues. The authorities and their crony businesses will abuse capitalism, and exploit tourism for their own good. What is more, the government controlled the number of tourists into Myanmar, and all tourists have to seek permission before entering the country. Besides, permits must be applied for through licensed tour operators by Foreign Independent Travellers (FIT) or any package tour groups involving FIT. It usually takes 5 to 7 days for approval, which is considered as a tedious process.

Attributed to the above circumstances, the tourism industry in Myanmar has developed relatively slowly, compared to its ASEAN counterparts.

5.5 Discussion on ASEAN Homestay Programme

The efforts made by ASEAN countries to promote their local food through homestays and other alternative tourism products offer a number of guiding principles and strategies that can be applied to safeguard TMF in Malaysia. Each of the countries have different ways in promoting their local food (see Table 5.1 on page 153 to 155), but they all share the belief that tourists benefit from the novel and unique experiences they get through the ‘food journey’ offered in homestays.

Table 5. 1 Summary of food-related activities in the community-based tourism in ASEAN countries

No.	Country	Food-related activities
1	The Philippines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alternative lodging at private homes - homeowners provide cooked food and hospitality. 2. The Municipality of Sariaya in Quezon - promoted famous local noodle dish in the homestays. 3. Emphasised on food element through the preparation, cooking, and eating as part of the homestay experience, accompanied with storytelling activities.
2	Singapore	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Known as ‘urban homestay’. 2. There is not much literature on food-related activities in this type of homestay tourism.
3	Indonesia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The CBET programme in Bali emphasised on educational aspects in visitors’ experience. 2. The CBET programme in Kiadan Pelaga offered activities that enabled the tourists to gain insights into the locals’ everyday way of life, such as by consuming the local food. 3. The Balinese home cooking lessons in the <i>warungs</i> is one of the trademarks for their homestays.
4	Brunei Darussalam	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kampong Ayer allowed tourists to explore and learn about the unique local culture, tradition, and riverside lifestyle in a natural setting. 2. The <i>Padian</i>, women traders who paddled their boats along Brunei river selling food and household items, are no longer there (Ahmad, 2013).

5	Thailand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The local food is cooked using materials available only in the community area; collected and prepared by groups of women who displayed their cooking expertise and knowledge of food preparation for tourists, while at the same time maintain their traditional rural culture. 2. Built their ecotourism curriculum to include the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) of the locals in the CBET programme. 3. The local map and learning materials are the essence of an effective CBET programme.
6	Vietnam	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The homestay programme is a combination of a family hosting accommodation in a traditional village home with meals, cultural performances, local tours and purchase of handicrafts. 2. The most captivating part of the Vietnam Homestay Operations Manual (2013) is the section on food and beverage services and cookery. 3. The Mai Chau district in the northwest uplands of Vietnam shows how food is utilized as a medium to demonstrate a culture of hospitality of the White Tai, an ethnic minority in the villages where tourism was dominated by tour guides. Homestay providers were forbidden to interact with the tourists except for when serving food and drinks.
7	Cambodia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The traditional culture of Chiphat was taught to visitors, while the more contemporary Khmer culture was shown in the homestays through short hikes to local farms where they can learn how to grow rice, bananas, jackfruit and various seasonal crops. There were village families who demonstrate and explain the fermentation and production process of local rice wine. Tourists are also invited to weddings, funerals, and seasonal celebrations and hear folklore myths. 2. CBET cooking group prepared traditional food in woven food containers for ecotourism picnics. Authentic versions and smaller replicas of conventional fish traps, rice baskets, and other implements were also sold to tourists. 3. Applied ecotourism curriculum and visitor learning. The visitors have Cambodian cultural exchanges, ecotourism activities, while cooking, chatting and relaxing with friends made in previous visits. 4. The Chiphat CBET project is derived from the informal ecotourism 'curriculum' - the particularities of a local place and community, reflecting multiple aims of environmental conservation, cultural preservation and the promotion of community livelihood. Other

		<p>common learning methods such as storytelling, experiential learning, residence in local homes, and participation in the family and cultural life of the community were also employed.</p> <p>5. Ecotourism curriculum built with the inclusion of the locals' Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) in the CBET programme. The local map and learning materials are the essence of an effective CBET programme.</p>
8	Lao PDR	<p>1. Most of the guest houses on this island have restaurants, which were run by women. The restaurants obtained some of their supplies such as vegetables, fish and poultry locally from Don Det Island; also from their kitchen gardens or neighbours, and the remaining came from Ban Nakasang, a market town a short journey by boat from the village.</p> <p>2. In Viengxay, (a region in north-eastern Laos famous for its caves) there were only four guest houses in the village, each with its restaurant.</p>
9	Myanmar	<p>1. Famous for domestic tourism for pilgrimages and festivals. More guesthouses, hotels (for foreigners) and homestays were developed to cater for tourists with religion as the primary reason for travelling to and visiting Myanmar.</p> <p>2. Homestays becoming more popular as the pilgrims required more privacy. However, there are no literature discussing food-related activities in the homestays.</p> <p>3. The guesthouses were allowed to provide accommodation with basic comfort, and required licences to cater food for the tourists.</p>

The Philippines featured the elements of 'sensory perceptions' of their traditional food in delivering tourists' authentic homestay experiences. It was for the tourists to consume their local cuisine in the homestay as pleasurable sensory experiences. Malaysia may need to investigate this approach for its own homestay experience programme. Kivela and Crotts (2006) remarked that the pleasure of having food at a local destination is a 'pull-factor' in marketing, and plays a major psychological and physiological roles in tourists' appreciation of food. Different from the Philippines, Indonesia promotes home cooking lessons to attract tourists to their homestays. Depending on the package, homestay programmes in Malaysia have been actively organizing cooking demonstrations of TMF to tourists. Nonetheless, the concept of home cooking lesson is an element that should be considered more widely in Malaysian homestay programmes, as tourists get to

spend time with the host family in a domestic environment. The cooking lessons can also be another income source for the homestay providers to achieve a sustainable livelihood.

In Thailand, the kitchen garden project to promote Thai's local and indigenous cuisines to tourists has been successfully applied in the country's CBT. Sharing of local knowledge with tourists plays a noteworthy role in helping and developing Thai homestay programmes. Additionally, with homestay providers developing a deeper knowledge of cooking their authentic native food for tourists, the principles of product differentiation could promote the sustainable growth of Thai homestay programmes in the future. The same concept of kitchen garden is proposed in this study for Malaysian homestay programmes. The achievement of the Thai CBT programme through this concept shows that the abundant natural resources in the rural areas are increasingly being viewed as significant and valuable in relation to economic and tourism interests. Correspondingly, this concept is another opportunity for tourists to understand the locals' everyday life.

Vietnam is also another country that included local gastronomy as part of the publicity drive for their homestay programmes. However, the Vietnamese programmes are faced with the challenge from over-reliance on tour guides as the 'middle person' between the providers and tourists. Most of the activities in Vietnam's homestay are dependent on the service of the tour guides, due to the lack of knowledge and skills among the providers in other languages.

Language barriers have not only been mentioned in homestay programmes in Vietnam, but also in other ASEAN countries. Wager (1995) highlighted that the tour guides in Angkor in Cambodia had little knowledge of the monuments and poor language skills. He suggested for training in these areas to be conducted for the tour guides, in order to develop CBT as a strategy for developing Angkor World Heritage Site as a sustainable tourism destination. However, on the contrary, there is little literature that discuss language problem in Cambodia CBT tourism planning. Language capability issue among tourist guides also has been raised by Ali (2013) in his study *The Perak Development Experience* in Malaysia.

He recommended for students at different educational levels to master foreign languages, as it affects their employability in the tourism industry. He also proposed for tour guides in Malaysia to speak other languages, such as Japanese, in addition to English, to diversify their language ability in supporting and developing tourism industry in Malaysia.

The dependence on tour guides in recommending the food and providing the interpretation of Vietnamese culture and traditions to tourists, has limited homestay providers' opportunities to interact and engage with tourists. At a closer look, Malaysian homestay programmes are also faced with this issue, relating to the involvement of tour agencies or third parties in dominating tourists in homestays (see Chapter 7, page 213). However, most homestay providers in Malaysia have the chance to communicate directly with tourists about homestay packages and are transparent when dealing with tour agencies.

Cambodia has the most comprehensive CBET project for poverty alleviation, although this country and Myanmar are the least developed among the group (Leksakundilok, 2004). The support from international NGOs in developing the CBET programme, suggests that Cambodia has a lot of potential to offer tourists. The elements of local knowledge, storytelling, and experiential learning of local cultural tradition, have been integrated into the CBET curriculum. The local community is aware that it is necessary to follow the curriculum to achieve the objectives of the projects.

As for Laos, some of the locals have expressed their interest in participating in Laos' CBET programme. They are aware that this programme could provide employment opportunities and boost income. However, due to the seasonal nature of tourism, the majority of the homestay providers remain reliant on their agriculture work. Here, the CBET programme serves as something akin to a part-time job to provide extra income during the high season. From the success stories of CBET projects in Cambodia and Laos, Malaysian homestay programmes could take notice of how the ecotourism curriculum benefitted their community and provided the foundation for the development of education in ecotourism projects for the tourists. Ideally, the integration of education and

community development should be a platform for more traditional knowledge, skills, custom and tradition to be used to enhance tourists' learning and experience. Information on CBET programmes in other ASEAN countries - Brunei, Singapore and Myanmar – is less widely available, and thus more difficult to review.

So far, the CBET projects in Chambok, Cambodia, and Koh Yao Noi, Thailand, have confirmed the effectiveness of their tourism planning and shown impacts through repeat visits by tourists. The learning materials and local map of the TEK are the factors of the success of the projects. The sequence of how eco-tourists were guided through the programme is its most prominent feature. First, the eco-tourists are greeted at the visitor centre by the local hosts (equipped with local map, photos, and wall displays), and secondly, tourists' particular interests are discussed based on the CBET curriculum and 'menu'. Then, thirdly, the tourists' are taken through the tourists' community ecotourism curriculum, by the local hosts (cultural rules, local geography, homestays, livelihood, natural attractions, ecotourism activities, philosophy and practice of CBET). Finally, the tourists' particular interests are discussed with the hosts. Therefore, a tailor-made ecotourism curriculum is developed from a 'menu' for possible ecotourism attractions and activities, in a list that can be found in visitor centres and is posted on project websites. However, visitors can also ask to deviate from the standard ecotourism curriculum. The evidence suggests for that the CBET curriculum developed in both countries could be replicated in the homestay programmes of other ASEAN countries. This observation reflects those of Ling *et al.*, (2010), who also found that images that meet tourists' expectation will satisfy them and in turn, repeat visitation and the likelihood of recommendations to friends and family will increase. It also strengthens the notion that repeat visitation playing a vital role in the future success of a destination (Andriotis *et al.*, 2005).

From the above literature on homestay programmes in ASEAN countries, it can be highlighted how the rural communities in these countries used cultural heritage as a strategy in revitalising their traditional products, and promoting their local culture and heritage as tourists' attractions. Many of the ASEAN countries have incorporated food-related activities as one of the local cultural experience for

tourists. The increasing number of food-related activities has shown that food is an integral element to support the development of rural tourism in ASEAN countries. All of the examples provide ideas that the homestay programme in Malaysia might think about implementing, in order to introduce their gastronomic products and experiences for the benefit of local communities. Considering the evidence in general, it would appear also that most ASEAN member states countries agree that promoting local cuisine through alternative tourism has significant potential, which needs to be further developed through the participation of all stakeholders and regional agencies such as ASEAN. Together, these examples offer valuable insights into how local food as a key opportunity could contribute to positive tourist experiences and, consequently, to the sustainable development of cultural heritage.

Chapter 6. Intangible Cultural Heritage Expression II through the Homestay Programme

6.1 Introduction

Food as an aspect of culture is recognised in the 2003 Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Convention by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), which seeks to ensure that nations and local communities respect and endeavour to safeguard culinary heritage. The purpose of the Convention is not only to raise awareness at the local, national and international levels, but also to provide for international cooperation and assistance. This chapter discusses examples from the national and international levels of how culinary and gastronomic heritage are being incorporated into culinary and heritage activities through marketing and promotional plans. Emerging trends from these examples offers valuable insights into how traditional Malay food (hereafter, TMF), as an integral aspect of community culture and tradition, could be promoted and safeguarded by attracting tourists seeking meaningful cultural experiences through the Malaysian homestay programme. Thus, the primary objective of this chapter is to understand the international, UNESCO's strategies to safeguard culinary heritage and how these strategies, that have been incorporated in the promotion of cultural heritage internationally, can be apply to Malaysian homestay programme.

6.2 UNESCO and Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

The first expert meeting on culinary practices was held in Istanbul in November, 2008 during the third session of the Intergovernmental Committee (UNESCO, 2010). The meeting was unsuccessful as the UNESCO State Parties decided that culinary heritage did not fit into the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (hereafter, CSICH) categories because ICH had thus far only recognised other aspects of cultures, such as oral traditions, performing arts, rituals, traditional knowledge and traditional craftsmanship as mentioned in Article 2.1 (UNESCO, 2010). But in 2009, UNESCO State Parties Peru and France organised a small meeting on culinary practices to discuss the role of culinary traditions. The meeting was fruitful, and UNESCO officially

added three culinary heritages to the ICH list for the first time in 2010 (Figuers, 2013). It was understood that inscription on the list could also contribute to raising awareness of the significance of healthy and sustainable food-related practices in other parts of the world, while encouraging intercultural dialogue, testifying to creativity and promoting respect for cultural, environment and biological diversity (UNESCO, 2010). At the same time, UNESCO established a project on the recognition of food, knowledge and eating practices at international and national levels under the CSICH since 2010. Figuers (2013) stated that recognition from UNESCO means that a nation can continuously maintain its culinary culture and traditions as well as maintaining cultural diversity in the face of the threat globalisation poses to local and national traditions. In this Convention, UNESCO discussed the importance of culinary culture as part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and the need for its safeguarding. However, UNESCO did not place gastronomy, culinary or food on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity until 2010 (de-Miguel-Molina *et al.*, 2016), despite the text of the CSICH being approved in 2003. Food, it is suggested broadly, can be considered as a set of tangible and intangible elements of food cultures. It is regarded as a shared heritage or as a common good by a wider community. According to Santilli (2015), the tangible element of food culture represents the food itself, artefacts and culinary utensils, whereas the intangible element covers all related aspects such as preparing and cooking practices, knowledge, presentation, etc.

The inscription of culinary heritage also coincided with the aim of the CSICH as stated in Article 1, namely to safeguard intangible cultural heritage and to ensure respect for the cultural heritage of the communities, groups, and individuals concerned. Additionally, the purpose of the Convention is to raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of intangible cultural heritage and of ensuring mutual appreciation thereof and to provide for international cooperation and assistance. Thus, the meaning and priority of the Convention are given solely to intangible cultural heritage, with a real appreciation of international human rights instruments, as well as with the need for mutual respect among societies, groups, and individuals, and of sustainable development. As food culture has been understood as the set of representations, beliefs, knowledge and inherited and learned practices that are

associated with food and shared by individuals from a given culture or a particular social group (Santilli, 2015, p. 586), culinary heritage adequately fits into the categories of ICH. After all, food expresses cultural traditions and reflects practices of the communities that produce and consume it. It is embedded in specific social and cultural systems that attribute different meanings to what, how, when, and with whom something is eaten. For that reason, culinary heritage could benefit a nation's culinary evolution. After the meeting in 2010, UNESCO inscribed three cuisines for the first time - the 'Gastronomic Meals of the French,' the 'Mediterranean Diet,' and 'Traditional Mexican Cuisines,' on the Representative List of the Convention. Subsequently, in 2011, UNESCO inscribed another cuisine – 'Turkey's Ceremonial Keşkek Traditions' - to the list, followed by 'Washoku' from Japan, 'Kimjang' from Korea, 'Gingerbread making' from Croatia, and 'Lavash' from Armenia.

In Article 2(3), 'Safeguarding' means measures aimed at ensuring the viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, mainly through formal and non-formal education, as well as the revitalisation of various aspects of such heritage. The 2003 Convention aims are geared towards building greater awareness, especially among the younger generations, of the significance of the intangible cultural heritage and the need to safeguard it. Figuers (2013) pointed out that having a nation's culinary heritage being recognised by UNESCO is both a source of national pride and an important factor in maintaining cultural diversity in the face of growing homogenisation. Similarly, Santilli (2015) emphasised that it is not possible to understand the cultural assets of food without considering the values and meanings invested in them as part of the intangible dimension, such as the knowledge, practices, wider food systems, and so on. Thus, it is not possible to understand the dynamics of the tangible food heritage without an awareness and understanding of the intangible food culture that supports it. The next sections analyse a number of gastronomy examples from the Representative List of the CSICH. To-date, fourteen culinary traditions elements have been inscribed on the list (UNESCO, 2010). However, only eight cuisine-related heritages (as opposed to drinks) are discussed here according to the year the food was recognised by UNESCO.

6.2.1 Gastronomic Meals in France

Gastronomic Meals of the French (GMF) is not a specific or regional cuisine, or even typical food, dishes or ingredients, but what is perceived (in the so-called ‘culinary imagination’) as the traditional French way of consuming food (Santilli, 2015). GMF was added in 2010 to the list in recognition of the importance of French customary social practices celebrating crucial moments in the lives of individuals and groups, such as births, weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, achievements, and reunions (UNESCO, 2010). The committee decided that GMF play an active role within many French communities when enjoying time together eating and drinking. Another factor that led to GMF’s inscription on the list were the individuals known as ‘gastronomes’, people who possess in-depth knowledge of food traditions and preserve them for living practice of the rites, thereby contributing to their oral and written transmission for future generations. UNESCO recognised the wider cultural significance of the time spent at the table eating home-cooked traditional foods and the role this plays in safeguarding culinary heritage (UNESCO, 2010).

6.2.2 Mediterranean Diet from Spain, Greece, Italy, and Morocco

The rationale behind the nomination of the Mediterranean Diet for the ICH representative list in 2010 is the fact that it is considered a culinary heritage (Medina, 2009) that comprises nutritional, social and cultural value (Reguant-Aleix *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, this diet also involves a set of skills, knowledge, rituals, symbols, and traditions concerning crops, harvesting, fishing, animal husbandry, conservation, processing, cooking, and particularly the sharing and consumption of food. Santilli (2015) described this diet as one from the landscape to the table. Women play an essential role in transmitting knowledge of the Mediterranean diet: they safeguard its techniques, respect seasonal rhythms and festive events, and carry its values to new generations. Markets also play a crucial role as spaces for cultivating and transmitting the Mediterranean diet during the daily practice and social gatherings surrounding exchange and agreement.

6.2.3 Traditional Mexican Cuisine

Traditional Mexican cuisine was recognised by UNESCO in 2010, as a comprehensive cultural model comprising farming, ritual practices, age-old skills, culinary techniques and ancestral community customs and manners dating back to the pre-historic era and also incorporating influences and contributions from other cultures. Traditional Mexican cuisine is made possible by collective participation in the entire traditional food chain: from planting and harvesting to cooking and eating. Female cooks and other practitioners devoted to raising crops and traditional cuisines across Mexico express community identity, reinforce social bonds, and build stronger local, regional and national bonds. Culinary efforts in states like Michoacán also underline the importance of traditional cuisine as a means of sustainable development. (UNESCO, 2010).

6.2.4 Ceremonial Keşkek Traditions from Turkey

In 2011, UNESCO recognised the ceremonial Keşkek tradition of Turkey in the Representative List for the CSICH. Keşkek is a dish rite performed with joint labour mainly for traditional wedding ceremonies, circumcisions, charity festivals, rain prayers, and religious holidays (UNESCO, 2010). Women and men work together to cook wheat and meat called ‘Keşkek’ in huge cauldrons, and then serve it to guests. The committee decided that the Keşkek ceremony is a unifying social practice that takes place at Turkish festive events and is transmitted from generation to generation, thus deepening a sense of ‘communal belonging’. The tradition encompasses entertainment, plays, and musical performances. Neighbouring towns and villages are invited to feast collectively at these ceremonies. The cooking tradition is safeguarded and transmitted by master cooks to apprentices. (UNESCO, 2010).

6.2.5 Washoku from Japan

In 2013, UNESCO inscribed Washoku from Japan on the Representative List of ICH together with Kimjang and Turkish coffee culture. Washoku is not a specific dish, but an entire system comprising the daily household meals that include rice, soup, a main course and two or three side dishes and pickles. The

foods in this tradition are associated with feasts and ceremonies and regional culinary specialties (Kumakura, 2014 as cited in Santilli, 2015). The decision to include Washoku is in line with the specification identified in the Convention that this food tradition is actively being transferred from generation to generation. Hence, UNESCO believed that Washoku plays an essential role in strengthening social cohesion among the Japanese people while providing them a sense of identity and belonging. Also, the practice favors the consumption of various natural, locally sourced ingredients such as rice, fish, vegetables and edible wild plants. In fact, grassroots groups, schoolteachers, and cooking instructors also play an essential role in transmitting the knowledge and skills through formal and non-formal education, or through practice, to the future generation of Japanese people (UNESCO, 2010).

6.2.6 The Tradition of Making and Sharing Kimchi from North and South

Korea

South Korea nominated the tradition of making and sharing kimchi on the Representative List, which was inscribed by UNESCO in 2013. Kimjang is the practice of kimchi making that takes place around November as a preparation for the long and cold winters (Bulut, 2015). Usually made in late November for winter, kimchi (or kimchee) is the Korean name for preserved vegetables seasoned with spices and fermented seafood (Liu and Zhou, 2013). North Korea also nominated kimchi as ICH and UNESCO decided to inscribed this food as the shared heritage of Korea in 2015 (Bulut, 2015). The traditional process of preparation and preservation of kimchi is shared by families, relatives and neighbours and transmitted through generations in everyday family life. It forms an essential part of Korean meals, transcending class and regional differences. The common practice of preparing kimchi in the late autumn which is during Kimjang season reaffirms Korean identity and is an excellent opportunity for strengthening family togetherness (UNESCO, 2010). Kimjang is also an important reminder for many Koreans that human communities need to live in harmony with nature and to show the world about the living culture of Kimjang in Korean society. First inscribed by UNESCO in 2013, Kimjang, the culture of making kimchi and listed for the second time in 2015, the North Korea's kimchi-making tradition can be seen as an attempt to cement and preserve a symbol of Korean identity (Bulut,

2015). Kimjang and kimchi-making culture allow Korean people to practice the spirit of sharing among neighbours while promoting solidarity and providing them with a sense of identity and belonging to be passed down to future generations (UNESCO, 2010). Kimjang and the kimchi-making culture also are regarded as a good example in strengthening their position in everyday life in all classes of society as well as tourists who come to Korea. It has been incorporated as an early part of the education system in Korea. The transmission of Kimjang and kimchi-making knowledge is carried out within the official curriculum in schools, not only in elementary schools but also in high school. Children learn about Kimjang and making kimchi together in class (Bulut, 2015). Thus, Kimjang and the making of kimchi have become one of the tools that contribute to strengthening family cooperation and solidarity in a modern society.

6.2.7 Nsima, Culinary Tradition

Nsima is a national dish and staple food of the communities in Malawi. It is served with green vegetables, sauces or stews (Roselyne N. Okech, 2014). All segments of the Malawians population eat it - partly as it is very cheap (Olsthoorn, n.d). UNESCO officially inscribed Nsima, on the Representative List of CSICH in 2017. The culinary tradition is well-known for its unique preparation, in which the maize flour is pounded using wooden mortars followed by an elaborate process of preparing and cooking to form a thick porridge (UNESCO, 2010). The process of cooking Nsima is time-consuming, but to the locals, it is a form of art (Olsthoorn, n.d). This dietary practice of Malawians symbolised the communal tradition in families by strengthening bonds between them through the continued practice. The Malawian government and local communities are now making strenuous efforts to strengthen the use of Nsima in promoting and safeguarding their culinary tradition by documenting recipes on Nsima in schoolbooks, organising festivals, and revitalising the practice. Currently, most restaurants in Malawi feature Nsima on their main menu to introduce it as their traditional dish and use it as a promotion for their destination marketing (Olsthoorn, n.d). The knowledge-transmission of this culinary tradition also has started to be transmitted informally between adults and children, through on-the-job training and education (UNESCO, 2010).

6.2.8 Dolma Making and Sharing Tradition

In 2017, the ICH list recognised the culinary importance for the people of Azerbaijan relating to the preparation and consumption of *Dolma*, stuffed fillings wrapped in preserved vine leaves (the most popular types) that forms an integral part of Azerbaijan cuisine (UNESCO, 2010). The name of this ancient national dish originates with the pure Azerbaijani verb *doldumag* (to stuff) as it means various leaves, vegetables and fruits stuffed with minced meat (Salmanova, 2017). Interestingly, there are more than 25 varieties of *dolma*. The collective process of growing, preparing, and cooking of *Dolma*'s start from the springtime until the cold winter. The fresh grape leaves (the main product for making *Dolma*) appear mostly during spring, while in summer, the communities are busy growing aubergines, tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers to make the fillings for this food. In the autumn, the locals make *Dolma* out of cabbage leaves, apple and quince and, during winter, they used extensively preserved grape leaves (Salmanova, 2017). The traditional knowledge and cooking practices of *Dolma* has been handed down, mostly by women, through informal education from mother to daughter, over time. Formal transmission increasingly occurs in vocational and apprenticeship schools (UNESCO, 2010).

6.3 Discussion on UNESCO and Intangible Cultural Heritage

The next sections discuss the gastronomy examples from the Representative List of the CSICH. To-date, thirteen culinary traditions elements have been inscribed on the list (UNESCO, 2010) as presented in Table 6.1 according to the year the food was recognised by UNESCO.

Table 6. 1 List of the culinary traditions on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (Source: UNESCO, 2010).

No.	Year Joined	Country	List of elements	Food-related activities
1.	2010	France	Gastronomic meal of the French	It is a festive meal to enjoy the art of good eating and drinking. Essential elements include the selection of dishes from a growing repertoire of recipes: the purchase of good, preferably local products whose flavours go well together, the pairing of food with

				wine; the setting of a beautiful table; and specific actions during consumption, such as smelling and tasting items at the table. The fixed structure, commencing with an aperitif (drinks before the meal) and ending with liqueurs, containing in between at least four successive courses, namely a starter, fish and/or meat with vegetables, cheese and dessert.
2.	2010	Cyprus, Croatia, Spain, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Morocco	Mediterranean diet	It involves a set of skills, knowledge, rituals, symbols and traditions concerning crops, harvesting, fishing, animal husbandry, conservation, processing, cooking, and particularly the sharing and consumption of food. Eating together is the foundation of the cultural identity of the communities in these countries.
3.	2010	Mexico	Traditional Mexican cuisine	It is collective participation in the entire traditional food chain: from planting and harvesting to cooking and eating. The basis of the system is founded on corn, beans and chilli; unique farming methods such as milpas (rotating swidden fields of corn and other crops) and chinampas (man-made farming islets in lake areas); cooking processes such as nixtamalization (lime-hulling maize, which increases its nutritional value); and singular utensils including grinding stones and stone mortars. Native ingredients such as varieties of tomatoes, squashes, avocados, cocoa and vanilla augment the basic staples.
4.	2010	Northern Croatia	Gingerbread craft	Croatian Gingerbread uses a simple recipe with common ingredients such as sugar, flour, water, yeast, ginger and spices. The gingerbread is then shaped into moulds, baked, dried and painted with edible colours.
5.	2011	Turkey	Ceremonial Keşkek tradition	Keşkek is a traditional Turkish ceremonial dish, whereby women and men work together to cook wheat and meat in a huge cauldron. The wheat is washed with prayers the preceding day, and then carried to a large stone-mortar, to the accompaniments of music from the davul drum and zurna double-reed pipe. At the mortar, it is pulled by two to four persons using gavels in a solid rhythm. Cooking is usually carried out outdoors: hulled wheat, chunks of meat on the bone, onions, spices, water and oil are added to the cauldron and cooked all night.

				Towards noon, the strongest of the village youth are called to beat the keşkek with wooden mallets, while the crowd cheers and zurna players perform musical pieces, announcing the thickening of the stew with specific melody.
6.	2013	Japan	Washoku	A social practice that related to the production, processing, preparation and consumption of Japanese cuisine based on sustainable use of natural resources. The Japanese make various preparations to welcome the deities of the incoming year, pounding rice cakes and preparing special meals and beautifully decorated dishes using fresh ingredients, each of which has symbolic meaning. These dishes are served on unique tableware. The practice favours the consumption of various natural, locally sourced ingredients such as rice, fish, vegetables and edible wild plants.
7.	2013	Republic of Korea (North Korea)	Kimjang, making and sharing kimchi	Kimchi is the Korean name for preserved vegetables seasoned with spices and fermented seafood. Preparation follows a yearly cycle. In spring, households procure shrimp, anchovy and other seafood for salting and fermenting. In summer, they buy sea salt for the brine. In late summer, red chillies peppers are dried and ground into powder. Late autumn is Kimjang season when communities collectively make and share a large amount of kimchi with every household.
8.	2014	Armenia	Lavash, the preparation, meaning and appearance of traditional bread	It is traditional thin bread made from simple dough of wheat flour and water. The mixture is kneaded and formed into balls, which are then rolled into thin layers and stretched over a unique oval cushion that is slapped against the wall of a traditional conical clay oven. After thirty seconds to a minute, the baked bread is pulled from the oven wall. Lavash is commonly served rolled around local cheeses, greens or meats, and can be preserved for up to six months.
9.	2015	Democratic People's Republic of Korea (South Korea)	Tradition of kimchi-making	Kimchi is a vegetable dish made by seasoning various vegetables or wild edible greens with spices, fruit, meat, fish or fermented seafood before they undergo lactic fermentation.

10.	2016	Azerbaijan, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey	Flatbread making and sharing culture: Lavash, Katyrma, Jupka and Yufka	Need at least three people for making the bread together with the preparation and baking. The flatbread is baked using a tandyr/tanūr (an earth or stone oven in the ground), sāj (a metal plate) or kazan (a cauldron).
11.	2016	Tajikistan	Oshi Palav, a traditional meal	It is a traditional dish that also known as 'King of the meals'. It is based on a recipe using vegetables, rice, meat and spices but up to 200 varieties of the dish exist.
12.	2017	Malawi	Nsima, culinary tradition	Nsima is a form of thick porridge prepared with maize flour. The traditional process involves pounding the maize into flour to selecting the accompanying food and then cooking and serving it.
13.	2017	Azerbaijan	Dolma making and sharing tradition	Small fillings containing meat, onion, rice, peas and spices are wrapped in fresh or pre-cooked leaves or stuffed in fruits and vegetables.

UNESCO recognised that Gastronomic meals from France have social and cultural significance for French people. Moreover, UNESCO believed that the identity of the meal draws family circles and friends closer together and, more generally, strengthens social ties. This aspect was a catalyst for mutual respect and intercultural dialogue and thus in need of preservation for future generations (UNESCO, 2010). With respect to Research Question 1 in this thesis (What are the elements of UNESCO's that can be applied to Malaysian homestay programme, in using and revitalising culinary heritage as a strategy to promote cultural tourism?) these results have shown that the Malaysian homestay could emphasise their traditional Malay meal experience in the rural village, to provide a better food experience for tourists. Demonstrating the uniqueness of TMF by eating cross-legged on the floor in the surroundings of rural areas is an excellent platform for tourists to get familiar with the local cuisine. As Sharif *et al.*, (2013) describe, eating cross-legged could better introduce TMF in a traditional way and thus tourists would be able to feel the pleasure and unique experience of consuming TMF. The core concept of TMF in the homestay need to be standardised in every homestay programme, in which tourists have their meals while being seated on a mat and food is laid out on the floor. Teaching the tourists how to eat using fingers also can be an interesting and pleasant experience for

them. A unique style of presenting food according to Sánchez-Cañazares and López-Guzmán (2012) implies transfer of knowledge about the people, culture, traditions and identity of the place visited. In the same vein, UNESCO noted that the act of eating together in the Mediterranean Diet (MD) is part of the foundation of cultural identity and continuity of communities throughout the Mediterranean area. Therefore, by the recognition of this diet, it could also contribute to raising awareness of the significance of healthy and sustainable food-related practices in the homestay programme in Malaysia through eating freshly grown produce food like herbs and vegetables from the provider's backyard garden and a variety of natural resources from the nearby forest in the form of food and medicinal plants. Such activity would encourage intercultural dialogue, testify to creativity, and promote respect for cultural and environmental diversity of the homestay food production and consumption.

Unlike the MD, which focuses on a wider culinary system from a number of countries fringing the Mediterranean Sea, Traditional Mexican Cuisine (TMC) focuses more on specific regional cuisine in Mexico. In the same way, as for the other countries, the committee decided to award recognition to TMC because it reflects centuries of history and cultural heritage of Mexican communities (The Travel World, 2011). The results reported here suggest new opportunities to enhance the visibility of food traditions of the Malaysian people through the homestay programme and upholds respect for the cultural diversity and human creativity that make homestay unique in both natural beauty and living traditions. The analysis of TMC has extended our understanding of how to find a strategic appeal for TMF in the Malaysian homestay programme and integrating this distinctive food through the attractiveness of the rural people lifestyles living in a traditional homestay village. Therefore, by identifying the niches of homestay destination marketing, the tourists could better understand the concept of living tradition in the homestay programme in Malaysia.

UNESCO has also taken another step by recognising the culinary culture of Keskek in Turkey and including it in the CSICH. UNESCO also, as with TMC, recommended a two-fold safeguarding approach - by local communities and State - to ensure Keşkek continuity and transmission to subsequent generations. The importance of the keşkek ceremony suggests a strong link may

exist between the communal activities related to the rural and pastoral way of life in the Malaysian homestay traditional village and TMF (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010). According to Ramele and Yamazaki (2013), rural Malay communities have a close-knit society and thus, prioritised every communal activity (*gotong-royong* in Malay) in their neighbourhood. Events such as communal feasting to celebrate religious festivals and events such as wedding ceremonies are examples of the communal activities in Malaysia. Kin relationship and cooperation among the community in the village must be used as a platform to promote homestay in Malaysia (Ramele and Yamazaki, 2013). The tourists should be introduced to the sequence of communal activity such as a wedding feast, from the beginning so that the tourists could experience and understand the local culture. The customs of the Malay traditional village that centres on their communal practices are one of the characteristics that homestay should use in promoting their homestay programme. Therefore, by using the value of TMF in promoting traditional Malay villages as a homestay product should also be linked to the preservation of Malaysian culture and tradition.

Another recognition given by UNESCO in the CSICH is the knowledge and skills associated with Japan's Washoku. The aspects of proper seasoning of home cooking and knowledge and eating practices passed down through generations in the home at shared mealtimes are the critical components behind UNESCO awarding this recognition to Washoku. The value of home cooking and eating practices in Washoku suggest that the Malaysian homestay programme should draw attention to the core components of Malay rural life and the element of staying and eating together with host families. The aspects that involve the tourists eating, cooking and engaging in many activities with the local families provide opportunities to interact, gain knowledge, and experience the lifestyles and culture of the host family as well as the local communities. Living in a traditional village is one of the fastest and easiest ways to get to know the real Malaysia (Tourism Malaysia, 2017). Hollows (2003) refer to family mealtimes as quality time, in which the mother does not only provide children with nutrition but also with love and care. The concept of eating together in Malaysian also comes from that basis to charm tourists with the local culture and lifestyle of the local communities (Kaur *et al.*, 2016) and thus, establish a bond with their warm and welcoming tourists like their own families.

Korean Kimjang is another example that could contribute to the promotion of food traditions similar to Washoku in making creative use of natural resources. The recognition received from UNESCO due to the fact that, kimchi is an age-old tradition which survived essentially unchanged to this day. The examples of Washoku, Kimjang and the making of kimchi tradition have shown that these culinary traditions have a prominent impact on the development of the tourism industry both in Japan and Korea. Kimchi, for example, is the symbolic Korean culinary icon that immediately evokes strong associations with the Korean nation (Lum and Vayer, 2016). As Choi and Gray (2012) emphasised, Korean culinary tourism makes the food an attraction that uses the existing infrastructure already in place. They suggest that culinary tourism is one of the best examples that the tourism industry should take advantage of, as it provides a tourism base that supports the preservation of the old instead of costly, new developments. As an example, the Korean government included kimchi, their national dish, as part of the promotion of 1988 Olympics. The cuisine is regaining popularity following the Korean government's efforts to use food as part of the tourism experience during this international event. Now, they are continuing their efforts through a number of cooking schools in Korea that focus on teaching tourists how to make different types of kimchi

Consequently, they are also publicising a few different types of their national dishes, such as susubori (rice wine), bibimbap (a spicy mixed rice dish with vegetables, meat and egg) to the tourist's market. It is common nowadays to take tourists to a bibimbap restaurant for lunch beside many cooking classes and a musical, B-bap using this dish as its theme. The insights gained from the above examples, including the protection of kimchi, may be of assistance to the government and the related stakeholders in the Malaysian homestay programme to put more efforts of using TMF as a homestay image and identity. The homestay programme should identify TMF as an essential resource in its events and activities, such as basic cooking classes for tourists staying with a host family, to establish that food is a central segment of homestay culture and heritage (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010). The example from the CSICH also provide another recommendation for the homestay programme in Malaysia to feature TMF in symbolic tableware such as using tiffin carriers for tourists to bring with them in the homestay tour as a homestay image.

The homestay providers also need to be educated on traditional Malay elements such as TMF should be served on special tableware that represents the unique identity of Malay culture and heritage, particularly in the homestay programme. Thus, the inscriptions of these two traditions could contribute to the idea of promotion of food traditions in the homestay programme in Malaysia and stimulate respect for human creativity and intercultural dialogue through the local culinary practices. It is also recommended that the homestay programme in Malaysia increase the visibility of TMF as an intangible cultural heritage in general and promote awareness of the importance of food as part of the cultural identity of the local communities in the rural areas.

6.4 Summary

A number of issues emerge from these examples from UNESCO's 2003 CSICH. In general, formal recognition by UNESCO to safeguard the world's culinary heritage has been seen as a worthy move for promoting the protection of traditional foods. As Figuers (2013) noted, recognition by UNESCO, at its best, encourages local pride and cooperation as well as drawing tourists to an unforgettable experience. The positive aspects from the identification are that culinary heritage can benefit a nation and/or a community. To-date, there is not much literature discussing the implications of CSICH 2003 towards the development of culinary heritage in a national context, particularly in ASEAN countries. However, a study by Akagawa (2018) has established how the more recent UNESCO listing of Indonesian batik has been integrated into that country's creative industry policy, to achieve economic and political objectives, and utilised at the community and individual level for economic purposes. The promotion of Indonesian batik as a creative industry has had a considerable influence on revitalising the status batik has as a national cultural heritage. Indirectly, it has benefitted and inspired much needed community-level economic enterprise. In his study, Akagawa (2018) observed many examples of imaginative and creative developments in the making of batik, which effectively underscores the idea of 'living heritage'. In the downtown urban kampongs (neighbourhood districts) and rural villages, he saw a lot of new batik projects engaged in traditional and experimental batik work. The CSICH inscription of Indonesia batik that had been heavily promoted by the Indonesia government directly stimulated most of this

activity. There are also many new initiatives involving new players in association with artisans conversant with surviving skills into the wider community, and innovative new approaches to designs invested with new meanings. All the new designs were pointing to the revitalisation of the traditional art of Indonesian batik (Akagawa, 2018).

The listing of TMF in the CSICH may seem primarily at present as a protection measure, but by integrating the ideas of promoting local food in the homestay as one of the prominent alternative tourism in Malaysia, it might also achieve the proactive economic objective of helping the rural populations achieve economic stability. The batik industry in Indonesia has shown that, following inscription and with substantial promotion, it has inspired the community to improve their economic situation. Malaysian stakeholders could help the homestay providers to achieve a similar economic benefit through participatory planning processes and cooperation with multi-stakeholders at local and national levels. Considering all of this evidence, it seems that the homestays in Malaysia need to agree how the economic interest of the government of Malaysia might revitalise TMF in support of the economic objectives of the Eleventh Malaysia Plan of 2016-2020 (Ong, 2016). A 5-year development plan, amongst others, is geared towards attracting high-yield tourists to further increase the industry's contribution to the economy. Furthermore, with the help of many parties towards the revitalisation of TMF in the homestay programme, it would be possible for the local community to work through the new initiatives and approaches to broaden the scope of their local cuisine. Local homestays also can lay claim to their food customs and traditions as a particular and unique aspect of local heritage in Malaysia. Such action could also inspire local communities associated with homestays in Malaysia to register their local food cultures under the National Heritage Department of Malaysia and for them to be sure that they can thereafter lay historical claim to this food being an authentic part of their local culinary heritage.

Chapter 7. Results and Analysis: The Perspectives of the Stakeholders

7.1 Chapter Outline

This chapter presents the results of in-depth interviews with different stakeholders involved in the homestay industry in Malaysia. The first set of results and analysis is from various primary stakeholder groups, also known as ‘enablers’ (see Chapter 3, page 78). The findings answer Research Aim 2 of this study, which is to investigate the way stakeholders champion and support the use of local food in homestay programmes in Malaysia, with the intention that the culinary activities in the programme can be used to attract tourists to visit homestays in Malaysia. The chapter also discusses how the stakeholders have sought to deal with the challenges and barriers they were faced with, in promoting and preserving TMF in the case-study homestays in this research, namely Kampong Beng Homestay (KBH) and Gopeng Homestay (GH). The stakeholders’ opinions concerning the potential for TMF to play a central role in the promotion of the case-study homestays are also analysed.

Figure 7.1 provides a summary of how the results have been derived from the data collection. The stakeholders¹³ in this study come from various organisations: the federal government, local state departments (hereafter, government officials), NGOs, private agencies, the local homestay coordinators from the two selected homestay programmes, homestay providers from KBH and GH, tourists who have visited KBH and GH, and a researcher from one of the local universities in Malaysia who has vast experience of conducting research on Malay cultural heritage in Malaysia. These participants have contributed their views and opinions towards the development of culinary heritage as part of the Malaysian homestay programme.

¹³ The stakeholders in this study refer to federal and local state government, NGO’s, and other private agencies (primary stakeholders), the homestay providers themselves and the receivers who are tourists.

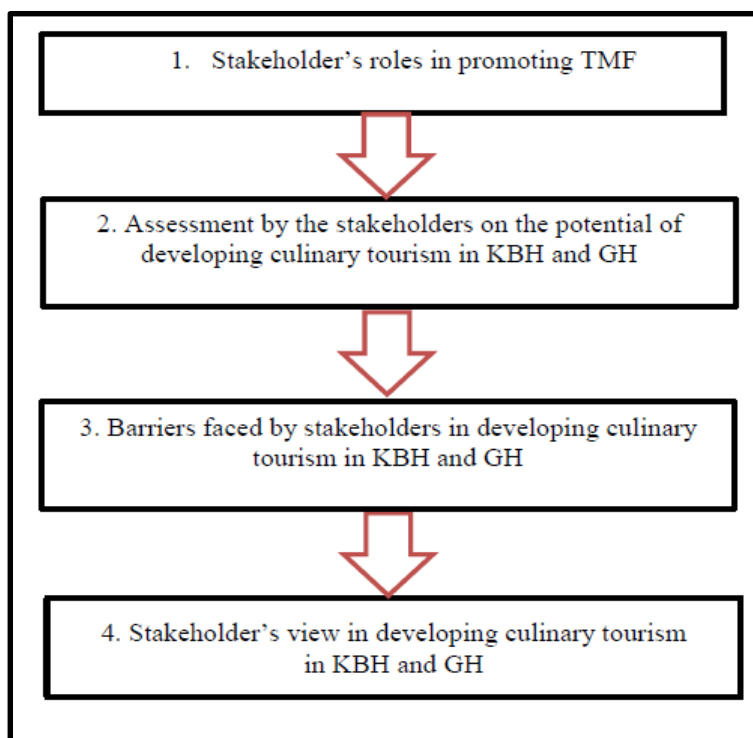


Figure 7. 1 Organising themes

7.1.1 Participants' Demographic

The demographic profile of the participants involved in this study is presented in Table 7.1. The participants range in age from 28 to 70 years old, and the majority are females (n=8). All of them (n=15) have a range of education, experience, and occupation. The 15 participants have a range of roles/responsibilities and ranks/positions, a fact which served to ensure richer data. The similarities and differences between their views and opinions were analysed before the final data were interpreted and discussed in detail below.

Table 7. 1 Demographic profile of participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Occupation	Organisations
Primary Stakeholder 1	Female	50	Principal Director	National Heritage Department (Government 1)
Primary Stakeholder 2	Female	30	Assistant Director	National Heritage Department (Government 1)
Primary Stakeholder 3	Male	35	Honorary Secretary General	Federal level (NGO 1)
Primary Stakeholder 4	Female	35	Administrative officer	State level MOTAC (Government 2)
Primary Stakeholder 5	Female	28	Assistant	State level MOTAC

			administrative officer	(Government 2)
Primary Stakeholder 6	Male	35	Administrative Officer	Federal MOTAC (Government 3)
Primary Stakeholder 7	Male	56	Chief of Director	State level Tourism Malaysia (Government 4)
Primary Stakeholder 8	Female	52	Former President	State level (NGO 2)
Primary Stakeholder 9	Female	46	Academician	Lecturer
Primary Stakeholder 10	Male	45	Coordinator	Homestay 1
Primary Stakeholder 11	Male	67	Coordinator and Head of Village	Homestay 2
Primary Stakeholder 12	Female	51	Committee members	Homestay 1
Primary Stakeholder 13	Male	70	Former Head of Village	Homestay 1
Primary Stakeholder 14	Female	29	Tour Operator	Travel Agency
Primary Stakeholder 15	Male	33	Owner	Private Homestay

Table 7.2 shows the four basic themes and its sub-themes that were brought up by the participants during interviews as identified by the researcher. The chapter discusses these themes and sub-themes, as shown in the below table in turn.

Table 7. 2 Identified basic themes from the thematic analysis

Basic Themes	Sub-themes
1] Stakeholders' roles in promoting TMF and homestay	1 a] Overview of homestay development in Malaysia and Perak; 1 b] Current development of homestays in Perak; 1 c] Support the women's role of promoting TMF in the homestay; and 1 d] Using ASEAN standards as a quality benchmark for TMF in the homestays.
2] Assessment of the stakeholders for developing culinary tourism in the homestay	2 a] Culinary authenticity; 2 b] Culinary products and experience; 2 c] Culinary resources; 2 d] Strategies and promotion; and, 2 e] Networking and collaboration for further development.
3] Barriers faced by stakeholders in developing culinary tourism in KBH and GH.	3 a] Problems/Issues faced in the homestay programme; 3 b] Lack of a genuine demonstration of cultural affection; and 3c] Power and influence of the stakeholders towards the programme.
4] Stakeholders' views in developing culinary tourism in the homestay programme	4 a] Homestay as a livelihood strategy for rural development; 4 b] The potential of TMF as a homestay product; 4 c] Economic benefits of inspiring the homestay providers to become actively involved; and 4 d] Feedback from industry players to build strong support.

7.2 Theme 1: Stakeholders' Roles in Promoting TMF and the Homestay

The first theme that emerged from the study revolved around the stakeholders' initiatives to sustain TMF as a homestay product. The most prominent result that emerge from the data concerns the role of women in supporting and upholding traditional and local food in most of the events and activities held through the homestay programme (see 7.2.3). Another observation that stands out from discussions with stakeholders is the importance of the implementation of specific standards such as the 2016 ASEAN Homestay Standards to measure the effectiveness of the programme (see 7.2.4). The main suggestion given by Primary Stakeholder 6 (hereafter PS6) and PS7, was that the homestay programme in Malaysia should put more effort into strengthening the homestay product through promoting the distinctiveness of local food. It was suggested that by promoting local cuisine, the homestays could also safeguard their food culture and preserve associated heritage values in which food culture is embedded.

A study by Kayat (2008) revealed that stakeholders' interest in the homestay programme depended on any one, or a combination of, three components: their power or lack of power to affect the programme (based on the resources that may be available to the programme); their dependency on the programme (how important the programme is to them); and the stakes (what is in it for them) they have in the development of the programme. Ultimately, efforts to promote and sustain TMF in homestays are also subject to how the government, local state authorities, homestay communities, and other supporting organisations work together in the planning and development of this cultural heritage to ensure that the homestay programme is sustainable in the long term. The two factors discussed below point to how stakeholders might support the promotion and safeguarding of local food as homestay assets.

7.2.1 Sub-theme 1a] Overview of Homestay Development in Malaysia and Perak

This section discusses the functions, interests, and concerns of the various stakeholders in the development of promoting homestay programme. The majority of those who responded to this issue felt that the use of TMF, in particular, is an essential component that can enhance the tourist experience as well as the homestay destination's image. An interview with PS6, an official from Government 3, indicated that homestays in Malaysia have various opportunities relating to local food. At the time of the interview, this participant was in-charge of all the homestay programmes in Malaysia. Thus, he had significant experience to share about the planning and development of the homestay programme and how the local cuisine can fit into its agenda.

According to PS 13 of Homestay 1, they started with the 'adoptive' concept ('*anak angkat*' in the Malay language) before the government changed it to become the official homestay programme in Malaysia. The 'adoptive concept' according to Khan *et al.*, (2009) is an integral part of the homestay programme and requires an understanding of the socio-cultural structure of the community. PS 6 informed that the homestay programme in Gopeng started after one of the members visited Sungai Itek Village which was involved in the programme. Sungai Itek Village in Gopeng, Perak, was involved before it officially became the foundation for the homestay programme in 2006. Following the success of this programme, the government decided to involve more villages, and Gopeng added in two more of their villages to join Sungai Itek as the official homestay programme.

The concept was first offered to students in secondary schools and universities all over Malaysia. The programme was organised by various agencies such as motivational consultant agencies, schools, and universities (Kayat and Mohd Nor, 2006). The students were required to stay with the villagers, with each 'foster family' having two to three students under their care for between three and five days. The students lived as a member of the family, participating in all their daily activities, and shared meals and bedrooms with the family's children. Very

often the students were given a nickname by the families (Khan *et al.*, 2009). PS13 stated that the programme was successful, and, as a result, the communities were motivated to engage further with the official homestay programme. This willingness to engage appears to have stemmed from local residents realising the benefits of tourism, which empowered them in economic, social, psychological, and political ways as found by Kayat and Nor (2006).

The homestay programme in Gopeng officially started in 2006. The initiative to start the homestay programme in Perak came from the Perak State Tourism Action, or Majlis Tindakan Pelancongan Negeri Perak (MTPN), after the success of the homestay in *Desa Murni Temerloh*, Pahang. MTPN started by informing villages in Perak about the benefits of their programme and the support that they had received by participating in it - especially the women. The person who started recruiting the villages and homestay providers for the Perak programme was the Past President of the NGO 2. She (PS8) was designated as a Vice President in 2017 after the researcher interviewed her for this study. At that time, she was working with MTPN, and the first thing she did was to ask the head of the village in her hometown in Gopeng to take part in the programme. She reflected that the process had been very tiring and exhausting, especially convincing local communities about the benefits of the programme and how it could support them in the long run. She emphasised how women could benefit from the programme, for example providing the accommodation and food to the tourists with the help of men.

Prior to this, there was no official homestay association in Perak, and PS13 took the initiative to register the unofficial homestay association. In setting up the formal association, she worked closely with the registry office to ensure that the association acted according to the government's guidelines. After the establishment of NGO 2, Pahang (another state in Malaysia) expressed its interest in establishing its own association before an association was finally set up at the national level - the Homestay Association of Malaysia. PS8 stressed that the initial establishment of the national homestay programme had been a challenge to everybody involved. The villagers were reluctant to join the programme, due to inadequate explanation (of the concept of the homestay programme) and

encouragement (of what support might be available). Potential homestay hosts in villages also worried about the cultural and language barriers, the food especially when hosting the international tourists. Establishing the programme was extremely hard work, as PS 11 from Homestay 2 reflected:

“It took all the blood and sweat of my life to make sure that everybody, especially the communities in this village, were giving their full commitment to become involve in the programmes.”

This statement was supported by PS 4 from Government 2 in Perak. She informed me that she had been involved with the programme from the beginning, and added that the process of administration and registration of the programme is often time-consuming due to the need to complete a great deal of paperwork before sending it to the Ministry headquarters in Putrajaya. She is answerable to the HQ staff if anything goes wrong and, in the event, that further clarifications and justifications about the application from other villages interested in participating in the homestay programme are required. PS 5, another government officer, noted that:

“The state office cannot make any decision. We are here to manage and administer the financial budget given by HQ. Then, we distribute the money to those villages that are successful in their application. Besides that, we are also in charge of the training or official programme for all the homestays in Perak.”

PS 4 asserted that the state office has no specific authority over, or interest in, the individual homestay programmes, in contrast to what was claimed by some of the homestay providers in Perak. She expressed frustration that, despite her having no authority, the coordinators of the homestay programmes and the local communities nevertheless often hold them responsible for any unapproved funds despite the fact that such decisions come from the Ministry headquarters in Putrajaya.

7.2.2 Sub-theme 1b] Current Development of Homestays in Perak

The interview with PS 4 revealed that the homestay programme in Perak has had significant success concerning its total income and the number of tourist arrivals

from 2009 to 2015 (see Table 7.3). The forecast is for this figure to continue an upward trend in the foreseeable future (Tourism Malaysia, 2012).

Table 7. 3 The number of domestic tourist arrivals at homestays in Perak 2009 to 2015 (most recent figures available)

(Source: Homestay Unit, Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC) Putrajaya)

No	State	Total Number of Domestic Tourists						
		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1.	Perak	3,280	3,448	3,179	6,073	6,142	9,219	10,724

However, the same period has seen a decrease in the number of international tourist arrivals at homestays. The highest number of international arrivals was in 2010, with 1,007 foreign tourists visiting homestays in Perak, while the lowest number was in 2015, when only 127 stayed (see Table 7.4). This result can be explained by the fact that between 2010 and 2015 the overall tourism industry in Malaysia suffered a decline due to several unexpected issues such as: political instability, the natural disasters of SARS and bird flu epidemic, and isolated incidents of kidnapping. However, the most significant influences on the decline in tourism were the disappearance, in 2014, of Malaysian Airlines Flight (MH370) from Kuala Lumpur to China and the crash of Malaysian Airlines Flight (MH17), also in 2014, which was shot down while flying over eastern Ukraine enroute from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur (Habibi, 2017). PS 6 mentioned that international tourists became more anxious about their personal safety and security as a result of these incidents.

Table 7. 4 The number of international tourist arrivals at homestays in Perak 2009 to 2015 (most recent figures available) (Source: Homestay Unit, MOTAC Putrajaya)

No	State	Total Number of Foreign Tourists (per person)						
		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
1.	Perak	809	1,007	540	238	298	421	127

The same report shows that total homestay income for Perak for this period fluctuated but ended the period substantially higher than it began (see Table 7.5). The government predicts that the total revenue for the homestays will continue increasing in the coming years in line with the Malaysia Tourism Transformation Plan 2020 (Tourism Malaysia, 2012).

Table 7. 5 Total homestay income for Perak 2009 to 2015 (most recent figures available)
(Source: Homestay Unit, MOTAC Putrajaya)

No	Year	Total Income (RM)	Total Income (£)
1.	2009	385,312.00	71,487.56
2.	2010	583,451.00	108,248.61
3.	2011	277,295.00	51,446.99
4.	2012	300,720.00	55,793.07
5.	2013	292,340.00	54,238.31
6.	2014	497,489.00	92,299.94
7.	2015	550,746.00	102,180.80

The figures in general show that homestays in Perak have excellent potential to grow and develop in the future, after the income dropped in 2011, with domestic tourist arrivals continuing to increase year on year starting from 2013. The statistics are based on the overall achievement of the homestays in Perak and do not refer to individual homestays. Under the Malaysia Tourism Transformation Plan 2020, The Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (hereafter, MOTAC) has targeted 36 million tourists and 168 billion RM in receipts by 2020.

The above results could be seen to suggest that Perak lacks adequate promotional plans and marketing strategies targeting international tourists to visit homestays. The observation, that the government of Perak has a poorly coordinated marketing, advertising, promoting, selling and servicing plan to attract international tourists, was also reported by Ali (2013). He stressed that marketing and networking are the essence of promoting Perak to both domestic and international tourists. According to Ali, Perak has a lot to offer (regarding rural tourism) though he questioned whether it has been marketed effectively to the public yet. Moreover, he emphasised that Perak has not been aggressively promoting the place for tourists to experience nature and history, as it does not appear to have that much to be proud of. It is therefore, recommended that better promotion and publicity plans are required to increase the awareness of both domestic and international tourists of the uniqueness of the homestay programme in Perak.

PS 6 mentioned that the government is now focusing on bringing back international tourists to visit the homestay programme in Malaysia by doing a lot

of promotional campaigns and marketing activities, both nationally, targeting international tourists already in-country, and abroad. However, the government is at the same time shifting its key priority focus for the homestay markets by targeting domestic tourists (largely because the above-mentioned incidents have not had such a negative impact on domestic tourism). It would be useful if Government 3 could commission an individualised report for each homestay in Perak so that they can focus on the individual performance of each homestay. In particular, the focus should be on those less successful homestays that receive a smaller number of visitors.

PS 6 noted that he was aware of the lack of marketing by the government to attract international tourists to the homestay programme, but due to a lack of staff in his department he has not been able to give it the due attention it warrants. He was confident that the introduction of the ASEAN Homestay Standards in 2016 would lead to more appropriate marketing and promotional programmes to be carried out by the related government agencies as stated in the manual for ASEAN Homestay Standard 2016 (ASEAN Homestay Standard, 2016). The certified homestay programmes also will benefit from the branding of ASEAN Standard which is an international recognition. Up to now, there are six benefits and privileges guaranteed by the Standard (although these may vary between ASEAN countries). Participating homestays will be (1) issued with an ASEAN Homestay Standards certificate, logo, and plaque to be displayed on the homestay premises; (2) promoted on the ASEAN Organisation Official Website (<http://www.asean.org>); (3) promoted at ASEAN and international tourism events, festivals, and forums; (4) given priority listing on National Tourism Organisation's websites and brochures; (5) given priority to participate in national and international tourism fairs organised by National Tourism Organisations, and (5) given priority to participate in free training programmes (tourist guide courses, etc.) (ASEAN Homestay Standard, 2016, pg. 40).

7.2.3 Sub-theme 1c] Support the Women's Role of Promoting TMF in the Homestay

Women are seen as the backbone of the programme, as PS 11 noted:

“The women in KBH are the pillar and strength of this homestay because most of the activities such as cooking, hospitality, cottage industries and looking after the tourists are handled by them.”

He also emphasised, nevertheless, the role of men supporting their wives in the programme. The unity and the success of the homestay product would be unthinkable if the men of the villages did not tolerate, and support, the involvement of their wives in the homestay programme. He said that mutual understanding between husband and wife is essential. In addition to this, he also confirmed that the active participation of women in KBH contributed not only to the whole development of their homestay programme, but that it had also had a positive impact on their local economy. The women establish their cottage industries based around their traditional foods, handicrafts, mat making and weaving, and so forth. The idea was initially to revitalise their traditional culture and heritage and to showcase these traditions to the homestay tourists. However due to the demand from tourists primarily for the traditional snacks, fermented fish, and handicrafts, the homestay providers started selling these products to the tourists staying in their homestay programme. The cottage industries were the most prominent businesses in this homestay as the women produce snacks from the local ingredients such as tapioca chips, banana chips, traditional biscuits and cakes, and fermented fish from their freshwater fish. The commercial sales from these products supplement their homestay income and currently the women are expanding their businesses to other villages all around Lenggong and Perak. PS 11 also mentioned that a number of the homestay providers offer cooking courses for tourists if they are interested in learning more about the local traditional food and delicacies. He also added that the women in KBH play a role in providing a wide range of information to the tourists, such as traditional medicines and ecological knowledge from nearby forests, the herbs and spices that they plant in the house compound, knowledge about the customary practices and beliefs of the people, and also local legends and stories. He observed that this cultural heritage shared by the women in this homestay programme was passed on during informal conversations between them and homestay tourists.

7.2.4 Sub-theme 1d] Using ASEAN Standards as Quality Benchmarks for TMF

The interviews held with government stakeholders revealed that the attractions of the homestay programme are in themselves inadequate if the homestay providers do not maintain the quality and standard of their homestay (see section 7.4.1 on page 208). For that reason, they brought up the issue of improving the low level of quality of some of the homestays. The interviews established that a number of crucial steps need to be implemented to reach certain standards for the improvement and development of the homestay programme in Malaysia. The first point was raised by PS 4, who commented that Government 3 is now in the process of reviewing the standards for every homestay in Malaysia in compliance with the 2016 ASEAN Homestay Standards. The pre-existing guidelines used by Government 3 entailed checking the quality of the homestays once every three years. This was deemed inadequate if higher standards are to be reached and maintained. Instead, PS 4 recommended an annual audit to uncover and resolve any issues concerning quality assurance before the introduction of the ASEAN Homestay Standards.

He noted that regional Government 2 offices could immediately report to the central office on any matters facing an individual homestay programme, specifically matters which threaten the sustainability of a homestay provider, so that they could assist and guide them as early as possible. He emphasised that Government 2 and 3 offers their help only for those homestays that really need assistance or homestays that have failed to thrive in their programme. Furthermore, when Government 3 initially set a time limit to conduct an audit within three years, he noted that they were not capable of tracking and settling every problem, especially for those homestays that fail to sustain and survive in the industry. In contrast, a yearly audit would allow Government 2 and 3 to tackle any outstanding issues and help the homestay to rectify them. PS 5 concurred, noting that a number of weaknesses have been uncovered during the audit process. Obviously, if an audit is conducted only every three years, the number of issues will in all likelihood increase if not addressed quickly. As Pusiran and Xiao (2013) explain, when the homestay programme are not regularly monitored and no formal management system is in place in the organisation, such as working

committees, meetings, minutes of meetings, etc., the lack of records and information may lead to incorrect statistics and improper understanding of the sustainability of any particular homestay programme. Therefore, PS 5, was hoping that through the implementation of the ASEAN Homestay Standard (2016), the government could identify areas needing to be improved, particularly homestay products and services, and enable identification of opportunities for the homestay programme in Malaysia to further expand in the future.

Normally, the audit process is carried out by an official from a Government 2 state office and the results are relayed to the headquarters in Putrajaya, which determines whether or not their certified providers who have been audited are still complying with the rules and regulations. The audit process does not only involve the re-inspection of the homestay providers' homes but also reviews the performance of the homestay concerning their income, the number of tourist arrivals, events, activities, and performances put on by a homestay's management. Routinely, the assessment for the homestay programme encompassed the core requirements developed by Government 3. Following the introduction of the comprehensive homestay standards developed by ASEAN, in line with the ASEAN Tourism Strategic Plan (ATSP) in 2011-2015, Government 3 started to view the homestay programme as a serious business which needs to be developed in a more presentable and attractive manner. PS 6 explained that adoption of the 2016 ASEAN Homestay Standards could improve the quality and level of the homestay programme in Malaysia. According to him, Malaysia was instrumental in promoting the development of these standards. Other ASEAN countries have already adopted and have begun to implement the new ASEAN standards to promote their community-based tourism and Malaysia needed to do the same.

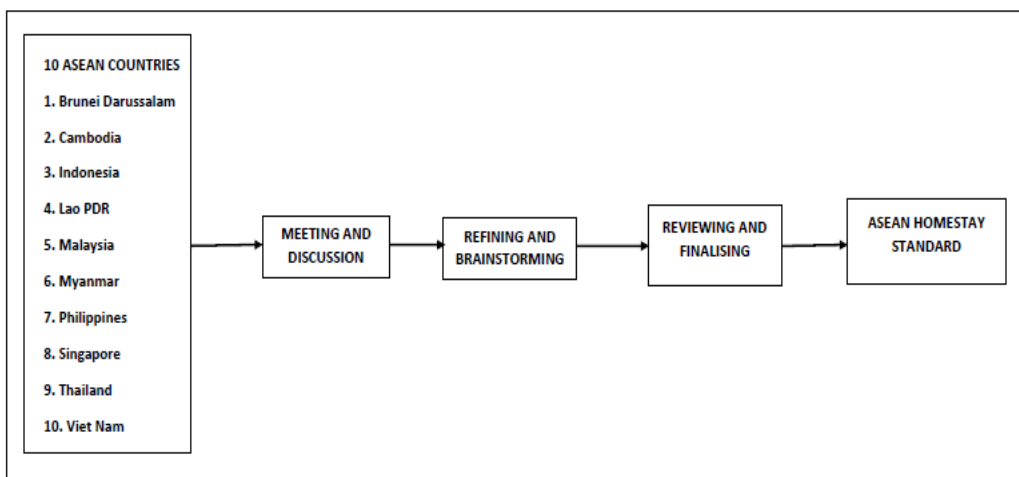


Figure 7. 2 The execution of the ASEAN Homestay Standards by the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) in 2012 (reinforced in 2016) (Source: PS 6)

PS 6 claimed that the process of finalising the ASEAN Homestay Standards was tedious as they had to go through a number of revisions (see Figure 7.2). Meetings were held by board members to brainstorm new ideas on how they might improve the structure and guidelines of the homestay programme based on what had been proposed by Malaysia. According to him, the brainstorming process entailed the enhancement of the existing homestay structure so that the other ASEAN countries could contribute their ideas and apply the standards to their respective countries. Singapore, for example, was invited to this meeting together with the rest of ASEAN countries even though they did not have a homestay programme, and their contribution was respected. According to the guidelines, the new standards had to be approved on the basis of anonymity before they could be implemented nationally. As part of the new guidelines, each member state (except Singapore) needed to identify their five best homestays to be evaluated according to the new standards. Malaysia submitted their top five homestays from Sabah, Sarawak, Pahang, Negeri Sembilan and Selangor for assessment and each was successfully awarded the ASEAN Homestay Standard Award.

In addition to the ASEAN Homestay Standards to be applied to all the homestays in Malaysia, PS 6 also said that their homestay unit has, in conjunction with a Malaysian research university, started a research project to benchmark the performance of the Malaysian homestay programme against other ASEAN countries. PS 6 noted that Malaysia has been seen as a role model country

concerning community-based tourism amongst the ASEAN countries. In 2012, the homestay programme in Malaysia was internationally recognised by the world tourism industry when the country took first place in the Ulysses Award in Public Policy and Governance, awarded by the UNWTO in Istanbul, Turkey. For that reason also, Malaysia’s homestay programme was selected as a role model to develop the ASEAN Homestay Standards for ASEAN member states. PS 4 and 5 expressed their keenness to implement these standards as soon as possible because they believe that the monitoring process for each of the homestay programmes in Perak would become more systematic:

“I am sure that with this new standard, we can identify which homestays are active and which are not so that we can help them to survive.” (PS 5)

The summary of theme 1 obtained from the preliminary analysis of the stakeholders’ roles in promoting TMF and homestay are shown in Table 7.6. The summaries from four sub-themes which is from 1a to 1d are gathered in below table.

Table 7. 6 Theme 1: Stakeholders’ roles in promoting TMF and homestay

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
ROLE1	Stakeholders believe that the local communities are only interested in the benefits of the programme and expect the government to assist them in running the homestays.
ROLE2	Homestay programmes in Malaysia are developed and financed by the MOTAC, but they are managed by the state departments of the MOTAC. However, it is expected for the homestay programmes to generate their own income by creating cultural products and services for tourist attractions.
ROLE3	The local communities are depending on the stakeholders for financial assistance. They also tend to limit their power in operating the programme due to their monetary interests.
ROLE4	Homestay programmes in Perak have been successful from in terms of total income and number of domestic tourists between 2009 and 2015. However, the number of foreign tourists has decreased in 2015 due to unexpected issues in Malaysia.
ROLE5	Evidence shows that homestay programmes in Perak have the potential to succeed, with the condition that the homestay providers increase their cultural products and services. They should also improve their marketing and promotional materials to make the programmes more well-known especially amongst tourists. The marketing and promotion of their programmes should be aimed to reach the right tourist groups.
ROLE6	Statistics have shown that homestay programmes need more niche marketing strategies for their traditional food knowledge (TFK), to enhance their rural areas with a specific history and tradition, which is mainly related to rural food tourism activities.
ROLE7	The MOTAC is confident that the introduction of ASEAN Homestay Standards in 2016 would lead to more appropriate marketing and promotional programmes for the homestay in Malaysia as well as improving the quality of the homestay.

ROLE8	The monitoring process for each homestay programme in Perak has to be done more systematically. The government has to also carry out the audit process, which does not only involve the re-inspection of the homestays, but also reviews the performance of the homestay concerning their income, the number of tourist arrivals, events, activities, and performances put on by a homestay's management.
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7.3 Theme 2: Assessment of the Stakeholders for Developing Culinary Tourism in the Homestay

7.3.1 Sub-theme 2a] Culinary Authenticity;

Firstly, stakeholders unanimously concurred that the main feature of the homestay programme could be devised around the uniqueness and authenticity of its local food culture and traditions. Food, combined with other aspects of local tradition and culture such as daily life in an authentic traditional village, dancing, handicrafts, and cultural performances, are defacto what make the homestay experience a uniquely fascinating tourism product in Malaysia (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010). However, developing and promoting TMF can contribute another unique aspect of homestays. KBH, for example, uses a deer farm as a unique production system to promote their local dishes. The demand for deer has increased since the farm has been supported by the Department of Veterinary Services in Perak. PS 11, of Homestay 2, noted that the deer farm had provided another gastronomic activity available to their homestay and had contributed to the homestay's income.

At the same time, local food businesses run by some homestay providers, producing local snacks like fermented fish, Malay cakes and pastries, have given them an additional motivation to stay active in the homestay programme. PS 11's role as a coordinator of the homestay programme for Homestay 2 is to provide the right direction and support to the homestay providers to empower them to managing the business, including culinary activities based on TMF. He also facilitates the providers to find their strengths through small food

businesses such as supplying fermented fish and Malay local snacks to tourists and visitors so that they can contribute to the growth and development of their homestay. However, by finding and identifying the capabilities of the homestay providers in producing local businesses from TMF in KBH, he believes that they could work together with the other relevant actors, such as national and local government officials, so they can take their small food industry from its homestay programme to another level.

On the same question, PS 10, of Homestay 1, declared that GH has a unique attraction in Rawa traditional food. He argued that not many people were aware that GH is famous for Rawa cuisine due to a lack of marketing and promotion by the homestay providers. But he was confident that with the right promotional material, local traditional food in GH could win tourists over. PS 8, of NGO 2 concurred, mentioning that GH has different attractions concerning TMF compared to other homestay destinations in Perak. However, as noted above (section 7.4.2), both stakeholders have concerns that local providers need to adapt their attitude to become more engaged with local food preparation. As PS 8 put it, the preservation of traditional Rawa food depends first and foremost on input from the homestay providers. By strengthening Rawa food promotion and activities, word-of-mouth promotion could begin to spread to other tourists across Malaysia, for example, through social media platforms.

7.3.2 Sub-theme 2b] Culinary Products and Experience;

Eighty per cent of the stakeholders agreed that sustaining and preserving the local food culture and traditions through the homestay programme should be a strategic elements of the country's national tourist agenda. The sustainability of this tourism product depends on how the government, local authorities, and homestay communities support one another in the planning and development of the homestay programmes. As PS 7 said: 'sustaining and preserving TMF as an intrinsic aspect of local culture should be treated as a Unique Selling Point (USP) in every homestay programme'. He describes that the Ipoh Food Trail project was one example of an opportunity for the homestay to create more products and services through TMF for their tourists. He encouraged homestays to promote

their strengths in local culinary traditions as part of the overall package offered to tourists. As PS 10 said:

“As a host, I want the tourists to reminisce about our traditional food and hospitality as well as the bonding that we have in the homestay. We want to be remembered by the tourists so they will revisit us.”

The relationship of ‘foster family’ to tourists is significant for the programme to attract them to come and stay in the homestay. Apart from living in a traditional village in rural areas, eating together as an ‘extended family’ can be one of the central selling factors for the homestay programme (see Figure 7.3).

PS 3, told me about his experience:

“One Japanese couple shed tears when the host family invited them to eat together at one table. They rarely have time to eat with the family, and this is the platform that we need to highlight in the homestay.”



Figure 7. 3 Eating together during breakfast, lunch or dinner time is a tradition for Malay community (Source: Author)

In addition to this aspect of Malay culture and tradition, another potential aspect that could benefit homestay providers is derived from being a commercial enterprise in the Small and Medium Industries (SME) and cottage industry sector. Indeed, KBH is an example of a successful cottage industry among the homestays in Perak. The local communities are currently successful in selling their local fermented fish and also traditional Malay snacks and savouries to locals and tourists. PS 11 informed me that:

“The providers in this homestay mostly do village labour work. So they take the opportunities to come out with local food products to make extra money.”

The interviews with the national and government stakeholders also revealed that the homestay providers in Malaysia participate in ongoing courses and workshops run by the Community and Development Department (KEMAS), coming under the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development (MRRD). The MRRD also plays a significant part in the development of the homestay programme in Malaysia (Muslim *et al.*, 2017). The Rural Development Master Plan drafted by MRRD, uses the national homestay programme to provide the infrastructure for the development, training, and capacity-building of the rural communities. The Master Plan also was structured to encourage villagers in rural Malaysia to stay in their homes rather than seek their fortune in cities (Muslim *et al.*, 2017). KEMAS provides educational and vocational courses, such as running domestic science classes for women, religious classes, literacy classes, pre-school classes, leadership courses and so on (Shamsul, 1988). Through these training courses and workshops, the Malaysian government inspires rural communities to look beyond the homestay strictly and to consider ways of generating income from the skills and knowledge acquired through it. Some of the classes provided by KEMAS include making traditional snacks, cakes and pastries, aromatherapy candles, sewing traditional clothes, and so on. Moreover, the government also believes that successful cottage industries, developed on the back of the homestay programme, would lend extra support to the wider economy as well as the homestay programme in the longer term.

Another point addressed by PS 5, from Government 2, related to the political advantages received by the homestay programme through a healthy relationship with official national and local government stakeholders. PS 5 suggested that most of the staff in Government 2 are delighted with how the KBH maintains this relationship. She expressed that:

“KBH is self-determining in looking after the subsidy. The homestay knows where they can get the support and help concerning finances.”

Some of the extended benefits received by KBH from the government include new buildings and facilities to develop their homestays while at the same time protecting their local nature and heritage. One notable project financed by the government for KBH was the Desa Lestari project (see Figure 7.4). This scheme was provided to KBH to build several private chalets in their neighbourhood for tourists who like to go fishing on Lake Raban. The Desa Lestari scheme comes under the MRRD. The financial assistance was given to KBH to improve their village incomes through the village official cooperatives, and in turn the profits can also be used for other projects in KBH, such as agriculture, cottage industries, and so on. PS 11 noted that he had assigned some of the homestay providers to cater food for the tourists during their stay in these private chalets, as well as giving responsibility for the cleaning and housekeeping. He noted this is another way that the homestay providers can be assisted to generate income in addition to that generated by the more narrowly understood homestay programme.



Figure 7. 4 Desa Lestari Project awarded to Kampong Beng' Homestay by MRRD
(Source: Author)

These encouraging results show that the efforts of the KBH homestay programme to become more independent in managing their tourism product have met with some success. Consequently, it is widely held that Government 2 should promote KBH as a successful model of networking between homestays and national and local government stakeholders for homestay development and management, as an exemplar from which other homestays may learn through networking and learning partnerships.

The results of this study show that the benefits received by the homestay programme and the homestay providers can be seen as multifaceted - economic, cultural, environmental, social and political (see Figure 7.5 below). The economic benefits discussed above (see section 7.5.3 on page 221), show that the homestay programme in Malaysia has contribute to improve the total income of the homestay providers by empowering providers, particularly women, to become actively involved in small food production and consumption as a result of the programme. At the same time, the homestay programme also recognised the cultural benefits received by the providers in a form of cultural exchange with tourists, for example, through the uniqueness of the concept 'eating together' with the host families (see Figure 7.3.2 on page 193). The homestay programme also implements an initiative to protect the environment by promoting the PAT programme as mentioned above, on how the government support in relation to the environmental preservation in homestay communities and at the same time to beautify the homestay landscape in each of the homestay programmes (see Figure 7.6 on page 200).

The kitchen garden project also implies that the homestay providers could benefit economically as they could provide the freshly home-grown produce like herbs and vegetables for tourists' consumption. The homestay programme has been part of the political agenda since 1987 (Jamal *et al.*, 2011), and received a political boost through a healthy relationship and positive networking with other government agencies and NGO's through the Rural Development Master Plan (see page 195). The Ninth Malaysia Plan, for example, has included the homestay programme as a means of promoting greater local participation in tourism (Jamal *et al.*, 2011). KBH has shown political benefits received by their homestay programme through a vigorous networking with the stakeholders. Lastly, the results of this study also found that homestay programme has presented a significant impact towards the development of social capital and kampong values among the homestay providers such as maintaining the communal activities that focus around TMF that creates a feeling of togetherness, as well as nourishing a sense of attachment within the community (see page 199). As a whole, these observations suggest that there is an association between the above five aspects towards the development of the homestay programme in Malaysia.

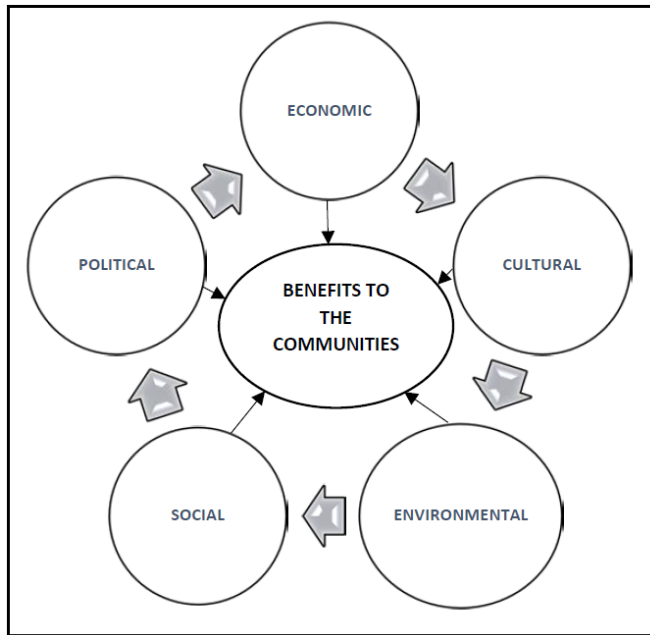


Figure 7. 5 The advantages of the homestay programme to the local communities

In general, based on the discussions held with stakeholders, Table 7.7 below shows the essential strengths which need to be engaged by both stakeholders and homestay providers to successfully administer homestay programmes. The table summarises the internal and external strengths needed by the homestay programme to ensure the sustainability of the programme in the future.

Table 7. 7 The identified strengths of the homestay for both case studies

Internal Strength	External Strength
The uniqueness of the culture and traditions	Strong support from government agencies and NGOs
Traditional and authentic food	Strong branding and identity of the homestay programme
Storytelling and reminiscence	Aggressive marketing and promotions
Aggressive cooperatives organisation	Collaboration and networking with industry players
Strong entrepreneurial ability	Word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing and promotions
High commitment and involvement from the communities	
Dynamic communities	
Strategic location and attractions	
Take pride in the culture and traditions	
Women and community empowerment in the programme	
Reasonable price for the packages	

7.3.3 Sub-theme 2c] Culinary Resources;

Another suggestion coming from stakeholders is for providers to nurture a sense of attachment (SOA) and sense of ownership (SOO) towards the cultural place, food, and traditions relevant to their homestays. PS 11 shared his techniques for developing and creating a SOA and SOO amongst the homestay providers in his homestay programme. He created a system whereby only the same individual can bring tourists to specific local attractions in KBH. This means that this assigned provider will be entirely responsible for the homestay activities that he or she has been charged with. For example, the same provider will accompany tourists to the waterfalls in KBH as one of the homestay activities during their stay. As noted by PS 11, the waterfalls in this homestay are one of the primary assets of KBH, and the responsibility to preserve and maintain this natural resource is imperative as it represents the image and identity of this homestay programme.

Therefore, in becoming a ‘specialist’ or an ‘expert’ in that particular facet of the homestay, a provider cultivates a SOA and SOO with that natural resource. The same principle is extended to other homestay activities, including food demonstrations. PS 11 assigned two homestay providers to be fully in charge of these food preparation activities, and thus any tourist interested in learning about these traditional foods is brought to those homestay providers’ homes for food demonstrations. He remarked that this practice, in use since he was given the mandate to lead the homestay programme, has contributed significantly to cultivating a SOA and SOO amongst the homestay providers in KBH.

In respect to the above results, PS 10 mentioned about the connection of SOA and SOO between the GH communities. A SOA and SOO can be demonstrated through the kitchen garden project initiated by the homestay providers in GH. My observation in GH found that majority of the homestay providers grow their herbs, vegetables and fruits either in the backyard or lawn areas (see Figure 7.6).



**Figure 7. 6 A kitchen garden grown by one of the homestay providers in GH
(Source: Author)**

PS 6, from Government 3, said that they always encourage homestay providers to grow their own produce and plant vegetable gardens to produce food. The providers can make the best use of the herbs, flowers, and vegetables that they plant in their compounds or from the surrounding areas and sell them to tourists instead of buying ingredients from markets. As a result, they have a variety of fresh and organic herbs and vegetables that are both valuable for cooking and also as identity markers of their local community (as well as saving the homestay providers money). At the same time, he highlighted that by growing their kitchen garden, the homestay providers also could take this opportunity to promote traditional Malay herbs, vegetables and fruits to make authentic and traditional dishes for tourists. PS 6 also emphasised that Government 3 always wanted different homestay programmes/ locations to develop their signature dishes because that is one of the reasons why the tourists want to visit their homestay. The tourists like to try food that is different to that which is available in the city or in other places. Subsequently, Government 3 wants the homestays to aggressively highlight their authentic food to tourists so that it will become a source of authentic memories for them from their stay in their homestay.

Similarly, PS 7, from Government 4, suggested that TMF can be a major strategy to attract tourists to come and stay with local families at a homestay:

“Most of the village’s food is difficult to find in the city nowadays. So the providers should aim to make their traditional food a central point in their homestays. They must produce a unique food that can trigger the tourists to try and eat it. Usually, the tourists like a new thing and they are going to treasure this experience.”

Again, PS 6 from Government 3 underlined that Government 3 always encourages the providers to use their traditional food as a selling factor in their homestay packages:

“Traditional food is one of the easiest ways to promote the homestay. By making known to the tourist their food specialities, they can save a lot of money instead of taking along the tourist to dine in a restaurant. The tourists can also learn how to cook their cultural food and bond together with the host families.”

In other respects, matters regarding the authenticity of homestay food were also discussed with PS 3, the Honorary Secretary General of NGO 1, who explained that the homestay providers should feel honoured and proud of their culture and food heritage. His concerns were more about how the providers present their food culture food and traditions to tourists:

“I didn’t like the idea of fake food demonstrations in the homestay because it was not authentic! They just did it for the sake of the tourist. I want them to do the real thing such as letting the tourists visit their home kitchen, pluck the herbs and vegetables from their garden and do the cooking together with them from scratch.”

PS 3 believed that the providers should promote traditional food in a more natural way instead of simulating an authentic experience because this is a fundamental reason behind tourist visits. The providers should be creative in making more exciting ways of promoting their traditional food because a portion of food is the easiest way to attract people and it is a way of communicating and connecting with people, in particular strangers. As PS 11 said:

“Cooking traditional food with tourists could lead to enduring memories of staying in our homestay. We are famous for traditional village food, and of course we should strongly promote this element to the tourist. The village cuisines are part of the image and identity of Kampong Beng Homestay.”

This statement is supported by PS 6 about his experience in treasuring authentic food in the homestays in Sabah and Sarawak. He realised that the homestay programme in these two states was excellent compared to some of the homestay programmes in West Malaysia. He stressed that he was very impressed with the situation in Sabah and Sarawak, and had inquired as to how the programmes were managed. He observed that the homestays in both states are committed to promoting and showcasing the authenticity of their traditional food to tourists. The presentation of food was intertwined with the promotion of other elements of local culture, such as traditional clothes, dance performances, and handicrafts. The homestay providers invite the tourists to join them to eat their local cuisine in the traditional way, off one large tray placed on the floor using the right hand only while listening to traditional music and watching traditional dance.

This observation is supported by PS 7, who stated that Sabah and Sarawak are excellent at promoting their culture and heritage because they are still practising and doing most of their cultural activities on a regular basis. Again, according to PS 6, the providers in Sarawak were very excited and full of passion when they gave live cooking demonstrations. He could even remember the intricate details of how the food was prepared and the unique taste, proving how traditional food can serve to store lasting and enjoyable memories of a destination. Furthermore, he noted how admirable it was that Sabah and Sarawak were preserving their culture and traditions through the efforts of local homestay communities.

7.3.4 Sub-theme 2d] Strategies and Promotion

The discussions with the stakeholders revealed that the growth and development of promoting TMF do not stem only from the efforts undertaken by the homestay organisation and the individual providers. The success of KBH, for example, entails the support of national and government officials such as the State of Perak, Members of Parliament, and the District Council. Figure 7.7 presents a flowchart which shows the assistance received by KBH. These villages belong to Lenggong's parliament constituency in Hulu Perak District, Perak, and in 2012

Lenggong Valley was inscribed as a World Heritage Site (WHS) by UNESCO. The massive subsequent development in the Lenggong Valley is associated with WHS recognition, and most of the homestay programmes in Perak were not as fortunate as KBH to receive this growth and expansion impetus. For this reason, PS 11 said that he did not expect promotion or marketing to be undertaken by NGO 2 for their homestay (see Figure 7.7) because of the support received by their homestay from national and government official as well as other organisations.

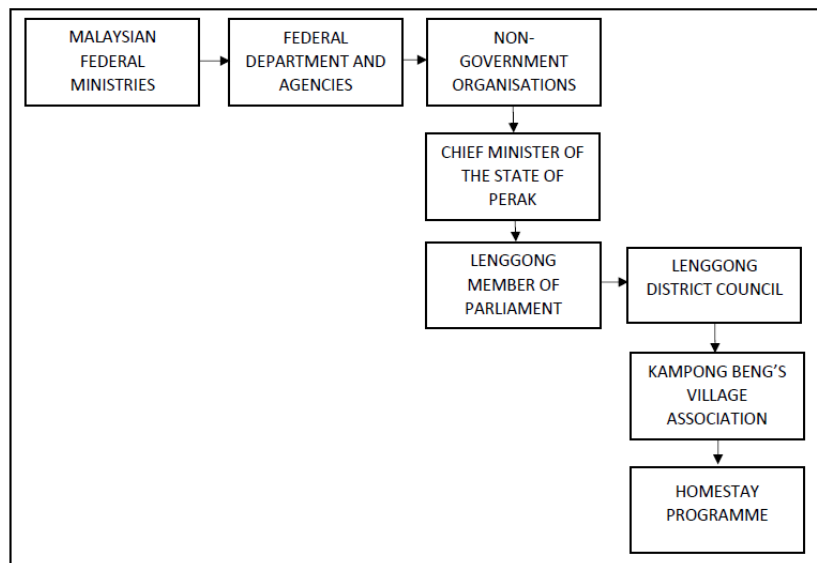


Figure 7.7 Flowchart for the support received by the homestay programme in Kampong Beng

In addition, the KBH homestay programme was established with the help and support given by Government 1. Government 1 is one of the agencies from Government 3, and it joined forces with Lenggong's city council to organise the yearly Lenggong Traditional Food Festival in Lenggong Valley. The first food festival began in 2011, and has been held every year since in Lenggong's square, attracting visitors coming from all over Malaysia and beyond to experience the uniqueness of Lenggong traditional food events. KBH is one of the villages in Lenggong presenting their traditional food known as *umbut bayas* by offering cooking demonstrations to the public. PS 4 stated that the homestay did not ask for any funding from them to participate in this event because the Mayor is willing to fund the festival using the city council's money.

The villagers in surrounding Lenggong County also are very supportive and committed to making this event a success. Collaboration and planning from the wider county to showcase local food specialties mean that every village is present at the event. The *Penghulu* or Head of Village from each community promotes two or three dishes from their village that represent the image and identity of their people. Most of the villages in Lenggong have similar food but the actual dishes have a different character, different names and cooking styles according to area. Thus, the heads of local villages ensure that there will be no overlap among the foods on display. From this example it can be concluded that KBH uses this food festival as a platform to promote their traditional food to raise local awareness and hence, might attract more tourists to visit their homestay programme. The power of networking and collaboration with national and government officials has made their homestay viable in the long run. The official added that the past Minister of Government 3, Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz, was proud of the success of the Lenggong Food Festival and the uniqueness of this county's traditional food. He told the press during a press conference at the 2015 Lenggong Food Festivals that he enjoyed the food so much in Lenggong when the reporter asked him which food in Perak that has the most sentimental value for him.

7.3.5 Sub-theme 2e] Networking and Collaboration for Further Development

This final section explores the results of the initiatives taken by the homestay stakeholders to safeguard and sustain their homestay programmes so that they can continue to uphold them as potentially major tourism products in Malaysia. Ultimately, the long-term sustainability of the whole homestay programme depends on the initiatives and efforts taken by the individual homestay programmes and the national programme coordinators and managers to network and collaborate on events and activities and publicise and promote their programmes.

The interview with PS 14, representing private travel agencies, revealed that a substantial amount of marketing and networking had been done by Government 4 to provide exposure of the homestay programme to the media and tour and travel agents. The company has been invited by Government 4 to several

homestays and asked to promote these destinations to tourists by coming up with attractive packages. For example, in April 2016 PS 14 was invited to stay in one of the homestays in Perak that was undertaking an agro-tourism project. PS 14 said that this was one of the initiatives run by Government 3 and Government 4 to promote the homestay based on the agro-tourism industry in Malaysia. Usually, Government 4 will invite industry players to experience the programme first-hand and write reviews and give feedback about those destinations and projects. An interview with PS 7, of Government 4, revealed that they are involved in devising tourism events and activities for the homestay programme in Perak. For example, they organised a FAM (familiarisation) Trip Agro Tourism to promote farm stays in that village. Besides developing the product from this homestay, he said that this is another way how Government 4 supports and encourages the homestay providers to be pro-active in the programme. For example, one event that has become popular in the homestay programme is the endurance and strength competition game called Badang Malaysia, organised in Labu Kubong Homestay. PS 7, stated that:

“We want the homestay providers to be attached and stay connected to us. We need to constantly encourage them so that they will keep the dynamic in the programme.”

PS 3, also mentioned that homestays in Malaysia usually receive a substantial amount of support from the tourism industry. Their NGO organisation, for example, aims to help the homestays and rural tourism in Malaysia by exposing tourists to the homestay experience through rail travel. However, they can only support the homestay programme located adjacent to railway stations operated by Malayan Railways Limited (KTMB). The programme started in 2010 when the Malaysian Homestay Program is linked to the Malaysian Railway to form a new Malaysian Homestay Railway Tourism aimed at promoting an experience of culture, tradition and lifestyle of the Malay Kampongs (Ramele *et al.*, 2017). The packages provide railway transportation to each homestay program across North and South known as Intercity Routes. The main long-distance routes started with Johor Bahru (and Singapore) through the Gemas Station that also known as West Coast Line (also called the North-South route) and goes up the western side of Peninsular Malaysia past Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Penang and up to (and across) the Thai Border (Tourism Malaysia, 2018). There are several

packages promoted by KTMB, known as 'Experience Malaysian Homestay by Rail'. One of the packages offers a North and East Bound Homestay Package. It covers a rail tour and homestay packages from Kuala Lumpur to Penang Island, Penang to Perak, Perak to Kelantan, Kelantan to Pahang, and finally, Pahang to Kuala Lumpur. Other packages offer a rail package that covers seven states in Kedah, Pulau Pinang, Perak, Selangor, Malacca, Pahang and Kelantan.

These results confirm the statement from PS 6, who reported that their organisation runs two annual international carnivals in Japan and Singapore dedicated to the homestay programme in Malaysia. In addition, the Homestay Association of Malaysia also holds joint ventures with Government 4 to collaborate on fairs and campaigns to promote homestays. A rotation system was implemented for the thirteen states in Malaysia to join and get involved in these shows, specifically if there is any new homestay programme suitable for promotion to the international market. At these fairs and shows, homestay programmes are encouraged to bring their handicrafts or products such as TMF to showcase to foreign tourists. Government 3 believe that by promoting homestays at international events they could inspire the homestay programme to develop and market their products to the international tourist market.

This section has investigated how the primary stakeholders contribute to the development of local food in the homestay programme in Malaysia and their planning in developing the culinary activities in the programme to enhance the homestay destination, so that it could attract tourists to visit the homestays in Malaysia. The findings indicate that the stakeholders have given their support and continuously encourage homestay providers to use traditional Malay food in their marketing activities in promoting homestay to the tourists. For the most part, the stakeholders, acting as enablers, have provided a direction for the homestay providers to manage and plan their programme more effectively and to promote it to the tourists, who, in this context, are receivers. The overall findings for this chapter are summarised under Figure 7.8 below.

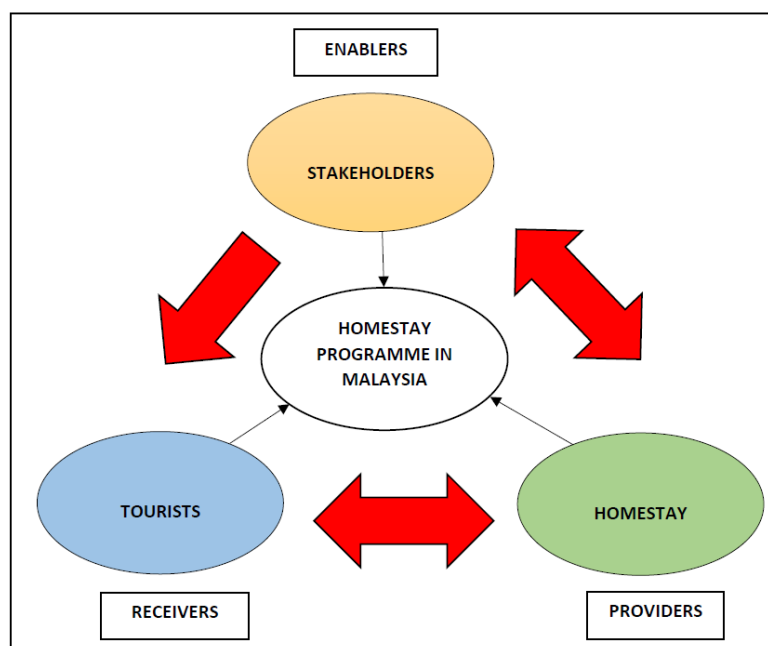


Figure 7. 8 The overall results from primary stakeholders in this study

Table 7.8 provides the summary for theme 2; assessment by the stakeholders on the potential of developing culinary tourism. All of the descriptions originate from the summaries of four sub-themes, which is from 2a to 2e.

Table 7. 8 Theme 2: Assessment by the stakeholders on the potential of developing culinary tourism

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
ASSESSMENT1	The stakeholders observed that homestay providers need to find their internal and external strength through the value of their traditional Malay food, food products and food-related activities, to attract tourists to visit their homestays. By understanding the characteristics of their traditional food and engaging tourists with rural food activities, they can lure potential tourists who are looking for culinary experience during their visits.
ASSESSMENT2	The stakeholders recommended for homestay providers to identify the economic potential of their food and cultural heritage products, for the benefits of the homestay communities. Local food can be a cultural marker for the homestays, and recognizing the homestay food identity, can be a means in building the image building of the homestay.
ASSESSMENT3	The stakeholders proposed for homestay providers to enhance their sense of attachment (SOA) and sense of ownership (SOO) towards their homestays. The stakeholders are always ready to equip homestay providers with ideas of revitalising their homestays using the value of traditional food for attracting tourists, so they could elevate their food products to an appealing culinary niche market.
ASSESSMENT4	The stakeholders are keen to lead homestay providers in Malaysia to find new opportunities and strategies in engaging them with multi-stakeholders, NGOs and private agencies to further improve their homestay programmes. They advised homestay providers to find platforms to include cottage industries as part of their programmes, such as through networking and learning how to set up a partnership with other parties that is equitable, efficient and mutually rewarding, to

	promote their traditional food products to the next level.
ASSESSMENT5	The stakeholders suggested that promoting and sustaining traditional Malay food in homestays should be on the national tourism agenda. Food should play a central role in the selection of destinations to visit by tourists, especially for those searching for authentic kampong food in rural areas.
ASSESSMENT6	The stakeholders believe that homestay programmes can provide multifaceted benefits to the local community development, economically, culturally, environmentally, socially and politically. They recognised that homestay providers play a critical role in the development and management of their homestay programmes. Thus, they need to find more formula on how they can and should best engage with homestay communities.
ASSESSMENT7	Homestay providers must create a speciality product that is perceived by tourists as authentic, and is explicitly linked to their culture and heritage. They have to learn any useful tools to boost their local economic and environment strategy that can benefit the tourism industry and their communities. Most importantly, they have to be able to operate with low-level capital and not being overly dependent on government funding and assistance.

7.4 Theme 3: Barriers Faced by Stakeholders in Developing Culinary Tourism in KBH and GH

The second theme discussed above addressed the common challenges and issues stakeholders are facing in promoting culinary heritage as part of the homestay programme. Most of the stakeholders noted that the issues in the homestays stem primarily either from the attitude and behaviour of the homestay providers themselves or from the third parties in the management and administration of the homestays. This section discusses the types of obstacles and tensions that limit the stakeholders from promoting TMF and their local heritage, particularly in KBH and GH.

7.4.1 Sub-theme 3a] Problems or Issues Faced in the Homestay Programme

One of the most significant issues discussed in the interviews was the attitude and mentality of the homestay providers. Some concerns were raised by specific stakeholders from the federal and state department when they have had to deal directly with the homestay providers. The officers from Government 2 and Government 3, for example, said that they had informed the coordinators of the homestays from the very beginning that they have to carry the programme and assume control for all aspects of the running of the programmes themselves.

However, they also noted that some of the homestays depend heavily on governmental arrangements to support them, mainly with respect to financing and resources. They stated that most of the responsibilities, such as maintaining homestay infrastructures, providing training to homestay providers, and providing funds for activities, are in practice in Government 2's hands. Some of the homestays simply assume this and wait for Government 2 to support them. According to the officials, this 'over-dependence syndrome' is a longstanding problem, and they note that providers continue to lack the willingness or ability to take responsibility for their programmes. For example, PS 6, from Government 3's office, stated that:

“They asked us to replace the padlocks for their community hall because it has been broken due to vandalism. So this dependency syndrome has made us feel let down by the attitude and mentality of some of the homestay providers.”

Another challenge noted by PS 4, 5, and 6, concerned the attitude and behaviour of PS 10, the coordinator from Homestay 1, who was constantly unavailable when contacted by Government 2's state office. Each month, every coordinator of the homestay programmes has to send reports to Government 2 in their respective state to provide an update on the number of tourists, the total income generated, and any other issues relating to the homestay programme. They have to work in close cooperation with the relevant officer in the state level (Government 2) office so he or she is well informed about the status of their regional homestays. According to these officers, Government 2 is quite concerned about the well-being of the homestay providers and tries to take care of their welfare because most providers are senior citizens. However, the officers have noted that the coordinators are not often co-operative in this regard and often fail to report to them if any of the providers have passed away or are having health problems which limit their capacity to engage with their homestay. One officer noted:

“We need a responsive homestay coordinator who is able to communicate with us about the progress of the homestay and for sure to lead the programme. An inattentive coordinator makes our job difficult as well as failing to guide the homestay providers.” (PS 6)

A number of other concerns include a lack of awareness of how to maintain the homestay infrastructure provided by the government. In fact, the government has built a new community hall (*balairaya* in Malay) in Kampong Beng Homestay and given to both homestays (KBH and GH) a Public Address (PA) system, and has upgraded some of the selected homestay providers' bathroom facilities (in both KBH and GH) to support them to participate in the programme. However, often these facilities are not well maintained, or it is expected, by the providers that Government 2 and 3 will continue to be responsible for maintaining them. According to PS 4, 5, and 6, the problem with this issue is down to the attitude of some of the homestay providers, who have a relaxed, 'hands-off', attitude and do not assume responsibility for maintaining these resources.

Similarly, but at the other extreme, these officials also noted that they have issues with those homestay coordinators, who take excessive control of the homestay facilities. For example, they have overheard from the homestay providers in one of the homestays in Perak that their coordinator limits the usage of the community hall to strictly homestay-related activities and not for the village's other activities.

Another concern, as aired by PS 3, was the cleanliness of homestays in both KBH and GH. According to him, this issue is one of the most significant problems for most of the homestay providers nationwide because some of them fail to maintain the cleanliness of their houses and their villages. PS 3 stressed that he was quite distressed with the attitude of the homestay providers and warned them that he would not be able to bring tourists in future if they did not assume responsibility for cleanliness and hygiene.

“It is a serious situation when the tourists complain that the provider's house is dirty, especially the toilet. The international tourists are very particular about the condition of the toilet, and they can easily become annoyed with a wet and dirty toilet.”

He noted that the providers have no option but to fulfil cleanliness standards, especially the bathroom facilities, because the quality and standard of the homestays are the highest priority in the programme. However, they are

unable to verify whether all providers maintain the condition of their homes to a suitable standard.

On another matter, PS 4, an official from Government 2's office, stated that some of the providers are confused with the concept of traditional values in the homestay programme. Government 2 have briefed them from the beginning of the programme that the idea of individuality and the meaning of 'traditional' in the homestay is in accordance with the type of village house that they have. The officials said that some of the homestay providers give the excuse that the tourists have to accept the way they live (relating to a dirty and cluttered house) because that is the one that they wanted to showcase in the homestay. This matter was not easy for the officials in Government 3 to resolve because the concept of 'traditional' that they want to highlight in the homestays was about the traditional life of the people in the village. Thus, the conditions of the provider's house must be one of the top priorities in the programme because there is a quality standard that the homestay has to fulfil to join and remain in the homestay programme. The officials informed me that they are hoping that, especially with the introduction of the 2016 ASEAN Homestay Standards, the quality and standard of the homestay programme's facilities nationwide will improve.

The stakeholders expressed a variety of perspectives regarding the homestay providers' lack of interest in growing their homestay programme. For example, the Tree Planting Programme, or the Plant a Tree (PAT) Programme, is endorsed by Government 3. This programme is one of the ways to encourage the homestay providers to generate extra income by selling seedlings or small trees to the tourists that come to their homestay. The objectives are to get the tourists to plant their trees as a sign of support for the environmental preservation in the homestay communities and at the same time to beautify the homestay landscape. The PAT programme also encourages tourists to repeat their visit to this particular homestay so that they can see the trees they planted in the future. Accordingly, the objective is to help the homestay providers generate more income by expanding their nursery seedlings and start micro-businesses in their homestays. The money will go to the homestay co-operative fund, and they could continue this programme as part of their current homestay activities. However, while most of

the contractors managed to deliver excellent specifications for the nursery project, the project was undermined by the poor attitude of the homestay providers, who did not maintain the nurseries. Officials from Government 2 and 3 told me that they were disappointed with this project as they had seen a lot of waste of government funds. They felt as if the homestay providers were not serious in making the project successful and relied instead on officials to provide continuous support for the project.

The above matters raise another subject concerning the capability of the homestay providers in providing various homestay activities and products to the tourists. Again, the Government 2 and 4 officials said that they would like to see a broad range of activities and products in the homestays. They have given a list of products or attractions the homestay could highlight, or create, to motivate tourists to visit their destination. The products refer to supplementary attractions such as nature, habitat, and vernacular architecture, places of historical significance, arts and crafts, music, cultural activities, traditional food and beverage, agriculture projects, or particular activities and/or special phenomena (Ibrahim and Razzaq, 2010). They stressed that the coordinator and the providers need to identify themselves the distinctiveness of their homestay concerning cultural heritage and products as unique features to draw tourists. Finding the homestay's particular strengths and unique products is crucial to get tourists involved. As one official said:

“The homestay providers have to be creative in developing their products and activities for the tourists. We gave them training for batik making class, handicrafts, food and snacks making and so forth to develop their entrepreneurship skills. But sadly, some homestays only committed for a few months, and in the end, the project was abandoned.” (PS 5)

The subject of product diversity in the homestay raises another issue concerning a lack of a clear image or distinct identity for each programme. The stakeholders mentioned that the majority of the homestays in Malaysia have particular strengths or unique selling points regarding their culture and traditions, most of which are located near to local natural attractions such as lakes, waterfalls, paddy fields, and a variety of flora and fauna. However, these opportunities for identity branding are not being fully exploited by the homestay

provisions. According to some stakeholders, the homestay providers are not creative enough at devising a broad range of activities that allow them to stand out from other homestay programmes. As one of the stakeholders stated:

“They need to be opportunist and cannot be too complacent. Look for the specialities of their homestay and promote it to the tourists.”
(PS 7)

Another critical point disclosed by the stakeholders in the interviews was the exploitation by third parties of the homestay programme. Disagreements between the homestay providers and third parties (i.e. travel agencies, the State Homestay Association, NGOs, and certain government officials) about the mark-up price for the homestay package, and mismanagement of homestay funds, are some of the most contentious issues for the homestay providers as they believe that third parties are taking advantage of their homestay programmes. PS 10 and 11 in Homestay 1 and 2 revealed that they were discouraged from collaborating with third parties due to this reason. In the past, they had experienced fraudulent activities by certain third parties, some of whom had high-ranking positions in the tourism industry. The providers claimed that they were still owed a large amount of money by third parties. PS 10 and 11 noted that they could not do anything about this matter as there was no clear contractual agreement between the parties involved. As a result of this incident, officials have started to monitor and regulate the amount of collaboration and networking between official providers and outside collaborators.

Issues of manipulation and exploitation by third parties such as contractors, tour agencies and suppliers engaged by the state government discouraged a number of providers from seeking to exploit networking opportunities with experts from the tourism industry. However, PS 8, from NGO 2, encourages any of the homestay coordinators in Perak to ask for an upfront payment for any projects which involve a large number of tourists or, failing that, to provide an original Purchase Order if the client is from the state government. She added that they are trying to resolve the issue of non-payment by third parties that were charging the tourists a higher price than that officially agreed with the providers. This matter has been brought up in the annual meeting of NGO 2, and

hopefully a solution will be found shortly. Table 7.9 shows the summary of the challenges faced by the stakeholders regarding the homestay programme in general in addition to managing different attitude and behaviour of the homestay providers in Malaysia.

Table 7. 9 The list of challenges acknowledged by the stakeholders

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
CHALLENGE1	Problematic attitude and behaviour of the homestay providers
CHALLENGE2	Lack of creativity by the providers in homestay activities and products
CHALLENGE3	Low homestay quality and standard for the homestay accommodation
CHALLENGE4	Fear on the part of providers of networking with outsiders (i.e. private agencies and NGO's)
CHALLENGE5	Lack of competent homestay leaders
CHALLENGE6	Competition from other private businesses (i.e. chalets and etc)
CHALLENGE7	Over-dependence syndrome
CHALLENGE8	Manipulation by third parties (i.e. contractors, tour agencies and suppliers)
CHALLENGE9	Lack of homestay identity and image
CHALLENGE10	Lack of a genuine demonstration of cultural affection

7.4.2 Sub-theme 3b] Lack of a Genuine Demonstration of Cultural Affection

In exploring the challenges faced by the homestay programme in promoting culinary heritage, this thesis explores the notion of genuine and authentic cultural activities and experiences. PS 8, of NGO 2, explained that she was having problems with the attitude of PS 10, of Homestay 1, and some of the providers in the homestay regarding this matter. She advised the providers and local leaders that tourists expect, and would like to see and experience, a genuine sense of uniqueness in the community, including experiences surrounding and including consumption of traditional Rawa food. However, the providers claimed that Rawa traditional cuisines such as *Kelamai* are challenging to prepare because they require a great deal of time. Furthermore, if done accurately, the dish can prove expensive, including use of materials required for preparing and cooking the dishes. As a result, they rarely prepared such traditional dishes, despite the fact that local culinary heritage is advertised in the promotional materials. PS 8 believed that the preparation of the food and other traditional cultural activities should be demonstrated to tourists because, for them, that is the primary objective of the homestay programme, and that excuses, primarily centred on time and cost, are unacceptable. This situation has also been experienced by PS 5, from Government 2. She told me that she had never been offered traditional Rawa food

in GH. According to her, the providers in GH always came up with excuses when asked to cook their traditional *Kelamai* for them and the tourist. The providers gave the same reasons - tedious preparation and cost.

Although PS 8 believed that a solution to this particular issue could be found, she had as yet failed to convince the homestay providers to cooperate with her. As a result, she devised an initiative to organise separate activities with the tourists and sometimes she requests help from the homestay providers to assist her in cultural food demonstrations. This former President of NGO 2 registered her parents as homestay providers in GH, and with that status she uses her parent's certificate to conduct cooking demonstrations at her parent's residence. One proposed compromise might be for anyone interested in learning how to cook *Kelamai* or any other Rawa traditional food to set an appointment with them first so that they would make the necessary arrangements.

This experience is in contrast to KBH, which seldom refers to traditional food in its promotional literature but, according to the officials, rarely fails to serve their unique Malay food such as Kampong Beng salad.

Another example concerning the situation regarding homestay providers promoting their local food was given by PS 4, from Government 2. She remarked that Government 2 proposed to the GH providers to come up with a small restaurant or stall to promote their traditional Rawa food to visitors. However, the first question that the providers asked was who was going to fund the shop with all the facilities, especially the capital to kick-start them. Additionally, they requested a government-provided site. This experience might be considered an example of the over-dependency syndrome held by the homestay providers in this area. Officials concur that this attitude of dependence on the government, especially for financial support, needs to end if the homestays are ever to stand on their own feet as legitimate and viable ventures. The officials fear that changing this mentality and attitude is a multi-generational task.

7.4.3 Sub-theme 3c] Power and Influences of the Stakeholders towards the Programmes

An interview with a government stakeholder, PS6, revealed that they have no power or control over homestay programmes. She claimed that the state office has no personal interest and power on any individual homestay programme, and therefore, homestay leaders and providers should not blame them for favouritism, because orders come from the people in federal offices in Putrajaya. Another interview with one of the committee members of Gopeng's homestay revealed the homestay providers' frustration with the former president's style of leadership which, according to him, was a poor conduct. He believes that she has carried out a very unethical work; however, they had no choice as she was using her power and position in the PHA to deal with matters related to the homestay. He also mentioned that the dispute has taken a turn for the worse, when the former president contested for the post of the Head of UMNO Women in Gopeng. Before the incident, the president has had a well-established connection with the current Head of UMNO Women. They started to work together for the homestay programme in Gopeng with a series of successful events happening in Perak. However, their friendship and connection only lasted for a few years, until a big confrontation took place, resulting in all of the benefits given to Gopeng homestay to be withdrawn by this Head of UMNO Women. He highlighted that the disagreement between them has led to a lot of damage to their homestay programme. They gradually began to receive fewer visitors in their homestay, as an impact of this political interference.

The issues of leadership and no control over the management of the programme are identified as a leading internal dispute among the communities in this homestay. These findings agree with the study by Razzaq and Hadi (2011) that the main success factors for a homestay come from leadership and the unity, as well as an understanding of its community, enhancing their pride and sense of ownership. A third party could easily manipulate the local communities if they are not ready and not participating actively, resulting in an external domination of local tourism development. The subjects regarding honesty and trustworthiness of the leaders in this community organisation have become prominent issues for the

internal problems. Concerns over the principle and abusive power among homestay leaders, have resulted in the lack of motivation for community participation and empowerment within their programmes.

However, when the same question was asked to PS4 and PS5, they recommended that Gopeng Homestay should resolve their issues first, in order for them to move forward with the improvement of their homestay programme. PS4 and PS5 were not in the position to interfere with their internal disputes, as they have no power and control over those people in the management. They can only provide solutions to any issues related to the statistics of the homestay, registration and certification of homestay provider, as well as the rules and guidelines for the homestay programme. As a result, with little help from related bodies, the providers and their communities should find solutions and take the required actions to solve these matters. They have to become proactive and empower their decision and commitment to ensure that their homestay could sustain in the long run (Pusiran and Xiao, 2013). The summary of results obtained for theme 3 is presented in Table 7.10.

Table 7. 10 Theme 3: Barriers that can hinder the development of culinary tourism

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
BARRIER1	The stakeholders revealed that 'over-dependence syndrome' by homestay providers in Malaysia restrained them from progressing in their homestay programme.
BARRIER2	The lack of communication and networking between government stakeholders and homestay providers create difference in opinions that hinder the progress of the programmes.
BARRIER3	It was also found there is a lack of responsibility among homestay providers in maintaining the equipment, facilities and infrastructure provided by the government. Some of the homestay providers take excessive control of the homestays facilities, and expect the government to provide continuous funding to maintain them.
BARRIER4	Inadequate knowledge in understanding the tourism industry and skills in creating attractive products and services among the homestay providers have resulted in their programmes becoming less engaging and attractive to tourists.
BARRIER5	The lack of training among homestay providers and the need for more community capacity building within their programmes have restricted them from providing exciting homestay rural food activities and products to the tourists.
BARRIER6	The inability of homestay providers to diversify their homestay products and activities due to limited access to natural based resources, as well as poor cultural livelihood knowledge, have resulted in the creation of activities that generate no or little income for the local communities.
BARRIER7	There is a lack of resourcefulness among homestay providers in finding a distinct image and identity for their programme. Thus, they have no capacity in demonstrating good traditional dances performances or cultural food

	demonstration to the tourists.
BARRIER8	The inability to navigate their programmes effectively by homestay providers, due to the uneven distribution of power within their homestay programmes. Most of the homestay leaders led the programmes according to their authority and thus, homestay communities have no power in decision-making process.

7.5 Theme 4: Stakeholders' Views in Developing Culinary Tourism in the Homestay Programme

7.5.1 Sub-theme 4a] Homestay as a Livelihood Strategy for Rural Development

One of the themes that emerged from the fieldwork and analysis in this chapter (see 7.5.2, page 219) is the potential of the homestay programme to be a viable and long-term cultural tourism product in the eyes of the stakeholders. All participants agreed that the homestay programme has significant potential to promote the culture and heritage of local people and also help them to improve their standard of living. PS 3, the Honorary Secretary General of NGO 1, commented that his organisation decided to collaborate with Railway Malaysia (KTMB) to promote homestay programmes in areas that can be accessed by train. KTMB brought the first group of Singaporean tourists in 2012 to Perlis by rail and the group stopped in a number of homestays along the route to Perlis. He was impressed with the feedback from tourists and decided to continue the collaboration with KTMB for more events and activities in the homestays. He stated that the tourists were thrilled with the concept of visiting traditional villages:

“Most of the villages in Singapore no longer exist, and the people miss the atmosphere of the traditional kampong. The trip was something like the recollection of their memories of living in a traditional village, especially the older tourists.” (PS 3)

A significant amount of money has been spent by the government on the development of this programme concerning the infrastructure, training, and preparing of local communities to make them able to host tourists. Moreover, the government has also invested considerably in planning and marketing the promotion of homestays both locally and internationally. This fact was highlighted by PS 7, from Government 4 who has been working to ensure that the

homestay programme reaches the target audience. He argued that even though the programme is not their primary tourism product, support has always been available to make sure that homestays in Perak are not left out of any events or activities organised by Government 4, such as tourism fairs. Their department also assists the homestays by distributing brochures, pamphlets, flyers, etc. in their central offices so that the public is kept informed about the homestay programme in Malaysia.

PS 14, from a private travel agency, supported the claim that the government has developed a lot of initiatives to promote homestays for tourism industry players. She reported that her company first started to become involved with the homestay industry after they received a request from a potential client from overseas. The Ministry recommended the client as their company is one of their official agents. In preparing the quotation for that client, they discovered that the homestay programmes were potentially interesting to their clients, both local and international. She further mentioned that the opportunities identified by MOTAC were eye-opening for them as they had not worked with any homestay in Malaysia before this. Her company took this venture as a new means of expanding their tourism product and began offering several packages to their clients. She also informed me that she received a large number of inquiries about the homestay packages through email from international tourists seeking a unique experience.

7.5.2 Sub-theme 4b] The Potential of TMF as a Homestay Product

A further question concerned the potential of TMF to be one of the main products to be promoted and highlighted when marketing the homestay programme. Interestingly, PS 7, noted that they had come up with the idea to highlight TMF in Perak by mapping and tagging every homestay programme in Perak in the brochures, flyers, and websites. He added that the plan to do so was discussed in meetings with other boards of directors in Government 4, but unfortunately it was not taken-up due to unknown reasons. He could not recall the exact issues behind this decision as he was later not involved in the planning for these events and activities. But he remembered that one of the promotions for

TMF in Perak, called The Ipoh Food Trail (IFT), received an overwhelmingly positive response from both domestic and international tourists. The IFT programme is one of the leading initiatives of 'Tourism Perak' in promoting Malaysian food by promoting the most famous and best restaurants in Ipoh, Perak.

Significantly, due to the success of the IFT programme, Government 4 decided to come up with another promotion and marketing strategy to promote TMF in every homestay programme in Perak. Currently, they are working with a famous food writer from Sydney, Australia, who has approximately five million followers on social media. However, currently, only two places in Perak have been selected to promote food: Ipoh, as the capital city of Perak, and the royal capital of Perak, Kuala Kangsar, where the palace of the Sultan of Perak is located. For this promotional campaign, Government 4 promotes Malaysia as a multiracial country that consists of people of Malay, Chinese, and Indian heritage. With this introduction, the food writer has been able to understand and explore the demographic background of the Malaysian people as it relates to TMF. It is planned that the writer will be introduced to different TMF in Perak through visits to actual homestays. As PS 7 noted in his interview, the promotion of TMF in the homestays is mostly subsumed within their overall marketing plan and promotional activities and they are searching for other ways to improve the current marketing strategies to facilitate the promotional campaign for TMF in particular.

PS 9, an academic from one of the University in Malaysia, has long been interested in promoting and highlighting the Malay cultural heritage and tourism in Malaysia and suggested that there is considerable potential to be gained from the promotion of TMF through the homestay programme. She opined that TMF should be included in unique homestay packages and attractions so that tourists will be given the opportunity to engage more with local people and understand more about their culinary practices. However, she said that there are a number of issues and challenges, which include: lack of infrastructure development, lack of leadership, poor marketing and promotional activities, inactive participation by the local community, conflicts in communities, and so on, that the government has to resolve before this tourism product can be adequately and successfully

promoted. She believed that researchers could help the federal government and local state departments to improve the planning and development of TMF as a more attractive form for the homestay programme. PS 2, from Government 1, revealed that the promotion of TMF in the homestays does not come under the responsibility of their Department which is one of the agencies under the Ministry that is responsible for preserving the cultural heritage of Malaysia. However, the interview with this official revealed that Government 1 always promotes homestays as part of their events or activities when promoting TMF. In the majority of events conducted by Government 1, cooks expert in preparing and cooking TMF are invited from several villages participating in the homestay programme. In this way they also promote homestays indirectly as places for tourist to taste authentic TMF. PS 2 also added that she was involved in documenting the materials for the traditional cuisine of Lenggong for Lenggong's Cultural and Heritage book when she met some of the expert cooks from local villages at the Lenggong Food Festival. She was one of the researchers who collected all the materials and information about Lenggong's food and was responsible for interviewing the local people and observing them cooking their traditional cuisine. She informed me that the documentation of Lenggong's traditional food began after Lenggong Valley was inscribed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2012. KBH was involved as it is located in Lenggong and the villages in this homestay have a lot of valuable information, knowledge, and continuing practices relating to the local cuisine as well as cultures and traditions that she thought must be documented and preserved. She told me that:

“Kampong Beng Homestay has a lot of valuable information and resources in culinary traditions. I insisted that the government highlight KBH's traditional Malay food so that the tourists could understand about our culinary heritage as well as experience local people's traditional way of life.” (PS 2)

7.5.3 Sub-theme 4c] Economic Benefits of Inspiring the Homestay Providers to Become Actively Involved

Another issue that emerged under this theme is how stakeholders might inspire the homestay providers to run their homestay programmes more actively. The programmes could serve as a tool for community enrichment by encouraging

active participation. Stakeholders could play a role in building the community commitment and relationships within and across the homestay providers, focusing on the sharing of ideas about the strengths of each homestay. This section explains how the stakeholders might motivate the homestay providers in KBH and GH to contribute to the development of their programmes.

PS 11 explained, that he is focused on generating motivation and incentives among his providers. He remarked that all the financial surplus from the homestay programme needed to be distributed via a fund set up by the KBH homestay organisation. The homestay providers are well aware that KBH collects a small percentage from the homestay surplus and puts this aside to distribute as a monetary reward at year-end. He said that the homestay providers were very happy and feel appreciated when he rewards them with a yearly amount in the form of a kind of 'bonus' system. PS 10 also revealed that he uses a monetary reward system to encourage the providers in his homestay to participate. The observations in this section show that PS 10 and 11 inspire their homestay providers to be involved through motivation or remuneration. PS 11 noted that he provides a bonus annually, or –bi-annually, to every provider who has actively participated in the homestay programme.

However, PS 10 noted that he will not be able to continue with the yearly bonuses or incentives concept to his homestay providers due to financial constraints. GH was flourishing between 2010 and 2015, when both domestic and international tourists visited. However, the number of tourists dropped dramatically since 2011 due to the reasons identified above (see page 184 and 185). Currently, this homestay programme is struggling and facing many challenges - particularly the lack of marketing and promotional activities. The lack of promotion influences the number of tourists visiting their homestay programme and therefore makes GH less popular among the tourists as compared to other homestays in Perak. This situation has had a huge impact on GH but he was hoping that their homestay could be sustained. However, he did expand on the rewards given to the homestay providers in GH during the interview:

“I took them on a short trip to Padang Besar (a shopping place located near the Thai border). I also made them an exclusive t-shirt as a token of appreciation for their commitment and involvement in this homestay programme, although I had to stretch the budget to do so.” (PS 10)

The above results indicate that the concept of financial incentives and rewards could provide motivation to the homestay providers to stay active in the programme in the long-term. However, the financial incentives and rewards should be reserved for those who cooperate fully and are fully committed to achieving the aims and objectives of the homestay programme. After all, the reason for most homestay providers to participate in the programme is mostly financial.

7.5.4 Sub-theme 4d] Feedback from Industry Players to Build Strong Support

The input from government stakeholders in the interviews revealed that the feedback from academia and tourism industry players could provide strong support for the development of the homestay programme in Malaysia. The focus on the interrelationship between government officials, industry players, and academia could develop mechanisms for cooperation models to be used across the homestay programme. Such models could also encourage different types of engagement and levels of interaction in scoping the issues about the development of the homestay programme in Malaysia, in particular on developing interaction between homestay programmes and those in the industry and academic sectors. This sub-set of themes 5 emerged from the interviews with PS 4 and 5, officials at Government 2, and PS 7, of Government 4. They agreed that the state government and the federal agencies require third parties, such as university researchers and specialists, experts from the hotel, food, and beverage sectors, and private tourist agencies, to work with the homestay managements and coordinators on developing the programme so that they could put the homestay sector at the centre of the tourism industry.

The interview with officials from Government 2’s office revealed that they were keen on collaborating with researchers from academia to share their ideas, knowledge and suggestions about the planning and development of the

homestay programme. The officials mentioned that sometimes they need to hear new ‘outside’ thinking and ideas on how they can improve the programme. PS 4 and 5 said that they might also include the homestay providers themselves in networking and collaboration meetings with academics and researchers, generating ideas on how traditional food as a primary cultural asset can be promoted and safeguarded. As an example, Government 2 office recently accepted new ideas put forward by a researcher at a public university in Perak, to create a framework for selecting the optimum role model for the homestay programme in Perak to motivate and encourage other homestay providers to improve their programme by creating new activities on a regular basis.

In a similar vein, PS 7, of Government 4, supported these collaborative efforts by inviting NGOs or individual researchers at Malaysian universities to share ideas and propose a plan to develop a peer review programme on the development of homestays in Malaysia. The Chief Director underlined the importance of having appropriate discussions with other relevant agencies and individuals about improving the development of the homestay programme. The brainstorming sessions included how to achieve high-quality tourist experiences, how to promote and preserve TMF and other natural and cultural resources, how government officials should be involved, and how community empowerment and ownership can be ensured. Table 7.11 presents the summary of the results from theme 4; stakeholders’ suggestions in developing culinary tourism.

Table 7. 11 Theme 4: Stakeholders’ view in developing culinary tourism

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
VIEW1	The stakeholders are keen to build more partnership or alliance with other agencies in Malaysia, in planning and developing homestay programmes, apart from improving the social networking and efficiency in the management of the homestays.
VIEW2	The stakeholders will also support and encourage homestay providers to promote the authenticity of traditional Malay food in their homestay programmes. They are eager to build more networks and collaborations around food, while increasing the awareness on food experience value in the homestays.
VIEW3	The stakeholders are very positive, by repositioning traditional Malay food as homestay first product, as it can be a factor for the vibrancy and attractiveness of these homestays, not just for tourists but also for the local communities.
VIEW4	The stakeholder’s welcome new ideas and approaches from other perspectives, such as from food and tourism managers, marketers and academics, for the benefits of linking the culture and heritage of traditional Malay food in the homestays.

VIEW5	The distribution of income and benefits among homestay providers is one of the areas that need to be handled carefully by the homestay management. The stakeholders observed that the lack of community participation may be attributed by the uneven distribution of power and benefits among the locals. Homestay providers need to put more emphasis on community participation and decision-making management among the community members.
VIEW6	Understanding of tourists' expectation is vital for homestay providers. The stakeholders observed that tourists are more inclined to experience the authentic traditional life and culture of the rural people in the village. They suggested for homestay programmes to fully utilise their traditional culture and heritage, such as through the use of locally produced food products, traditional food production and consumption, as well as the uniquely authentic local dishes and food to meet tourists' expectation and satisfaction with the service offered.
VIEW7	Homestays can use traditional Malay food that are locally produced, which are mainly the unusual and less popular cuisines as a major attraction for their homestays. Distinctive cuisines can be developed as gastronomy routes to promote the homestay destination, and be mapped as the main cultural attraction for a specific homestay programme.
VIEW8	Stakeholders believe that homestay providers should aim for the adventurous culinary tourists, who like to try something authentic, which is different from what is typical for them. Thus, they suggested that engaging tourists with authentic food experience is an essential part of this niche market.

7.6 Summary

This chapter has presented a review of the data that emerged from interviews with diverse stakeholders from the Malaysian Homestay Programme. These groups are involved in the development of the homestay programme in Malaysia, and thus their input into this research provides valuable material to allow us to understand more deeply and comprehensively the nature of the nationwide programme and their contribution towards the development of TMF in the homestay. The results provide evidence that the majority of the stakeholders agree that the homestay programme in Malaysia holds significant potential for the tourism industry, particularly regarding the promotion of TMF. However, they generally noted that the homestays face a variety of issues and challenges that limit the capability of the stakeholders to carry the programme to the next level. The primary responsibility for developing the homestay programme in Malaysia, however, lies with the homestay providers, with support given by the federal and state local departments to guide the homestay organisations to continue to grow and expand based on their unique identities. Thus, the homestay providers should be responsible for the growth and development of their homestay by developing a clear attachment to the programme utilising their particular competencies and capabilities. They should also show more sense of ownership and commitment to

developing a range of exciting products and activities for their homestay. By having a greater engagement with, and developing a stronger sense of ownership in, the programme, the providers could find and develop their own individual strengths and weaknesses and therefore overcome the challenges and continue to grow based on their unique identities. In conclusion, this study's results suggest that the homestay providers have a significant opportunity to bring support and meaning to their homestay programme in sustaining and safeguarding their cultural heritage and values to the programme. They should also be more proactive in 'owning' the programme by accepting and utilising local community power and authority to develop their homestays and strengthen it through community capacity building. Their help to support and continue monitoring the homestay programme could, and should, encourage the homestay in Malaysia to become more sustainable and viable in the long run.

Chapter 8. Case Study 1 – Kampong Beng Homestay, Lenggong

8.1 Chapter Outline

This chapter describes the results and analysis from the interviews with, and observation of, homestay providers and domestic tourists in Kampong Beng Homestay (KBH). Firstly, the homestay provider's involvement and participation in the homestay programme was observed and investigated, as was the standard of practices in preparing and providing TMF for tourists. Secondly, open-ended interviews were carried out with domestic tourists who have stayed at this homestay in order to explore their experiences consuming TMF and overall sojourn at this homestay. Figure 8.1 shows the means of transportation and journey to KBH, which is located in Lenggong, Perak, Malaysia.



Figure 8. 1 Picture of the means of transportation and journey to Kampong Beng Homestay
(Source: Author)

The discussion focuses on how the homestay providers engage with the promotion of TMF as a key attraction in their homestay programme, and how they present this cultural heritage to enhance tourists' homestay experiences. The identified basic themes that emerged reflect the local pride of KBH community of their culture and heritage, and how important they are, as well as the presence of a strong 'sense of place', which contributes to the homestay's presentation of their traditional way of life to tourists. The chapter also discusses domestic tourists' experience on the use of TMF as an important aspect of the homestay programme.

8.1.1 Aims and Objectives for Case Study 1

The presentation of case study 1 covers the results and analysis obtained from the qualitative methods employed to investigate the homestay providers of KBH, along with making observations in their home kitchens. The observations and results in this chapter relate to the third research aim of this study, which is “to review the way TMF is used in Kampong Beng Homestay as a specific asset to their homestay programmes.” As seen in Table 8.1, the outcome from this case study can be categorized into four main basic themes and its sub-themes. These themes and sub-themes, which overlap with those identified for stakeholders in Chapter 7, are discussed in detail in the following (sub) sections.

Table 8. 1 Identified basic themes from the analysis

Basic Themes	Sub-themes
1] Homestay provider’s roles in promoting TMF and homestay	1a] Kampong Beng Homestay’s use of local food 1b] Use of locally produce in TMF preparation and cooking; and 1c] Attitude of the homestay providers towards the local food.
2] Assessment of KBH to be developed as a culinary tourism homestay	2a] Culinary authenticity; 2b] Culinary products and attractions; 2c] Culinary experience; 2c] i) Malay culture of hospitality 2c] ii) Collective communal activities 2d] Culinary experiences through storytelling; 2e] Promoting social integration among local communities through TMF; and 2f] Strategies and promotions.
3] Barriers faced by KBH in developing its culinary tourism	3a] Power and influence of the stakeholders towards the programme; and 3b] Motivations of the homestay providers.
4] The potential of KBH to be developed as a culinary tourism destination	4a] Advantages and benefits to the communities

8.1.2 Demographic Profile of the Homestay Providers

The majority of the homestay providers who were interviewed were aged from 50 to 65 years, and all of them are currently permanent residents in KBH. Currently, the registered homestay providers in KBH come from Kampong Batu Ring and Kampong Beng, with the majority living in Kampong Batu Ring. Table 8.2 presents the breakdown of the participants’ profiles according to age, gender, occupation, and origin. As shown, thirteen participants are local village people and they have lived there all their lives and are familiar with the other participants. All of the participants are women, and they are either married mothers or widows.

With regard to educational level, two of them were able to finish secondary school while the rest only completed primary education.

Table 8. 2 The demographic profile of the homestay providers in Kampong Beng Homestay

Participant	Gender	Age	Occupation	Origin
KBHP 1	Female	62	Housewife	Kampong Beng
KBHP 2	Female	57	Businesswomen	Taiping
KBHP 3	Female	54	Businesswomen	Kamunting
KBHP 4	Female	64	Businesswomen	Kampong Batu Ring
KBHP 5	Female	65	Pensioner	Kampong Batu Ring
KBHP 6	Female	63	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
KBHP 7	Female	60	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
KBHP 8	Female	57	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
KBHP 9	Female	54	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
KBHP 10	Female	53	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
KBHP 11	Female	59	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
KBHP 12	Female	57	Housewife	Kampong Batu Ring
KBHP 13	Female	60	Housewife	Kampong Beng
KBHP 14	Female	52	Housewife	Kampong Beng
KBHP 15	Female	51	Housewife	Kampong Beng

Most of the women in this village were born there while two interviewees (KBHP 2 and 3) settled there upon marrying local men. Most interviewees are involved in the homestay programme on a full-time basis and the majority are self-employed such as farmers, rubber-tappers, or fishermen. However, three out of the fifteen participants have their own businesses selling local food products such as fermented fish, traditional Malay snacks, and savouries for breakfast. The primary reason for this homestay remaining active in the homestay programme is the efforts and involvement of the women. In fact, in this village the women play a significant role in generating income for their household, selling food, clothing and other craft products to ease the burden of keeping a home and make a living. Thus, the women are familiar with working life within their village as well as their cultural and heritage, which combine to help their participation in this homestay programme.

The results in this study show that KBH has 42 registered homestay providers from four neighbouring villages, with a total number of 54 rooms to

accommodate tourists in their programme (see Table 8.3). The statistics were confirmed by the officer from the Homestay Unit of MOTAC in April 2015.

Table 8. 3 Number of Homestay Providers as of April 2015
 (Source: Homestay Unit, Industry Development Division, MOTAC, Putrajaya)

No	Homestay	Village	No. of Providers	No. of Rooms
1.	Kampung Beng Homestay	1. Kampung Beng 2. Kampung Durau 3. Kampung Batu Ring 4. Kampung Dusun	42	54

The villages that participate in this homestay are carefully selected and managed to comply with the guidelines and regulations set by MOTAC. The providers who succeed in their applications to join the programme undergo an assessment by assigned panels nominated by MOTAC, after which they are given an official plaque which they must hang in front of their house (see Figure 8.2).



Figure 8. 2 The original plaque granted by MOTAC for all the registered homestay providers (Source: Author)

KBH is one of the leading homestay programmes in Perak, largely due to the natural attractions surrounding its location. The homestay is also known as ‘The Mini Amazon’ for the landscape and the outdoor adventure activities in which people can participate. KBH won second place in the MITI homestay awards in *Satu Daerah Satu Industri* (‘One District; One Industry’) in 2015, in the category of best homestay in Malaysia. Due to this recognition and achievement, KBH was awarded a new plaque for their homestay programme (see Figure 8.3).



**Figure 8. 3 The new plaque granted by MOTAC for Kampong Beng Homestay
(Source: Author)**

The government stakeholders stressed that this new plaque is a symbol of how MOTAC continuously gives its support to the homestay providers to urge them to continue with the homestay programme and promote it to domestic and international tourists.

8.2 Theme 1: Homestay Provider's Roles in Promoting TMF and Homestay

The next results from the study established that there is strong support for utilising TMF among the majority of homestay providers in KBH to exploit their unique sense of place and attachment (12 out of 15). It was very clear the providers were knowledgeable about TMF. There was an extensive discussion about the use of home-grown food and products in the homestay and how they were blessed with the natural resources and surroundings of KBH. The section below discusses the results from the homestay providers who are utilising TMF in their food preparation and cooking for tourists. The results underline that homestay providers in KBH connect TMF with the novelty of their fresh, healthy, and authentic traditional kampong food for the tourists' gastronomic experience.

8.2.1 Sub-theme 1a] Kampong Beng Homestay's Use of Local Food

The next set of questions explored the practice of homestay providers using local food to engage with tourists at their homestay. Most of the homestay providers stated that they offered breakfast, lunch, tea, dinner, and even supper to

the tourists and sometimes snacks in the price of the homestay package. The inclusion of food in the accommodation cost is significant because the original concept of the Malaysian homestay programme was to give the opportunity for tourists to stay and interact with, and experience the daily life of their homestay family and learn the culture and lifestyle of the rural community in Malaysia (MOTAC, 2018). It was clear from the interviews that the homestay providers put substantial efforts in preparing and cooking for their guests.

In response to the question: ‘What kind of food, did you cooked for your guests?’ a range of reactions was elicited. The majority of those who responded (13 out of 15) reported that their main style of cooking as “Traditional Malay food”. When the participants were probed regarding what kind of TMF they produced, most (13 out of 15) commented that their main style of cooking was ‘kampong food’. The results from this question show a similar response to the Nummedal and Hall (2006) study, where over half of the B&B participants identified “Traditional New Zealand Cuisine” as their primary type of cooking for the guests. However, the participants said that they usually ask tourists about their food preferences before deciding on the style of cooking. They also offered “Vegetarian food” to those who asked for it such as Indian people, followed by “Western food” for international tourists, and “Other” for those who have any allergic reactions to specific food such as peanuts and seafood. The “Western food” cooking styles according to these participants are any types of food around bread, sausages, burger, fries, butter, milk and eggs. It is not like the Malaysian cuisine that centres around rice, noodle, congee, kuih (bite-sized food), Indian bread like roti canai and so forth. The wide range of cooking styles offered by the homestay providers shows their understanding of the different culinary needs of tourists. The providers are also aware that some of the tourists are nervous of eating new or unfamiliar foods. The outcome is rather surprising as Ji *et al.*, (2016) mentioned that tourist food consumption is influenced by food-related personality traits such as neophobic tendencies that can stop them from trying new food at a destination.

The next questions were intended to probe the providers about what kind of “traditional Malay food” or “kampong food” they cooked for the tourists. All (15 out of 15) of the participants segregated their types of cooking into three:

breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Twelve of the participants described that they cooked coconut rice, fried rice or fried noodles for breakfast accompanied by traditional Malay kuih and hot drinks. Whereas for lunch and dinner, they cooked plain steamed white rice that is frequently taken with a variety of side dishes such as freshwater fish, poultry, meat, or vegetables. Rice is the staple diet in any Malay meal, and it is often served for breakfast, lunch, dinner and supper. Almost all of the participants reported that they served locally-sourced Malay fresh herbs/salads to tourists for their lunch and dinner to be eaten with rice and number of *sambals* (condiments) including *sambal belacan* (Malay chilli paste with shrimp paste), *tempoyak* (fermented durians), *cincalok* or *budu* (anchovies sauce). Malay salads are very popular among tourists in KBH. One of the homestay providers said that the tourists went to pick themselves various types of fresh vegetables outside their house to eat with white rice. There are a wide range of plants grown by the homestay providers such as banana blossoms, pegaga, bitter gourd, long beans, ladyfingers, and leafy greens like daun selom (water dropwort) that can be consumed raw. The providers were asked about their significant dishes in KBH, especially freshwater fish. The overall response to this questions was very positive. Nearly all providers (13 out of 15) reported that they cooked freshwater fish for the tourists such as *Loma* (*Thynnichthys thynnoides*), *Tengalan* (*Puntius wool*) and other fish such as Catfish, *Tilapia*, and *Baung*. The fish was either cooked with coconut gravy or grilled with turmeric and other spice based sauce, and served during lunch and dinner. Two providers reported that they had even cooked venison for tourists on one occasion.

Interestingly, KBH has other attractions near their village, including an award-winning agro-farm where the deer farming is the highlight. However, the deer meat is rather expensive to be served and cooked for the tourists. Other providers suggested that, as the venison is very expensive, it is usually sold rather than eaten, meant for the economic benefit of the all people in Kampong Beng.

The menu served to tourists for teatime consists of hot drinks (either coffee or tea) taken with traditional Malay *kuih* or dessert and puddings. Some of the participants reported that *pengat* is the most popular dessert requested by tourists. *Pengat* is made from tapioca, pumpkins, yam or bananas and cooked with

coconut milk mixed with palm sugar. The supper menu served to tourist is usually hot drinks with either biscuits or traditional Malay *kuih*.

What is interesting about the results from this section is that “kampong food” is the main food cooked for tourist during their stay. The homestay providers also described that this types of food ‘won the tourists heart’ due to the distinctiveness of the cooking styles especially the freshwater fish and traditional Malay ulams. However, it is not surprising that few of the participants said that they cooked seafood or meat for the tourists (only 2 out of 15) as these foods are considered as luxuries to the rural communities because of their cost.

8.2.2 Sub-theme 1 b) Use of Locally Produce in TMF Preparation and Cooking

Nearly all providers (12 out of 15) indicated that they used locally provided/grown produce in their cooking for homestay tourists. 12 out of 15 participants reported that they used food such as herbs and vegetables from their garden and they either caught their own fish from Lake Raban or purchased it from the local supplier. This is an important result indicating that KBH providers use substantial amounts of local produce. The results also reveal that the majority of homestay providers produce the food for themselves and caught the freshwater fish for their consumption and for the homestay tourists. The ingredients that the providers use for cooking are widely available from natural resources as well. Some of the more exotic ingredients such as bamboo shoots are found in a nearby forest and KBH specialty foods frequently feature aspects of their natural habitats as well as cultural background. Almost all of the providers said that they purposely use local produce and locally available ingredients from the land and the river to attract tourists and to add more authenticity to their homestay experience.

The providers noted that some tourists insisted on eating kampong food and reported that domestic tourists asked them to cook TMF throughout their stay accompanied by fresh herbs and vegetables as a salad. The tourists were also keen to eat the KBH’s classic dishes, in particular the fermented fish with white rice. The providers stated that they usually cook meat and poultry for the younger tourists, especially those in their twenties, as this age group require lots of

nutrients for their body as they are growing, and also for international tourists. But, the providers will still cook their traditional dishes if requested by these tourists. More than half of the homestay providers (9 out of 15) stated that they kept meat and poultry including Malay chickens in their rural households. The providers keep cages for chickens and ducks for their consumption and sale. Malay chicken is a feathered, game fowl that lays brown eggs and is slow to mature. Although providers tend not to have many Malay chickens in the village, some of them (5 out of 15) reported that chicken is also used for tourist consumption. When asked about the cost of food purchased, the participants were unanimous that, if they could use their local produce, they can save a lot of money on buying food for guests. Even though one tourist might be charged RM80 (or £15) per night, for many rural households, to spend RM30 (£5.50) to RM40 (£7.40) on food may still have substantial multiplier effects through local communities. The majority of the homestay providers (14 out of 15) are doing other work in the village such as rubber tapper, small farming, fishing etc. Thus, the amount of money that they received from the homestay programme is considered as a luxury and an additional income to support their family. Moreover, the perception of money is closely related to poverty and, according to the participants, poverty means not enough income made per year. One provider said:

“Most of us are doing village labour work such as rubber tapper, while some are doing fishing and rural farming. We are not making much income from this work. Hence, we took part in this homestay programme. Besides occupying our free time, we can also get additional earnings. In any case, this income helps us (women) to contribute to our household expenditure.”
(KBHP 11)

A few providers indicated that it was more difficult and expensive to source tourist's food during the monsoon season. The season affected the availability of freshwater fish in KBH, and therefore, the homestay providers have to find another alternative. However, the providers in KBH also indicated that their homestay business is highly seasonal with few tourists coming during the monsoon but reaching a peak in summer. Therefore, all of the participants agreed that the lack of local produce in the monsoon season was not a major problem.

8.2.3 Sub-theme 1c] Attitude of the Homestay Providers towards the Local Food

The above results indicate that the homestay providers recognise their role as promoters of TMF in KBH. The providers always talked about their TMF to the tourists and asked if the tourists, had ever tried this or that dish before. However, discussion with the homestay providers suggested that they were underestimating their own power as a promoter to promote TMF towards tourists. Only a small number of participants (4 out of 15) agreed with the statement that they have a role in supporting TMF in KBH as they can influence the tourists to try their local food. This differs from Nummedal and Hall (2016) who concluded that as the homestay providers act as hosts in the homestay, they can build a close relationship with their guests, and consequently can have great influence on their visitor's choice. Actually, because they are communicating with tourists on a regular basis, providers have a great opportunity to promote TMF. However, there is clearly a need to educate the providers about the important role that they can play as a promoter of TMF and tourists homestay experiences. The low positive response suggests that providers might have a linguistic barrier communicating the cultural importance associated with TMF in KBH to international tourists. The current study only involved domestic tourists, and thus, it was not a problem for providers to share the information and explain about their local produce in relation to food resources, medicinal properties, cosmetics values and so forth. Table 8.4 elaborates the description for indicators of Theme 1, regarding the homestay providers' roles in promoting their traditional Malay food and homestay programme.

Table 8. 4 Theme 1: Homestay Providers' Roles in Promoting TMF and Homestay

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
ROLE1	There is a strong support in utilising TMF among the majority of homestay providers in KBH. They also provide the novelty of their fresh, healthy, and authentic traditional kampong food for the tourists' gastronomic experience.
ROLE2	The homestay providers cooked "kampong" food for the tourists during their stay. They also served dishes using their freshwater fish and traditional Malay ulams to the tourists.
ROLE3	Nearly all the providers used locally provided/grown produce in their cooking for homestay tourists, which include herbs and vegetables from their own gardens, and they either caught their fish from Lake Raban or purchased them from local suppliers.
ROLE4	The homestay providers recognised their role as promoters of TMF in KBH. They always talked about their TMF to the tourists, and asked if the tourists have ever tried any of their dishes before.
ROLE5	The providers admitted that there is a language barrier communicating the cultural importance of the TMF in KBH to foreign tourists.

8.3 Theme 2: Assessment of KBH to be Develop as a Culinary Tourism Homestay

Food is explored in this case study as one of the ways to understand cultural interaction, specifically for tourists visiting rural homestays. The second theme in this case study discuss about the potential of KBH to be develop as a culinary tourism area through its homestay programme. The preliminary responses from ninety per cent of providers in this homestay (13 out of 15) thought that tourists perceive food and gastronomy as one of the attractions of their journey before they visited the homestay. However, the providers believed that most of the tourists were primarily attracted to KBH because of its natural environment and landscape and the cultural gastronomic experiences were placed as secondary. As the interviewees stated:

“Fishing is one of the popular activities in KBH especially among the fish enthusiasts because of our strategic location for fishing. Even, some of the tourists with no experienced in fishing also attracted to this activity after seeing us catching freshwater fish for lunch or dinner.” (PS11)

“I was surprised when one of the tourists asked me only to cook the village's food during his stay. I did ask him how he knew about our food and he said through our website and some information that he had gathered from the individual blogs and tourism websites.” (KBHP 4)

The following section describes the role of TMF as a leading attraction for this homestay.

8.3.1 Sub-theme 2a] Culinary Authenticity

In Chapter 7, the primary stakeholders had mentioned that for developing culinary tourism in the homestay programme, the main feature of the homestay programme could be devised around the uniqueness and authenticity of its local food culture and traditions (see 7.3.1 on page 192). The use of TMF in GH and its culinary heritage associated with the homestay programme are considered as very valued elements within the capabilities of the homestay providers in producing an appropriate marketing strategy of their local food. Moreover, over half of the homestay providers interviewed (10 out of 15) reported that their food is unique

due to their rural location near Lake Raban. Thus, local and traditional food in this homestay is understood as authentic and different from other places in Perak, particularly urban areas. The people in this village believe that their traditional food symbolises the location and culture of this destination. The section below interprets the results of the interviews regarding food preparation and cooking that symbolises KBH. I was intrigued to discuss the importance of TMF with the homestay providers in KBH because it reflects a sense of cultural importance that is still strong in their traditional way of life. All of the results under this sections were closely intertwined: the personal importance emphasised by providers in preparing, cooking, and thus safeguarding, TMF and their sense of pride and ownership towards TMF clearly complemented each other.

The majority of providers (14 out of 15) claimed that they serve only local and traditional food to the guests during their stay. They also revealed that most of the tourists are satisfied with traditional kampong food. Among the authentic food that they serve are *rendang daging masak pedas* (spicy beef curry), *ikan Bakar with air kerabu* (grilled fish with a gravy), *gulai tempoyak* (curry made from fermented durian), *sambal serai* (chicken cooked with spicy lemongrass), and *kerabu umbut bayas* (salad made from young palm tree shoots). Besides these dishes, providers also prepare their traditional snacks and cakes to serve to the tourists at teatime and supper. Figure 8.4 below shows the classic Malay snacks and cakes that were served to me while interviewing one of the providers. I was surprised to see these traditional Malay cakes in goldfish shapes because I had not seen these cakes for approximately 20 years. The provider told me that she still keeps all the traditional equipment for cooking, such as an urn made from clay and the whisk to make these traditional Malay cakes called *bahulu*. *Bahulu* is a traditional Malay spongy cake that is made from a mixture of eggs, wheat flour and sugar, and has to be whisked until the batter is fluffy before it is cooked over a charcoal fire. The most popular *bahulu* is in the shape of a goldfish or a button flower. Nowadays, people make the button flower shape because the mould is much easier to find than the more traditional goldfish one. Whenever people see the *bahulu* in a goldfish shape, it reminds them of the traditional *bahulu*. Participants also noted how the tourists look forward to trying and exploring their local traditional food:

“One of the local tourists told me that I don’t have to cook any chicken or meat dishes as he is looking forward to eating our traditional food and dishes made from freshwater fish.” (KBHP 13)



Figure 8. 4 Traditional Malay snacks and cakes in traditional shapes
(Source: Author)

“I just prepared our authentic food, and surprisingly, each of them ate three plates of rice. I was never expecting that they would like our food. It is just village people’s dishes.” (KBHP 1)

In KBH, the communities make use of every single resource that they have and try to be creative with the sort of ingredients and methods of food preparation. Accordingly, one of the traditional practices of Malay people in rural areas is to source their food from rivers, the sea, lakes, and paddy fields for water-borne food and forests, farms and neighbourhood areas to find edible plants and vegetables that they can eat. KBH is surrounded by lakes and, therefore, eating freshwater fish has long been a regular culinary feature of local life. Freshwater fish is one of the examples of this homestay’s signature dishes and food symbolism. When tourists come to this place, they are served with a number of dishes consisting of freshwater fish. One of the interviewees said:

“The most popular freshwater fish that we always cook is Tengalan fish. We make gulai masak lemak (fish cooked in coconut gravy) as this dish is one of the most preferred dishes among the tourists.”

The type of fish eaten locally has been known to indicate social standing among Malay communities. Freshwater fish has traditionally been eaten by the lower classes or by people living in rural areas. Middle- and upper-class families usually consume saltwater fish, which tends to be too expensive for lower-income families. Moreover, villagers tend to sell saltwater fish to vendors as a source of extra revenue to support the family instead of consuming it themselves.



Figure 8. 5 Belotak Fish is one of the famous dishes in Kampong Beng Homestay (Source: Author)

Figure 8.5 shows a popular TMF among tourists and the local communities in this homestay. A discussion with Opah, one of the providers in KBH, established that this traditional food, *Belotak*, uses freshwater fish, especially fish that are smelly and not fresh, known as *medak*. The fish is often caught in paddy fields, and they put it on the edge of the field to dry until evening. As it is not considered fresh, it is not suitable to eat as a main dish. To avoid being wasted, they will clean this fish first using turmeric leaves to eliminate the strong fish odour and then boil it before removing the flesh from the fish bones. Usually, they will use catfish, snakefish or climbing perch because these fish are found constantly in the paddy field. The meat is then mixed with thick coconut milk, pounded shallots, bird's eye chillies and lemongrass. The thin slices of turmeric leaf are then added and it is cooked under a medium heat on a stove until the water is dried out. Surprisingly, there is no unpleasant smell from this fish, and you can eat it with hot rice and other traditional *ulam* and sambal *belacan* (chilli pounded with toasted shrimp paste).

8.3.2 Sub-theme 2b] Culinary Products and Attractions

As most of the providers indicated that they make use of the natural resources surrounding their village, it is suggested that, the KBH homestay should explore more strategies and opportunities relating to their communities' gardening activities as an attraction of their homestay. As noted above, the majority of providers come from low-income families and do not have the funds to purchase expensive food ingredients. Therefore, they adopt strategies to stretch their household budget by using the resources available in their gardens. By growing their fruit and vegetables, they save money and are able to provide their families with fresh food. As one interviewee said:

"I had one local tourist that requested to eat ulam with white rice only for dinner. Just imagine, I have to look around in my backyard and neighbourhood gardens for the fresh ulam and other vegetables. Luckily, we have all kinds of ulam in this village or otherwise where should I go to buy it at night?"
(KBHP 3)

The majority of providers said that they have no concerns determining the menu or food choices of tourists during their stay. Typically, they will ask tourists before preparing food whether they think they will be able to eat kampong food and if they have any allergies to certain foods. Comments from the providers emphasise the desire of tourists to experience eating freshly and organically grown herbs and vegetables that are difficult to find in the city. Furthermore, as KBH is in a rural setting, the tourists have a preconception that they will be able to eat traditional dishes and food during their stay in the village. If the guests say they want to try the local food, then they are served KBH famous dishes, including local herbs and salads. Most of the interviewees commented that the domestic and international tourists are willing to experience and try new food and therefore there were no issues regarding eating TMF.

An observation in House 1 showed that this provider is content with her garden. She took me to her backyard and showed me each of the herbs and plants that she grows there. She said that cassava leaves are a 'must-have' plant that grows in every house because it is easy to grow, and they like to eat it with chilli pounded with shrimp paste. She also grows Mosk Pak Choy, a Chinese vegetable

widely used among the Malay community because it is easy to grow in the garden. In addition to these plants, she also grows spinach, water spinach, and vegetable okra, among others. One issue the villagers are facing now is that some of their plants have to be protected with aluminium-zinc walls to protect them from wild animals such as wild boar. However, she told me that the villagers are now avoiding growing vegetables and fruits near to the forest and instead only focus on their house compound, which according to them is also more appropriate for producing the relevant foods. This also makes it easier to show the tourists the type of traditional Malay herbs and plants, especially those that are less well known and not available in the cities.

After showing me her collection of home-grown produce, she took me inside her house and showed me a tray of white pastille powder that she had dried under the sun (see Figure 8.6). This product is a homemade and traditional cooling rice powder made from soaking rice grains. The rice grains need to be soaked in clean water for up to three months or until the rice grains dissolve in the water. The water has to be changed weekly to get rid of the unpleasant smell. This provider told me that sometimes people soak the rice grains for one year in a tightly sealed urn. Then, the mixture of the rice paste is poured onto a clean white cloth using a cone made from mango leaf, pandanus leaf or cocoa leaf. The tiny droplets of rice are then placed in the sun until dry with the thin slices of pandanus leaves and mashed fresh flowers.



Figure 8. 6 Traditional Malay beauty products made by the providers (Source: Author)

As a rule, they will use flowers that have a sweet-scented fragrant such as jasmine, bougainvillea, roses and any other herbs with a strong smell to get rid of the aroma coming from the white pastilles. Each time you want to use it, by dropping water on it the cooling powder will quickly dissolve, and you apply it to your skin and whole face. The provider told me that this powder is excellent to prevent acne, as well as being good for skin whitening and smoothing effects. In fact, Malay people use it as a cooling powder for children when they have the chicken pox.

In summary, these observations show that the kitchen gardens tended by the communities have the potential to expand and deepen the experiences of tourists at these homestays. Their gardens could also play a strategic role for the providers to save on food costs for their families and in providing tourists with local foods. Additionally, the food gardens help the communities to commit to the concept of cultural and environmental sustainability. Over the long term, the continued efforts to develop the kitchen and community gardens may assist low-income providers in their cooking activities that could benefit the programme, such as cooking demonstrations for tourists. In this way, more revenue could be generated. This study also shows that the providers utilising their kitchen gardens as a resource for food, medicinal and cosmetics value, which reflects their cultural identity as per rural communities living in a traditional village. It appears that the gardens should be considered as a distinctive element that could/should be showcased to enhance the gastronomic experience of tourists in KBH. With a proper marketing tool and publicity, these gardens could be used in all of the promotional materials and methods for KBH to promote their destination through using their TMF.

8.3.3 Sub-theme 2c] Culinary Experience

Another significant observation was the importance of the cultural values embedded in the Malay communities in KBH. Undeniably, the observation and interview with the providers demonstrated that they were very much shaped by local traditional values. The first interview was conducted with the homestay community leader's wife. She has introduced herself as Opah and said that the majority of the people in this village call her by that name. It is common among

people in traditional Malay communities to be called according to family status, such as *Emak* or *Mak* (mother) or *Ayah* (father), *Opah* or *Nenek* (grandmother), *Atuk* (grandfather) and to do otherwise is considered rude and offensive. The fictive kinship relationship between the host and guest in the homestay programme illustrates the polite formality among Malay families. In fact, the tourists who came to KBH called her as *Opah*, and she was famous among the regular tourists who return to KBH especially the fishing enthusiasts.

Other views mainly related to a number of traditional village cultural practices in KBH that were observed. For example, in KBHP 8 House, soon after the provider finished cooking, she quickly laid down all the cooked meals on the bamboo mat on top of the *saprah* (a square tablecloth). She served all the dishes together, clean plates, a bowl of hot white rice, a small bowl of water (for washing hands), a bottle of plain water for drinking, and glasses (see Figure 8.7 and Figure 8.8).



Figure 8. 7 Traditional Malay table manners require to be seated on a floor mat and to eat with the meals (Source: Author)



Figure 8. 8 Ketor is a traditional Malay jug for cleansing the hands (Source: <http://www.pickles-and-spices.com/malay-table-manners.html>)

The small bowl of water is to dip the tip of all your right fingers for cleansing. Many meals are invariably eaten with your right hand. Left hands should never be used to handle food under any circumstances. The *Ketor* is the traditional Malay jug with fresh water that is used to wash the fingers while the big bowl under the *Ketor* is to catch the remaining water. The main dish will be rice with three or four side dishes that are eaten together with the rice. Typically, you will take your meals using a spoon, especially for meals with gravy, sauce, and soup, and use your right hand to tear a piece of food from the shared plate, particularly for dry dishes. The way men and women sit is notably different. Men crisscross their feet in front of them, which in Malay is called *bersila*, and women fold both their feet on one side, *bersimpuh*, generally on their right (Hussin, n.d).

The results from this section indicated that the homestay providers provided more meaningful experiences to the tourists through the traditional Malay table manners. Today, these traditional table manners are rarely practiced, as most households consume their food at the dining table. The simplicity of table manners in the modern household in Malaysia showed that the traditional elements of Malay table manners has been gradually altered to fit the social advancement of the people and society. In relation to this result, 80% of the homestay providers in KBH mentioned that tourists mentioned that they hardly eaten their meals on the floor where the tablecloth is laid, and they sit around cross-legged. They also stated that tourists were happy to see them present the traditional silver jug to wash their hand. The homestay providers recognised that these elements contribute to the development of the tourists' experience in consuming TMF in their homestay and they were pleased to continue this practices as part of their traditional identity. The providers also believed that the presentation of traditional Malay elements added value to the overall TMF identity in KBH.

8.3.3.1 Sub-theme 2c] i) Malay Culture of Hospitality

This thesis discusses the 'meaning' of food as an exploration of culture through the homestay programme. It shows that there is always something to do or learn in this homestay village, such as visiting the farm, learning how to catch fish in the traditional way, and enjoying the fascinating spectrum of Malay

customs and traditions. More than that, the local communities in KBH rely a great deal on the communal eating aspect of Malay hospitality, an element of their stay that is highly cherished by most tourists. I noticed that the providers in this homestay programme gain various benefits in the form of interaction and communication with the guests from the social aspect of food consumption. As KBHP12 stated:

“Usually, the tourists who came in a group, were very busy with the schedule. We get to know them more closely only through eating together activities. I like seeing them enjoy the food I served especially when they added in more rice into their plate. It really makes me happy.”

Additionally, the culture of hospitality is vital for Malay families and communities. These daily life activities help to create and promote a unique bond between host and tourists. As one of the interviewees stated:

“We taught them to eat using their right hand, and you can see that some of them are untactful as they have never experienced eating this way, especially the international tourists, who usually eat with a knife, fork and spoon. But still they wanted to try. So you can see a lot of actions and funny things around, and we laugh together.” (KBHP 12)

The connection between food and hospitality with the guests is the central bonding aspect as it brings the tourists into the family unit. These results reflect those of Pettinger *et al.*, (2007) who also found that culture has a major role in determining where and how foods are consumed. Moreover, food is a way of expressing sociability and hospitality, as mealtimes bring groups together, both physically and symbolically.

8.3.3.2 Sub-theme 2c] ii) Collective Communal Activities

The next subject in the interviews was related to the prominent sense of attachment fostered in this homestay to the local community's commitment to the communal activities such as wedding feasts. These communal activities (*gotong-royong* in Malay) are carried out by neighbours throughout the village to help the host prepare for feasts, especially food (see Figure 8.9). In this place, the head of the village is the first person that the host has to inform so that he can raise this matter at the village meeting. The head plays an important role discussing with

other villagers about the preparations that need to be undertaken and the exact schedule for the communal activities as well as the itinerary of the event.



Figure 8. 9 The men are responsible for cooking large portions of food during the community's 'working together'
(Source: <https://teejayphoto.blogspot.com/search?q=kenduri>)

As one of the interviewees noted:

“Normally, Penghulu (the village head) will inform the villagers about which house is going to have a feast in that month. So they will mark in their calendar and on that day almost all the villagers will come and help us.” (KBHP 3)

Another interviewee added:

“Usually most of the villagers will show up during the event because this is something like shared values that everyone in this village must uphold.” (KBHP 15)

The collective work is a voluntary activity and organised by a committee of village development and security (JKKK), which functions to record all the events that will be celebrated by community members. Usually, the community members willingly accept an invitation because their presence represents their commitment to the communal values upheld by all the members. As one participant highlighted:

“Actually, the concept of working together is similar to the obligation to repay the work. Today, I help her and tomorrow she will help me back.” (KBHP 6).

Women play a vital role in every joint communal activity because they have to do the food preparation the day before the event takes place. Usually, they will remind each other if there is an event to be held and make sure that every woman gets involved in that programme. The host will prepare and buy all the ingredients and raw materials for cooking and gather them in the corner of the kitchen. Then, the women will come in the afternoon after the *Asr* prayer and start preparing food as demonstrated in Figure 8.10. The host only needs to inform the villagers about the menu on that day, and from there they will divide the tasks according to the number of people who are helping at that time.



Figure 8. 10 The communal activity among woman taking place in the host's house
(Source: <http://chefwanmohd.blogspot.com/2013/05/blog-post.html>)

The host will typically prepare all the ingredients and items for the feast in a shed outside the house so that the men can obtain the ingredients for cooking. The host needs to ensure that she has provided the men involved in the preparation of *kenduri* (feast) with a tea towel and cigarettes. The men will distribute among themselves all of the items before they start working. Typically, they will hang the tea towel around their neck to absorb their sweat during the food preparation (see Figure 8.11). Men play an important role in food preparation cooking and the role of head of food preparation for a community wedding ceremony or any big feast will be given to a man as shown in Figure 8.11 (Muhammad *et al.*, 2013).



Figure 8. 11 Tea towel hung around the men's necks to absorb the sweat due to the hot weather and cooking (Source: <http://my-paritkarjan.blogspot.co.uk>)

There is no specific literature to explain about the role of men in cooking and food preparation in Malay feasts, but a study conducted by Leong-Salobir (2009) in her *A Taste of Empire. Food, the Colonial Kitchen and the Representation and Role of Servants in India, Malaysia and Singapore, c.1858-1963*, mentioned that cooking in the past was a form of labour that was also considered as a tough job. It required managing wood fires and kerosene tin stoves which implied that domestic cookery and chores in the post-colonial world should be undertaken by men. Moreover, most domestic servants who worked for the British expatriates who worked in Malaysia during that period were male. The continuing post-colonial view of the importance of men in cooking for large-scale community events seems to be reflected in their current central role in these events. The host will prepare and provide some Malay food and drinks for all of the villagers who are helping out during the *kenduri* and make sure that each of them is well fed. Usually, the *gotong-royong* takes place about two days and lasts from morning until midnight. Occasionally, the communities will start to clear up all of the food after 5 pm during the real feast. The host will ask a group of woman to begin packing the leftover food so that they can take some back to their families. The dishes also reflect the symbol of token of appreciation from the host families to all of the villagers that have helped out during the feast (see Figure 8.12).



Figure 8. 12 Food preparation and cooking are the major communal activities in Kampong Beng (Source: <http://www.redscarz.com/search?q=Kampung+Beng&x=0&y=0>).

Taken together, the results in this section provide valuable insights into the practice of Malay communities in rural areas. This section reflects on the importance of TMF that can be showcased to the tourists as a means of enhancing their gastronomic experience in the homestay programme. This particular connection and bonding creates a space for interaction between providers and tourists centred around TMF and which also provides a platform for social integration among the local population in KBH, serving to strengthen their domestic bonds. The results illustrate that the homestay providers in KBH could use these communal activities as one of the elements to publicise their cultural importance, especially around identity, which are still embedded in their social communities. As Corner and Armitage (2002) posited, food preparation and its consumption portray the identity of the people and communities. Accordingly, Malay culinary practices not only act as a type of communication mechanism, but metaphorically have the capacity to mark distinctions between communities (Zahari, 2011). The interview results suggest that TMF practices in KBH have significant connections with the community's life and this study corroborates Rearick's (2009) view that some elements of TMF are the visible symbols or badges of identity of the locals. These identities are frequently expressed through the preparation and consumption of TMF that have been prioritised by people who believe their culture needs to be preserved. As confirmation of the importance of TMF one interviewee revealed:

“As far as I know only one family has changed this culture. He engaged with the local catering company to handle his daughter’s wedding feast so that we don’t have to cook for his kenduri. We felt a little bit upset by this decision.” (KBHP 13)

The concerns expressed by this informant related to the penetration of modernisation on their cultural practices for communal activities. One tradition which is not perceived as being under threat from modern approaches to rural life is collecting firewood. Figure 8.13 illustrates the natural scenery that you can see in every house in this homestay village. Each of the house will stock up their firewood in a shed or barn for future use.



Figure 8. 13 The stock of firewood is kept in a shed for future use (Source: Author)

Most of the providers said that they prefer to use a firewood stove over a modern one for doing the cooking. An interview with one of the providers revealed that this firewood is not merely collected for their daily use but is also treated as an essential social bonding activity between the villagers, especially during a wedding feast. The reason behind this practice is to share the burden of the host families in gathering firewood for cooking. Provider KBHP 4, stated:

“We will send a bag of firewood to our neighbours’ houses every time they are planning to do a wedding feast. Then, another friend will bring their wood to this person, followed by the rest of the neighbourhood.”

The village has an ageing population and many residents will soon be unable to continue this practice. When asked whether the younger generation will continue this tradition, the provider responded that the new generation have

different ideas and approaches to traditional practices. As far as the local villagers are concerned, this is fine as long as the new generations maintains the traditions and continues with the custom. As she explained:

“Nowadays, the work has been taken over by the youths in the village. They will organise among themselves, and they will pass us the wood that is ready to use. They even store the wood properly in the shed. So, we have to take care and look after this group of young people. We give them food and a packet of cigarettes after they have finished their work.” (KBHP 10)

This suggests that, the tradition continues but it has been modified by the young generations to suit the passage of time. It is considered valuable that the providers started to involve the younger generation to play a role in the community traditions so that continuity can be ensured. When I asked her about any other customs that have changed with time and to suit the needs of the modern village, she told me about the oil lamps, or *panjut*, which have been given a new look by the villagers for the homestay programme (see Figure 8.14). She said:

“During the past, we made the oil lamps from bamboo. We had to go to the forest for a good and quality bamboo to make the oil lamps. But after we started with the homestay programme, we got the idea to change the casing of the oil lamps with young green papaya. So instead of using bamboo, we transformed it into this one and the tourists love it.” (KBHP 8)

This tradition has been clearly altered due to modernisation. In this context, the oil lamps have been adapted to the present but still utilising traditional knowledge. This observation was also reported by Zahari (2011) who stated that modernisation symbolises advancement, the evolution of a community and society. The traditions of oil lamps in KBH could be deduced as a continuation of the past to the present and therefore, should be portrayed to tourists as one of the traditions and values that still preserved by the homestay providers.



Figure 8. 14 The oil lamp, or panjut, made from green papaya
(Source: <http://yusmanorain.blogspot.com/2014/01/homestay-kg-beng-masih-mengekalkan.html>)

8.3.4 Sub-theme 2d] Culinary Experiences through Storytelling

It was found that the providers had informally used storytelling to explain some elements of TMF when explaining things to tourists without realising the impact that inventive storytelling might have on the promotion of their homestay. One of the culinary stories that is famous in KBH regaled by the providers is about a traditional food known as *Kebebe*. The dish is made from 13 different types of fruits, shrimp paste, salt, sugar and bird's eye chillies, resulting in a combination of different tastes such as bitter, salty, sweet, spicy and sour. It is usually served during special occasions, such as a snack in the collective work for a wedding, or eaten during afternoon tea with hot beverages (Kaur, 2016). It is interesting to note how this dish is prepared by the village community, which is through the act of communal collective activities and pounded using wooden mortar and pestle.

The story behind this food was explained by KBHP 3, highlighting that Lenggong's culinary heritage is heavily influenced by the use of local ingredients from plants, as well as river and forest products such as *rebung* and Rattan, which can be found in abundance around the village. The ingredients can also be found in the forest and nearby their own house compounds. She also mentioned that this dish has existed approximately 200 years ago, made by their ancestors who migrated from Pattani, Thailand. The village was established by a son of a Pattani

King, known as 'Tok Beng'. He fled through the Perak River during a war in Pattani at that time. Thus, the village was named after him. The dish has once been the main dish for the community of Lenggong.

The creation of the Kebebe began with an older woman giving someone a recipe to remove oil stains on wood after it had been used to pound grated coconut to make *kerisik* (pan-toasted grated coconut flesh). The person was advised by the older woman to not wash off the oil stain on the wooden mortar and pestle, but instead, to pound a variety of fruits that can be found around their neighbourhood. The oil stain was removed, while the new ingredients that had been pounded consistently using the same wooden mortar and pestle turned out to be so delicious. The combination of various types of fruits and other ingredients make the dish taste good. This mixture has also been used as a remedy for people who have fatigue and bitter taste on the tongue, mainly after recovering from a fever. That story is famous in Lenggong, as it has been passed down from one generation to the next.

The people of KBH should be proud of their folktales and myths about the origin of their place, which can be shared with tourists. Coskie (2010) promoted the idea of creating community bond through storytelling, as one of the meaningful connections with each other, especially in representing their culture to other people. He quoted Hamilton and Weiss (2005) as saying:

“Storytelling is the oldest form of education. People around the world have always told tales as a way of passing down their cultural beliefs, traditions, and history to future generations. Why? Stories are at the core of all that makes us human.” (p.1).

In this section, there are a number of stories about Kampong Beng that are shared by the homestay providers. Interestingly, inventive storytelling has not been widely used as one of the tools in promoting their homestay, and they do not even realise the potential of this method. 4 out of the 15 providers interviewed said that they have no skills in telling the stories, and because of that, they should not become the storyteller for their homestay. On the other hand, only 4 out of 15 respondents have informed the author that they know the history of Kampong Beng, but could not tell the tourists because they did not know how to arrange and organise the stories in a proper way. Additionally, some felt that they have not

been told to do the storytelling during the programme, as one of the respondents said:

“I do not know how to arrange the storyline. It so happened that one of my cousins in Jeli, Kelantan, has asked me whether I know the history of Mountain Reng. He also asked if there are any rock relics or big mountains in Batu Ring village”

Listening to a folktale presented by KBHP 6, the rock from Batu Ring village is believed to have flown to Mountain Reng in Jeli, Kelantan, which is about 165 km from their village. The rock submerged a whole village in Jeli in one social occasion involving a food feast near the mountain. They believe that the stone relics that still exist in Mountain Reng are initially from Batu Ring village. The villagers also believe that the impact crater-shaped hole in their village, is the original site of the stone that has flown from the village to go to the mountain. However, they knew nothing about that hole and the existence of the stone relics in Mountain Reng. They could not even explain why the rock have flown to that mountain in the first place.

However, participant KBHP 4 mentioned that the rock has actually flown from Jeli, Kelantan, to Batu Ring village. She said that the crater-shaped hole situated in their forest was where the stone relics were located, and the size was as big as a small lake in that area. She remembered going to that place when she was a child, but was then forbidden by her parents to go again. That place is dangerous because it is inhabited by a group of wild elephants. Having said that, there are two different versions of the story that need to be validated by another participant of this study. Fortunately, KBHP 7 agreed that the story from KBHP 6 was the same story that she has heard as a child. To her knowledge, the crater has disappeared and was covered with water. Then, after a number of Internet searches, the original story of Mountain Reng was compared with the two versions of the story as told by these participants. Apparently, the story of Batu Ring village has been published in one of the local newspapers in Malaysia (see Figure 8.15).



Figure 8. 15 Picture of Mountain Reng in Jeli, Kelantan
(Source: <http://www.malaysiasite.nl/gunungrengeng.htm>)

One version of the story was written on an information plaque by Tourism Malaysia, located in front of Mountain Reng in Jeli, Kelantan. The plaque provides the version of the legends that surround the mountain, which is similar to what was found on the Internet. According to the historical records point located at the entrance to the mountain, the original site of the mountain known as Tala Village, was first opened by Tok Saadeh, a descendant of *Pulang Hari* (Return Day) in Java, Indonesia. On the plaque, it is written that the mountain came into existence as a result of human sins of going against the norms, which is also known as *bergalak* (to outrageously entertain). The head of Tala village at the time had planned for a large-scale traditional games event, which was expected to last for seven days and seven nights, with a variety of games organised for participation by the people. He wanted to show the villagers a new game that has never been played before, namely pitting a cat and a dog on the rooftop as the highlight of the event. It was regaled that the event was held at noon, which coincided with the Zuhr prayer time, and was eagerly anticipated by the villagers as they have never seen such an unusual occasion.

The story has it that while the crowd was cheering for the game, a strong storm hit the village, which was followed by heavy rain. Just before the chaos, an old woman and her grandson have decided to go back to their village which was located not far from Tala village, to put away the rice that they have left to dry

under the sun in their house compound. After the rice have been stored, the rain suddenly stopped, and the woman together with her grandson went back to Tala village to witness the event. They were however taken by a great surprise to see that the whole event site was crushed by a rock, burying everything. According to that legend, the old woman and her grandson were the raconteur of the tales behind Mountain Reng¹⁴. According to another source, the stone that crushed Mount Tala village originated from Ulu Sungai Gong, located in the state of Perak, which is believed to be of a three-night distance to Kelantan and the Tala village. However, evidence shows that the mountain in Hulu Ring River has now become a pool, and the senior citizens in Batu Ring village believe that the pool is of the same shape as Mountain Reng in Jeli, Kelantan.

Another participant shared a different story about some antique glassware and dinnerware that were used for Perak's royal food banquets, which have been thrown into Lake Raban (see Figure 8.16). However, she has asked the author to validate it with the experts, as she was not sure of the accuracy of her account of that legend. After browsing the Internet, the author has found that a similar story has been published by a local newspaper about a resident of Lenggong, Perak. The original story is about a lake located not far from his house in Lenggong, near the mountain. Not only does the small lake behind his house contain rare species of lake fish that could not be found elsewhere, but it also contains antique dinnerware and glassware at the bottom. He remembered that his parents told him that during the Japanese army occupation of Hulu Perak, many of the villagers fled into the nearby forests. Some hid in caves, including his own family who took refuge in Kajang's Cave. At that time, there was also an officer who worked at the Land Registration Office in Lenggong, who was believed to be a member of the Perak royal family. He was forced by the Japanese army to leave his house.

Then, a few days later, a gang of thieves entered the abandoned house, and stolen the antique glassware and dinnerware belonging to the Royal family. All the dishes are stamped with the royal crest. Due to some unknown reasons, the thieves threw all the stolen glassware and dinnerware into the lake. His parents

¹⁴ Reng means kismet or energy in the Kelantan dialect.

were there and have witnessed how the thieves thrown the dinnerware and glassware piece by piece into the lake. So, he believed that all the antique treasures are still hidden at the bottom of the lake. His parents also told him that the lake contains many grenades, from all kinds of ammunition and rifles that have been discarded by the Japanese army before they surrendered in 1945.



Figure 8. 16 Picture of Tasik Raban in Lenggong, Perak
(Source: <http://tasikrabanhomestay.blogspot.co.uk/>)

Overall, these observations suggest that KBH could take advantage of their inventive storytelling to promote their homestay programme. Guevarra and Rodriguez (2015), for example, highlighted that tourists love the sharing and learning from the homeowner's narratives. This finding is significant because it establishes the potential of storytelling as an additional tool to promote homestay programmes.

8.3.5 Sub-theme 2e] Promoting Social Integration among Local Communities through TMF

The culture of the Malay communities in KBH has not altered much in respect to their lifestyles, social relations, or cultural values. In their accounts of the events surrounding the village, the majority of respondents felt that they still engage with and uphold longstanding village traditions and values. One of the examples I observed during my fieldwork was the social bonding among the villagers in this homestay. This practice reflects the feeling of a sense of

belonging based on shared experiences and lifestyles, such as the food exchanged among households, on special occasions such as Ramadan but also on normal days as well. Practices such as production and sharing of meals are representative of the traditional invocation to share your prosperity with other. Recipients are expected to return the favour by sharing their good times with their neighbours, traditions which are less noticeable among urban Malay communities. The continuity of these traditions strengthens social relations among the communities and passes them to the younger generation. Commenting on social integration among the village communities, one of the interviewees said:

“Another typical norm is to ask our neighbour if they have extra lemongrass, tapioca shoots, Vietnamese mint or anything from their garden that we can use first. Sometimes we run out of stock, and we will swap with them later.” (KBHP 10)

The food practices among the providers in this village have been passed down from generation to generation. The current generation are keen to safeguard these traditions as they believe that their continuation contributes to creating a compelling social bonding among the community. Interestingly, the most striking result to emerge from the data is that the way the communities in KBH communicate with other villages. The villages under KBH are located next to each other but the communities depend on boats and sampan (traditional Chinese flat-bottomed boats) as a mode of transport. During interviews, all of the homestay providers reported that they always visit each other's villages OR houses for any religious, communal feasts and celebrations and that TMF is a key component of these feasts evidently promoting a social integration among the villagers and homestay providers. The homestay providers also revealed that they always bring tourists to the next village using their personal boat when they had an invitation for any food-related events. They believed that this traditional mode of transport provides more meaningful experiences for tourists especially when the tourists consumed TMF during the feast. In fact, according to the homestay providers, they thought that tourists developed their sense of understanding about the local way of life and culture in KBH, with meaningful memories that centre on food and traditional boat travel, through such experiences. An interview with the homestay leader disclosed that:

“Tourists were so happy when we invited them to join our food activities such as [attending a] religious feast in the next village. They knew that we were using the traditional boat as a mode of transportation and they were not afraid to travel by this boat at night. They told us that this was their unique and meaningful experiences especially after they were feeling full after a meal.” (PS11)

The comments above illustrated that the homestay providers are aware that tourists were delighted with their traditional boat, as a mode of transportation. He remarked that by exposing the tourists to experience KBH social practices, the tourists would understand more fully the culture of the local people. In addition, the tourists also enjoyed travelling in a traditional boat as a symbolic representation of KBH and associated this element with the food activities that they consumed in the second village. He also thought that by using traditional boats tourists will promote this homestay programme by word of mouth to their families, friends, and relatives. The observations in this section also indicate that continuing food traditions will, in the long run, maintain and perhaps strengthen the relationships within and between homestay communities.

8.3.6 Sub-theme 2f] Strategies and Promotions

When the participants were asked about why KBH is as popular as it is today, the majority commented that their homestay became more popular after it received the Best Homestay Award in Perak in 2009. The village is close to a beautiful lake, Lake Raban, set in a lush environment and popular for fishing enthusiasts. As a result, locals started to call this place ‘Kampong Beng Mini Amazon’. In addition, they also noted that the recognition of Lenggong as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS) increased the popularity of their homestay programme. Recognition of Lenggong as a WHS site and the prevalence of Perak Man (see Figure 8.17) as displayed in the Lenggong Valley or Lenggong Archaeology Gallery has increased the reputation of their homestay programme as a site of alternative accommodation for tourists.



Figure 8. 17 Original skeleton of Perak Man displayed in Lenggong Archaeology Gallery (Source: Author)

Lenggong has been developed by local state organisations with new facilities and amenities provided, such as Raja Muda Nazrin Bridge, known locally as Tasik Raban Bridge. The former Chief Minister of Perak, Datuk Seri Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir, said that a plan to develop Hulu Perak-Belum-Lenggong-Banding had also been proposed. They have also begun the process to obtain UNESCO World Heritage Site recognition for Royal Belum State Park, which was gazetted as Belum Forest Reserve for biodiversity conservation. (South East Asia Iron and Steel Institute, 2015). As one of the interviewees noted:

“Since UNESCO’s recognition, we have received a lot of guests from local and international organisations to our village who are interested to learn about our culture and traditions. They asked us to demonstrate how to use some of the traditional equipment, such as Lesung Kaki (a traditional wooden rice pounder), coconut grater, grindstone and many others.” (KBHP11)

However, participant KBHP 11 expressed regret that he did not insist that the local communities maintained their traditional tools, utensils and equipment because he never thought that they would participate in this cultural programme. He puts this down to gradual modernisation of village life and a lack of awareness of the importance of preserving traditional ways of life, particularly by young people. He added that it would be costly to revive the use of traditional tools and equipment and that, regrettably, they do not have the necessary funding to undertake such a revival.

With regard to the recognition of Lenggong as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS), the majority of the homestay providers, and their leader, were not aware that they had the chance to take advantage of the potential benefits from this UNESCO inscription. Some of the interviewees (10 out of 15) felt that the tourist primarily visits their homestay due to the cultural assets and environment surrounding the KBH. While others (5 out of 15) considered that Lenggong Valley has not had any significant influence on their homestay programme. For a small number of participants (3 out of 15), the recognition from UNESCO was the primary reason for a strong development in Lenggong, particularly the yearly event of Lenggong Festival Food. These observations reveal that the homestay providers were relatively split with respect to Lenggong Valley as to whether they believe that tourists were interested in their homestay because of the UNESCO recognition. Table 8.5 summarise the results for Theme 2, regarding the assessment of KBH to be developed as a culinary tourism homestay.

Table 8. 5 Theme 2: Assessment of KBH to be developed as a Culinary Tourism Homestay

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
ASSESSMENT1	The providers realised that most of the tourists were primarily attracted to KBH because of its natural environment and landscape, and the gastronomic experiences were placed as secondary.
ASSESSMENT2	The homestay providers claimed that their food is unique due to their rural location, which is near Lake Raban, thus, the local and traditional food in this homestay is understood as authentic and different from other places in Perak, particularly in the urban areas.
ASSESSMENT3	KBH created their signature dishes and brand based on kampong food and freshwater fish. The tourists always request to eat freshwater fish together with fresh Malay <i>ulam</i> during their stay at KBH.
ASSESSMENT4	The providers are utilising their kitchen gardens as a resource for food, medicine and cosmetics, which reflects their cultural identity as rural communities living in a traditional village.
ASSESSMENT5	The aesthetic value found in traditional Malay table manners is one of the aspects that are still put into practice by KBH, which is primarily for homestay attractions. They believe that traditional Malay table manners should be upheld together with other values that represent the image of the village and rural population.
ASSESSMENT6	Malay culture of hospitality is vital for the Malay families and homestay communities in KBH. They are proud to showcase the element of 'eating together' to the tourists, as they perceive this as a value that should be profoundly portrayed in the homestay.
ASSESSMENT7	Having people who are not related to the providers during the programme has resulted in the development of a special connection which is similar to a mother-daughter or mother-son relationship. The homestay providers prefer to be called <i>Mak</i> (mother) or <i>Ayah</i> (father) during the programme.
ASSESSMENT8	The KBH community still emphasises on a prominent sense of attachment through communal activities such as wedding feasts. Their commitment to communal values is upheld by all the members, as a way to show respect to fellow community members.
ASSESSMENT9	Inventive storytelling to tourists has actually been carried out by the homestay providers without realizing the impacts that this have on the

	promotion of their homestay programme.
ASSESSMENT10	The results also show that KBH still engages with and uphold longstanding village traditions and values among their local community.
ASSESSMENT11	People of KBH believe that the recognition of Lenggong as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO can increase the popularity of their homestay and provide a free publicity to promote their programme.

8.4 Theme 3: Barriers Faced by KBH in Developing its Culinary Tourism

However, wider issues might become a major threat to KBH homestay programme, if the villagers cannot secure a balance between them as shown in Table 8.6 below. The lack of awareness of, and expertise in, homestay providers of KBH relating to marketing and promoting their TMF is thus regarded as a weakness and threat. The list of potential consequences that have been identified in this study is summarised in the table below.

Table 8. 6 Weaknesses and threats in promoting TMF in Kampong Beng Homestay

Weakness (internal)	Threat (external)
1. Lack of apprentice from the young generation	1. Lack of promotion in branding KBH as a culinary destination
2. Lack of awareness in preserving other cultural and heritage such as traditional Malay houses	2. Insufficient promotion for their TMF
3. Lack of economic diversification	3. Lack of interest in the advantage of Lenggong as the UNESCO World Heritage Site
4. Lack of quality and standard such as hygiene and cleanliness	
6. Focusing the food activities to share their knowledge and skills with tourists	

Table 8.6 provides an overview of the results obtained from the analysis of interviews with homestay providers of KBH. The results illustrate some of the main weaknesses and threats to this homestay concerning the growth and development of their programme in the future. KBH may achieve the successful aspirations of their leaders, but the results show they have some way to go to be an assured, sustainable programme. The weaknesses include lack of interest by the younger generation to continue the homestay programme and running businesses in small food industries. Without the commitment of the younger generation, these businesses might not survive, and the homestay may have to look for another opportunity to provide additional income to the homestay providers.

Secondly, the lack of awareness in preserving traditional Malay houses is very important. Even though this weakness is not related directly to TMF in KBH, traditional Malay houses are one of the elements that contribute to KBH being seen as a traditional Malay village. Tourists recognise that the traditional houses gave them more connection with the village setting especially when being offered TMF in that kind of physical environment. Thirdly, the lack of economic diversification in their food businesses. As the research has shown, the women in the homestay have worked hard to develop businesses producing and selling fermentation fish, Malay food snacks, and cakes. Moreover, the homestay programme targeted tourists as their main business customer, but it should be noted that the tourist season is not year-round. This suggests that the homestay providers are always entirely dependent on tourists to buy their products and tourists as the main target market for their food businesses.

Fourthly is the lack of quality and standard in hygiene and cleanliness. During observations, there were about 20% of the homestay providers who did not really deliver the necessary hygiene and cleanliness levels in their houses, particularly their domestic kitchen. The providers should place greater care on the elements of quality and high standards to gain the respect and confidence of the tourists. In the interviews, the homestay providers did not realise that the knowledge and skills they share with tourists about their TMF could be expanded and developed as part of the homestay product for tourists. Therefore, from this study, it is suggested that the homestay providers in KBH should be encouraged to understand that they have such unique knowledge and skills in TMF that they could make them an important attraction of the homestay by showcasing them to the tourists.

Included in the threats to the programme in KBH, were: 1) lack of promotional efforts in branding KBH as a TMF culinary destination; 2) insufficient effective promotional tools and materials for their TMF; and lastly 3) lack of awareness of the opportunity to take advantage of Lenggong as the UNESCO World Heritage Site. These three factors have been recognised as threats for TMF in KBH and the providers must look seriously into this matter if they want to preserve and safeguard their TMF. Interviews with the homestay providers in KBH found that the promotional materials for TMF in KBH were not

as ‘aggressive’ as the other cultural assets. They realised that tourists visited KBH in the main for cultural assets and therefore they had put so much effort into promoting these assets that they had forgotten that their TMF is also worthy of being marketed and promoted to the tourists. In brief, the data discussed in all of the above themes were identified to support and answered Research Aim 3, “to review the way TMF is used in Kampong Geng Homestay as a specific asset to their homestay programmes”.

8.4.1 Sub-theme 3a] Power and Influence of the Stakeholders towards the Programme

The participation of the KBH homestay providers in the homestay programme underpins their motivations and empowerments to grow with the business. The homestay leader, PS11 encourages the homestay providers to contribute their ideas in the decision-making process. In this section, the findings reveal that the majority of the homestay (12 out of 15), providers experienced an exceptional level of ‘empowerment’, especially in expressing their opinions and concerns as well as making decisions on matters related to the homestay programme. The providers view the economic and social benefits provided by the homestay programme as very rewarding, and being asked to contribute their ideas gives them more control over the development of their homestay. The following section describes the types of motivation and empowerment received by the homestay providers in KBH from their leader.

100% of the providers interviewed indicated that they were aware of the community involvement and participation in homestay activities. The leader of this programme, Pak Alias, organises all the events and management of this homestay acting together with the committee members and providers. He believes that empowerment is one of the factors that he needs to develop while managing this homestay programme. He also has taken the initiative to develop contacts with stakeholders such as federal government agencies and departments, local stakeholders, NGOs, and the private sector to secure the resources and support necessary for the success of this homestay. He also believes that it is his role to urge the providers in the village to participate fully in the activities and events for the homestay so that their programme will be sustainable in the long term.

One interviewee alluded to the role of women in the homestay programme. The majority of the businesses in the programme are owned by women, and the involvement of the women in this programme has resulted in the growth of a number of small businesses, in particular making traditional fermented fish as a staple homestay food item. The women also make local snacks and cakes and sell them to boost their income, by introducing TMF as an integral part of the homestay experience. Provider KBHP 6, explained that:

“Usually we will prepare the snacks in advance to sell them to the tourists. So we decided to make extra because our friends will also buy from us to give the snacks as a souvenir to their family and friends. Indirectly, we therefore earn extra income for ourselves.”

This practice is seen as an opportunity to earn extra money from the products that they are selling. The teamwork between them in producing the snacks has inspired other providers to produce something to boost their income from the programme. Provider KBHP 8, stated that:

“I started making spicy snacks from the noodles machine. So, I tried a few times and keep on improvising the texture until I was happy with the results.”

The contribution of these women in expanding business activities relating to the homestay programme, might be a key contributor to making the programme sustainable in the long-term.

8.4.2 Sub-theme 3b] Motivations of the Homestay Providers

The next section considers the personal motivations that prompt providers to take part in the homestay programme. The majority of participants (13 out of 15), claimed that they joined the programme initially not to earn money but to fill their leisure time. They also claimed that they had not been aware of how much money it was possible to make by participating. However, it was also clear that for a minority (2 out of 15), the primary motive for signing up to the homestay programme had been financial:

“We do labour work in this village, and by participating in this homestay programme we can earn extra money for our living. Thus, it could help us to earn more and help out with household finances.” (KBHP 13)

One interviewee reported that:

“The villagers depend on the tourists to buy their products. If there are tourists, then we can get extra income.” (KBHP 1)

When asked whether the money that they get from participating in the programme was sufficient to cover the costs of buying the raw materials and providing the facilities the tourists need, one interviewee commented that:

“If we get two guests, then we can have a little bit profit. Otherwise, the payment that we get from the coordinator is just enough to cover all the expenses for the tourists’ food and the souvenirs that we give to them on the departure day.” (KBHP 5)

Commenting on the financial aspect, one of the interviewees mentioned the hardships of village life. The majority of villagers were used to surviving by utilising all the resources in their surroundings. Therefore, earning money from the programme was seen as a blessing. As one participant said:

“We are satisfied with the management of our homestay programme. Every year we receive a bonus from our community leader and the amount is not fixed. If we manage to host more tourists, then we will receive more. But usually, it’s worthwhile to top up our living cost in the village.” (KBHP 11)

This view was common across the community as an individual significant advantage of their homestay programme. Additionally, most of the providers appear to be enjoying participating in the programme as they can meet new people outside of their everyday life. They were friendly and eager to talk to tourists and keen to know about life in other places. Table 8.7 presents all of the results for Theme 3 concerning the barriers faced by KBH to be developed as a culinary tourism homestay.

Table 8. 7 Theme 3: Barriers faced by KBH in developing its Culinary Tourism

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
BARRIER1	The lack of awareness and expertise by the homestay providers in marketing their homestay can be regarded as a weakness and threat to KBH.
BARRIER2	The homestay is lacking of economic diversification in their food businesses, and targets tourists as the primary customers for their products.

BARRIER3	The lack of interest among the younger generation to continue the homestay programme and be involved in the small-scale food industry.
BARRIER4	A small percentage of the homestay providers in KBH are still having a lack of quality and standard in hygiene and cleanliness.
BARRIER5	The lack of awareness in preserving traditional Malay houses is critical, as it is one of the elements that contribute to the image of KBH as a traditional Malay village.

8.5 Theme 4: The Potential of KBH to be Develop as a Culinary Tourism Destination

8.5.1 Sub-theme 4a] Advantages and Benefits to the Communities

The Malaysian homestay programme is partly intended to facilitate the development of rural areas, especially improving the socio-economic well-being of the local people. The results of this case study are clear that the homestay programme is helping with this. The providers and wider communities in KBH have shown that by participating in the homestay programme they can secure the funding to preserve their natural resources, culture, and traditions. Table 8.8 depicts the benefits and advantages to those involved in this homestay. Even though the profits earned by the homestay providers in rural areas are not as great compared to homestay programmes in or near to the most popular cities, KBH has a good opportunity to use the homestay programme for the socio-economic development of the local communities. Additionally, the providers also have a high degree of control over the activities offered, natural resources, and cultural heritage, which affords them significant power in decision-making and thereby the opportunity to sustain local culture and tradition.

Table 8. 8 List of factors that contribute to the preservation of TMF at Kampong Beng Homestay

Internal Factors	External Factors
a) Sense of pride and belonging in TMF	a) Public relations with the stakeholders
b) Transparent leadership and management	b) Strong support from government, NGOs and private sector
c) Reward and token of appreciation from food businesses	c) Word of mouth promotions
d) Community empowerment especially the women in food businesses	d) The advantage of the areas and settings
e) Knowledge and skills in TMF	e) Tourist satisfaction and positive feedback through TMF
f) Food SMEs and local products	
k) An efforts to increase the homestays' economic using food	
g) Image and identity of TMF	
h) Pride in their culture and heritage	

i) TMF as a tourist's attractions	
j) The safeguarding of TMF	

In addition to the efforts and initiatives of the homestay leader and providers in managing KBH, the results indicate the connections derived from the internal and external factors (see Table 8.8 above) that contribute to the development of TMF in this homestay. Interior factors are those that result from within the community, while external factors refer to those that come from outside the local community. The first element in the internal factor was the sense of pride and belonging among the homestay providers in their TMF. The discussion of the earlier themes has showed that the homestay providers were still able to preserve a high level of local cultural identity in presenting their TMF to tourists. The homestay providers acknowledged that their homestay was blessed with natural attractions such as Lake Raban, waterfalls and jungles and other cultural assets, but they emphasised that TMF is one of the components that connect them closely to the tourists. They realised that tourists were happy to consume their TMF in addition to experiencing the other attractions in KBH.

Secondly, the homestay leader actively encouraged the homestay providers to participate in the programme and to find the business opportunities through this programme such as food snacks small industries. The leader also inspired the homestay providers to stay committed to the programme by giving an annual bonus or other rewards to celebrate their yearly achievement. Thirdly, by giving consistent rewards and bonuses to the homestay providers, indirectly they also take charge and empower the programme by producing more homestay products to expand their homestay business. The homestay started with two individuals selling fermented fish, and nowadays they expand to another five individuals with the same businesses but different target market and customers. This observation shows that the women in KBH were not only empowered to create more businesses to support their homestay, but also encouraging them to learn new knowledge and skills concerning TMF.

One respondent told me that she had learnt new techniques and methods of producing traditional fish snacks on a course at the Department of Fisheries, Lenggong. This observation also reflected the homestay providers creativity in producing more products for their homestay business, and their developing a

vision that they can grow together with the programme. Besides, the homestay providers also recognised the importance of promoting kampong food and freshwater fish to the tourists to differentiate their homestay from others. The interviews with two homestay providers revealed that they are still using the traditional tools and equipment in preparing and cooking TMF in this homestay. They also reported that tourists were fascinated to see the old traditional Malay tools and equipment in their house because they could no longer see that heritage in other places. Through the elements discussed above, the results also suggest that the homestay should use the uniqueness of their TMF and related practices to showcase to tourists that they are still living a traditional way of life.

The attraction of using boats to travel to another village for activities with a food component is another example of how the providers used the programme to show how they were so proud of their traditional cultural food practices. When the providers acknowledge all of these elements as components that contribute to the development, promoting, and marketing of their programme, then the safeguarding mission and purposes will be achieved. Finally, under the internal factors, the results also indicated that the homestay providers were excited to increase the economic development of their homestay programme through the elements of food. The chalet projects (see Chapter 7 on page 196) and deer farm (see Chapter 7 on page 192) developed by the homestay as part of their ventures clearly showed that the providers are keen and enthusiastic to earn more money from the programme. The women in this homestay take the role of being the housekeepers for the chalets; cooking meals for the tourists and making sure the chalets are taken good care of. The men take the opportunity to find extra income from the deer farm. The commitment shows by the homestay providers in KBH revealed that the homestay providers realised that through active participation, commitment and hard work, they will get the benefits from the programme.

Under the external factors, the results found that the homestay leader was proactive in making a connection with the relevant stakeholders such as local authorities, NGOs and so forth. In his interview, he confirmed that he always visited the office of local authorities in Lenggong to ask for a new grant or incentives for the villagers. He said that the government has been allocated a lot of funding and financial assistance for rural areas to develop their village and

communities to alleviate poverty. He knew about this scheme and funding as he always attends the meetings and conferences organised by the local authorities. The strong support received by KBH was not only limited to funding and support, but the homestay programme had also won a few competitions organised by the government. The homestay leader realised that in order to be successful, the homestay programme must have strong support from the government. Moreover, the support is not only to develop more facilities for the homestay programme, but the government also needs to support it by providing good marketing and promotion for the homestay, to increase the number of tourists visiting their homestay.

KBH is blessed with a wonderful natural and cultural environment. The homestay leader told me that he made use of all the natural and cultural assets belong to KBH to promote the homestay programme. The advantage of their area and setting is one of the opportunities for the homestay to thrive and success but it must be planned and managed very carefully. He emphasised that homestays in Malaysia were intended to be sustainable and to survive for the long run. Therefore, he insisted that a good relation with tourists is also a priority. Tourists are like customers - and they are ‘always right’. He emphasised that all involved in the programme should listen to their feedback and always be attentive to their needs. At the end of the day, if they have enjoyed themselves and been well looked after, tourists will provide a good recommendation to their families, friends and social network about the homestay programme. The homestay providers in KBH have been reminded that they need to treat the tourists with good hospitality and make sure that they have a good experience in KBH.

The community leader noted that the villagers are the strength and backbone of the homestay’s development, and they need continuing incentives to manage their individual homestay responsibilities. Table 8.9 lists all of the results for Theme 4 in relation to the potential for KBH to be developed as a culinary tourism homestay.

8.9 Theme 4: The Potential for KBH to be developed as a Culinary Tourism Homestay

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
POTENTIAL1	The providers claimed that they have an exceptional level of empowerment, in expressing their opinions and concerns as well as making decisions on

	matters related to the homestay programme.
POTENTIAL2	The leader also inspired the homestay providers to stay committed to the programme, by giving annual bonus or other rewards to celebrate their yearly achievement.
POTENTIAL3	KBH has an excellent opportunity to use their homestay programme for the socio-economic development of the local community.
POTENTIAL4	The women in KBH are not only empowered to create more businesses to support their homestay, but are also encouraged to learn new knowledge and skills concerning TMF.
POTENTIAL5	The homestay providers are still able to preserve a high level of local cultural identity in presenting their TMF to tourists.
POTENTIAL6	The chalet projects and deer farm which were developed by the homestay as part of their ventures, are an indication of the providers' eagerness and enthusiasm to earn more money from the programme.

8.6 Summary

This chapter has discussed in detail the efforts of the homestay providers in KBH to draw on their local culture and heritage to build an attractive homestay destination. The results have revealed that the providers in this village allow tourists to engage in authentic rural experiences, particularly in relation to their TMF, and gain insights into a local heritage and traditions that are strong symbols of local identity. The rootedness of this community and sense of belonging portrays a genuine and compelling emotional 'attachment to place', which tourists find appealing and interesting. This chapter has also addressed in detail the role TMF as embedded in the wider context of the tourists' experience of authentic rural life.

The results imply that the homestay providers in KBH were not aware of their potential role as marketers and promoters of TMF towards tourists. The evidence shows that there was substantial use of local produce, home-grown and locally provided food in KBH, but it also indicates little awareness by providers of the potential for adding value to the tourist experience through TMF. The results provide valuable insights into the use of TMF as the main cuisine type cooked for homestay tourists. The fact that many homestay providers in KBH served and promoted their cuisine as "kampong food" to some extent explains the high utilisation of TMF in their cooking. This can also be seen in relation to the positive attitude of providers towards promoting local dishes to the tourists. The results suggest that it was possible to increase awareness and empower the homestay providers through the utilisation of their TMF to support KBH.

The coordinator of this homestay noted that the recognition of Lenggong Valley as a World Heritage Site had had an indirect impact on the promotion and marketing of their homestay programme. Nonetheless, although the promotion and marketing efforts of KBH played a role in its popularity (in particular promotion of the Lenggong Traditional Food Festival), the UNESCO inscription appears not to have had a significant – if any at all - influence on tourists' motivations to visit. The majority of tourists said that they had purposely come to KBH due to the uniqueness and attraction of the place itself, a traditional village located in a magnificent natural setting. The motivation for most of the tourists was to experience authentic rural village life; the fact that Lenggong Valley is a World Heritage Site was incidental. The majority of the tourists perceived that their involvement in the culinary heritage of this homestay and the opportunity to appreciate at close hand local social customs and relations added greatly to their overall experience and sense of uniqueness and authenticity.

Overall, the results show that KBH's initiative to raise their homestay to another level has helped in the promotion of KBH as one of the most desirable cultural homestay destinations in Perak. But, the results suggest that TMF was rarely presented in the marketing and development for KBH, and it was often hidden primarily under other cultural dimensions rather than as a major attraction of their destination, as shown in the promotional booklet of Tourism Malaysia Perak in association with Perak's Homestay Association (see Chapter 10, Figure 10.8). Therefore, it is suggested, that the efforts and initiatives of homestay providers could be focused more on marketing and publicising their traditional food heritage. This would require careful and close collaboration with local agencies and NGOs, but such action could go a long way to safeguard both TMF and the homestay. Providers must give special attention to their TMF as a product that their homestay offers, rather than merely meeting a physical need. The homestay programme also needs to maintain and upkeep their traditional villages where food traditions are kept alive, relatively free from the outside influences of commercialisation, especially those related to culinary heritage.

Chapter 9. Case Study 2 – Gopeng Homestay

9.1 Introduction

The results obtained from the analysis of the second case study are discussed in this chapter regarding the culinary practices of the homestay providers in Gopeng Homestay (GH) and also their role in providing and promoting TMF to tourists. The discussion about the results and analysis for this case study are arranged in a similar fashion to Case Study 1 in Chapter 8, which dealt with KBH.

Gopeng is located in Perak, on Malaysia's West Peninsula. It is well-known for its Rawa Malay community, who are spread around several parts of Malaysia but concentrated in larger numbers in Perak, around Gopeng (Khoo and Lubis, 2005). The author had little knowledge of this homestay as, compared to Case Study 1, the information on the website was insufficient and had not been updated for some time. Hence, the author's fieldwork in this case study was based on exploratory research as the author had no advanced knowledge and information about this homestay. Figure 9.1 shows the sign to GH.



Figure 9.1 The sign to Gopeng Homestay from the exit toll Gopeng
(Source: <http://gopengmalaysia.blogspot.com/p/sungai-kampar.html>)

9.1.1 Aims and Objectives for Case Study 2

The data were collected using the same qualitative methods used for Case Study 1, namely in-depth interviews with the homestay providers and tourists, and observations in the providers' home kitchens and gardens. This chapter also addresses Research Aim 3, namely "to review the way TMF is used in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay as a specific asset to their homestay programmes". Table 9.1 shows the four basic themes and its sub-themes that were brought up by the participants during interviews as identified by the researcher. The chapter discusses these themes and sub-themes, as shown in the below table in turn.

Table 9. 1 Identified basic themes from the analysis

Basic Themes	Sub-themes
1] Homestay provider's roles in promoting TMF and homestay	1 a] Gopeng Homestay's use of local food 1 b] Use of local produce in TMF preparation and cooking; and 1 c] Attitude of the homestay providers towards the local food.
2] Assessment of GH to be developed as a culinary tourism homestay	2 a] Culinary authenticity; 2 a] i) The famous <i>Kelamai</i> 2 b] Culinary products and attractions; 2 b] i) Rawa beliefs in adat and cultural traditions 2 b] ii) <i>Adet Bojojak</i> ceremony 2 b] iii) Culinary practices associated with the ceremonies 2 c] Culinary experience; 2 c] i) Collective communal living in Gopeng Homestay 2 d] Culinary experiences through storytelling; 2 d] i) Mystery of red bananas in the Rawa communities
3] Barriers faced by homestay providers in GH	3a] Power and influence of the stakeholders towards the programme; 3 b] Leadership and the tension among the communities; and 3 c] Trust issues and abusive power of the third parties.
4] The potential of GH to be developed as a culinary tourism destination	4 a] The Malay cultural landscape as home and kitchen garden; 4b] Community opinion on future development; and 4c] Safeguarding efforts and sustainability of the GH programme.

While many of the results are similar to those of KBH (see Table 9.1 above), different results have been generated under organising theme 2, 3 and 4, regarding the barriers faced by homestay providers in GH, assessment of GH to be developed as a culinary tourism homestay and, the potential of GH to be developed as a culinary tourism destination. All four basic themes and sub-themes are discussed in detail in this chapter. Of particular note is that the results also raise unexpected issues on the failure to promote the culinary practices by the homestay providers of their traditional Rawa food (TRF) offered to tourists, and it

is suggested that this unique TRF provides opportunities to better promote and publicise their homestay programme to tourists.

9.2 Demographic Profile

Table 9.2 gives the demographic profiles of the homestay providers in GH. The majority (15 out of 15) of the homestay providers who participated range from 50 to 70 years old and all of them are currently permanent residents in these villages. The majority of them (11 out of 15) have lived in this place for more than 30 years and are familiar enough with the communities and surroundings of Gopeng. The participants all come from three homestay villages in this homestay programme: Sungai Itek village, Pintu Padang village, and Jelintoh village. Except for one participant, all were women. Of the 14 female participants, 11 are housewives; one was a pensioner, one a religious teacher, and one a businesswoman. The only male that participated in this study is a businessman who currently runs his own water sports activities in Gopeng. Most (14 out of 15) had completed secondary school, and only one participant had a diploma from a Malaysian university. As to their involvement in the homestay programme, the majority (11 out of 15) said they were doing it on a full-time basis, while four others participated on a part-time basis because they occasionally needed the room available in their house or only participated in the programme at the weekend.

Table 9. 2 Demographic profile of the participants

Participant	Gender	Age	Occupation	Origin
Gopeng Homestay Provider 1	Female	73	Housewife	Sitiawan
Gopeng Homestay Provider 2	Female	63	Religious teacher	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 3	Female	58	Businesswomen	Lumut
Gopeng Homestay Provider 4	Female	54	Businesswomen	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 5	Female	60	Pensioner	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 6	Male	62	Businessman	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 7	Female	69	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 8	Female	51	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 9	Female	63	Housewife	Taiping
Gopeng Homestay Provider 10	Female	84	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 11	Female	60	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 12	Female	56	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 13	Female	53	Housewife	Sitiawan

Gopeng Homestay Provider 14	Female	61	Housewife	Gopeng
Gopeng Homestay Provider 15	Female	63	Housewife	Gopeng

The introductions to the participants were formally carried out with the help of the coordinator of the GH programme. Table 9.3 shows that GH has 49 MOTAC officially registered homestay providers with a total number of 51 rooms. The overall statistics encompass the three villages that participate in this homestay programme (MOTAC, 2015).

**Table 9.3 Number of homestay providers in Gopeng Homestay
(Source: Homestay Unit, Industry Development Division, MOTAC)**

No	Homestay	Villages	No. of Providers	No. of Rooms
1.	Gopeng Homestay	1. Kg. Jelintoh 2. Kg. Sg. Itek 3. Kg. Pintu Padang	49	51

As noted, GH is made up of three adjacent villages in Gopeng, (Jelintoh, Sungai Itek, and Pintu Padang). They started their homestay programme in 2006, led by one homestay coordinator. However, each village now has its own village leader and JKKK (Village Development and Security Committee), so the overarching homestay programme is a different, overlapping, entity, managed by the registered homestay providers in the three villages.

During the first interview with Participant GH 6, the author ascertained that this homestay had not been part of the wider, national, homestay programme established in 2013. This had not been revealed at a prior meeting with one of the stakeholders from the Railway Tourism Association Malaysia (RTAM), although that meeting had referred to an internal dispute at some of the homestays in Malaysia, without referring specifically to GH. During the interview with Participant GH 6, the interviewee briefly clarified the issues and some of the problems that had befallen them since the new coordinator had taken over the management as well as interference in GH from the former President of the Perak Homestay Association (PHA) in the operation of the GH programme. The current situation is that Jelintoh village's homestay providers decided to pull out of the wider national programme because of several internal disputes. Because of this, the author went to this village and interviewed two participants, who revealed a number of points which are explored later in the section on barriers and challenges for homestay providers in GH to sustain their homestay programme.

9.2.1 Gopeng and Rawa Descendants

As mentioned in section 9.1 the communities in GH are characterised as Rawa by migration and Malay as citizens. The locals always communicated in the Rawa dialect and practice local rituals such as *Adet Bojolak* in Rawa (*Adat Berjejak* in the Malay language) followed by traditional Rawa cuisines which are easily distinguishable from other states and ethnicities in Malaysia.

The pride of the Rawa people can be seen principally in their language, known as *Bahasa Rawa* (Rawa language). The author noticed that the language and dialect of these communities are different from standard Malay, making it difficult to understand the local people. In addition to its dialect, Gopeng is also famous for its strategic location close to the limestone hills and the Titiwangsa Mountains that can be seen from in the distance.

9.3 Theme 1: Homestay Provider's Roles in Promoting TMF and Homestay

The providers in GH have a distinct advantage to use their TRF to develop a sense of place to create a unique visitor experience and differentiate their homestay destination. The Rawa settlements in GH are fortunate that the Rawa traditional cuisines not only contribute to the social integration between Rawa and the local Malay but add to the development of local community in this homestay. The marketing of TMF in GH has been recognised to specifically focus on promoting TRF as much as possible as it not only generates an economic benefit to the local community, but can also be exploited as a unique attributes of a GH as a homestay destination. The distinctive social and cultural characteristics of the Rawa based on their TRF food are explained in more detail below.

9.3.1 Sub-theme 1a) Gopeng Homestay's Use of Local Food

The homestay providers in GH were asked to identify how they use local food to enhance tourists experience in their homestay. The response to these questions found that the providers in GH offered breakfast, lunch, teatime, dinner and also supper to their tourists. The providers indicated that the teatime and supper meals are available at the convenience of the tourists because sometimes

they are preoccupied with other activities in the homestay. The majority of the providers who responded to these questions said they were pleased to provide food for the tourists as, at this time, the providers can communicate closely with them. Interestingly, the results found a connection between food as a communication and social bonding for the homestay providers and tourists. The results further support the idea of Frochot (2013) that food is closely associated with communication as; how food is eaten and shared represent a fundamental social bond.

When the participants were asked about what kind of food they cooked for the tourists, the majority commented that their main style of cooking is “Normal food” (4 out of 15), “Malay food” (4 out of 15) or “Rawa food” (7 out of 15). Participants described that their style of cooking is different for breakfast, lunch and teatime. But usually, they will repeat similar dishes for lunch and dinner as both consist of plain steamed white rice, and a few side dishes of meat, poultry, fish and vegetables. The “normal food” or “Malay food” according to the homestay providers is something that Malay people are used to eating every day such as rice, curry and Indian bread made with wheat flour like roti canai. Whereas the TRF include the traditional dishes for the Rawa communities in GH. Participants segregated the meals into three. For breakfast, they normally serve coconut rice, fried rice, fried noodles with traditional Malay kuih and hot drink such as coffee and tea. Some of the participants mentioned ‘pulled tea’, a hot milk tea beverage derived from the pouring process of ‘pulling’ it between two cups to create a rich, frothy drink during preparation. A small number of participants did mention that they offered “Western food” for breakfast particularly for foreign tourists from the Middle East, India, Sri Lanka, Australia, and New Zealand. According to them, they cooked this type of food usually on the tourists’ first breakfast as; at that point, the providers aren’t sure if the visitors can eat traditional food. The “Western food” that they prepared are white bread with butter and jam, sausages, chicken nuggets with hot drinks. The results indicate that the homestay providers presumed that domestic tourists were already familiar with what the destination has to offer in relation to TMF and therefore, they cooked and served the usual breakfast eaten in Malaysia, whereas for international tourists, they supposed that the tourists would prefer to eat their typical breakfast such as American and continental breakfast.

The next meals prepared and cooked by the providers is lunch. All of the providers reported that they try not to provide the same meals for lunch and dinner to the tourists, but most of the time, they had to. At least one dish is carried forward from lunch, but they reheat it accompanied by a newly cooked dish such as vegetables. A minority of participants indicated that they also serve traditional Malay *ulam* (salads from fresh herbs and vegetables) that are eaten with various *sambal* (condiments) such as *sambal belacan*, *tempoyak*, *cinjalok* (pounded chillies with secondary ingredients such as shrimp paste, *tempoyak*, shallots, and lime juice). TRF is the traditional cuisines of Rawa communities in GH. Favourite dishes include *Asom Daging*, *Asom Ikan Koli*, *Bubur Anak Lebah* and many more. Direct observation indicated that the preparation and cooking of this food reflected the cultural identity of the Rawa community regarding the types of ingredients that they use in their cooking. According to some of the homestay providers, every family has their own recipes for making these traditional dishes.

Not one provider mentioned that they cooked seafood for the tourists. This result might perhaps be as expected as seafood is considered as a luxury food for the people in rural areas. For many rural economies, purchasing such foods can have an effect in their household's budget. The menu for teatime, according to all of the participants is hot drinks served with biscuits, traditional Malay kuih or dessert and puddings. Nearly all of the participants in this study indicated that they cooked *Bubur Anak lebah* or 'Bee larvae porridge'. This rice flour jelly drenched in sweet coconut milk is one of the favourite desserts in Gopeng and Perak specifically. This dessert is categorised as one of the Malay heritage foods in Perak due to the unique method of making this dessert.

What is striking about the results is that not all of the providers indicated that they cooked TRF to the tourists. Only a minority (7 out of 15) reported that they prepared these types of food during tourists' visits. The traditional Rawa dishes mentioned by these homestay providers are *Asom Daging* and *Gulai Nangko* (see figure 9.8 on page 299). This suggests that these two dishes are the most important dishes for the Rawa communities, especially in GH. However, it does not suggest that the providers are promoting their TMF in GH to tourists. The low proportion of providers who reported that they cooked TRF for tourists, illustrate the limited awareness among homestay providers of the opportunity to

use TMF to promote their homestay programme. Regardless of what is the reason behind this, it seems like there is no urgency for the GH homestay providers about the important role that they could play as promoters of TMF for the tourist experience in their homestay.

9.3.2 Sub-theme 1b] Use of Local Produce in TMF Preparation and Cooking

The overall response to the question about the use of locally produced ingredients by the homestay providers in GH was neutral. Fewer than half of the providers (7 out of 15) reported that they use locally provided/grown produce in their cooking. Eight participants indicated that they used and purchased their ingredients such as meat, fish, poultry and vegetables from the supplier in the area they live. Unlike those homestay providers in KBH, who fully utilised their home-grown and produced food, the providers in GH choose to buy from the local producer for their cooking, and only fewer than half number of participants (7 out of 15) used their home-grown food for cooking. The providers usually purchase their materials and ingredients for cooking from either a local supplier who sells from a van or a farmers' market in Gopeng's town. Nine participants indicated that they grow foods that are useful in cooking, such as pandanus leaves, lemongrass, lime kaffir leaves and a few leafy vegetables such as *pegaga* (*Centella Asiatica*), Vietnamese mint, ladyfingers, and so forth. These participants reported that they have a small backyard area for their traditional garden where they grow these fresh herbs, vegetables and fruits for their family's consumption. Some of the participants stated that, during the fruit season, they like to offer homestay tourists the chance to go to their fruit orchard and pick local fruits such as rambutans, mangosteens, mangoes, papayas, dragon fruits, and so forth. The most exciting fruit season for homestay tourists is the durian season. These responses demonstrated that some homestay providers in GH had not realised the benefits of serving homestay tourists with their home-grown food. The majority of them, appear to have seen these activities as leisure pastimes rather than opportunities for human consumption and for reducing their household expenditure related to the homestay programme. However, 8 participants indicated that they saw home-grown products as an integral part of their homestay programme that adds value to visiting tourists' experience.

A concern has emerged in this research on the use of local produce among the homestay providers in GH. The results disclose that the providers in GH do not actually depend on their home-grown produce for cooking food for homestay tourists as they choose to buy the ingredients from local suppliers. The question that has emerged is how much money do the providers generate from the homestay programme if they have to buy the ingredients for cooking from local providers? The main objective of the homestay programme in Malaysia is to generate income for the communities and providers in rural areas. Homestay has been seen one of the potential alternatives to provide additional income within the community and thus, eradicate poverty. However, in response to the question, “How much did you spend on purchasing food for the tourists?”, the results was unexpected, as the majority of homestay providers commented that they spent around RM30 to RM40 (£5.60 to £7.50) for a single day’s stay. This figure can be considered as significant as the tourists only pay for RM60 (£11) per night for their stay. For many rural communities, such expenditure has important effects on their household budget and income. The results reveal that the income generated from the homestay activities alone was insufficient to contribute significantly to a provider’s livelihood.

9.3.3 Sub-theme 1c] Attitude of the Homestay Providers towards the Local Food

In order to gauge the level of interest among providers in GH, participants were asked to indicate whether they preferred tourists to eat TMF. The results show that a majority of providers (10 out of 15) said they highly encourage tourists to eat TMF. There was substantial support for this subject among the providers in GH. However, when asked whether they would serve TRF or TMF to the tourists, the participants were divided. Only 50% stated that it was possible for them to cook TRF for tourists, whereas another 50% said that there was little possibility to serve TRF within the current arrangements, which were that no-one had told them that they should cook TRF for the tourists and thus, they just cook TMF. The results suggest that the homestay providers in GH are split between being Rawa by migration and local Malay as inhabitants. A possible reason for this could be a failure to decide among the homestay management about their branding and identity for the homestay programme: should they be offering a

traditional rural Malay experience, or a traditional Rawa experience? The results also identified that, as some providers are not from Rawa emigrants, they had decided to continue providing tourists with more generic TMF, whereas some Rawa descendants offered their TRF. The results presented a substantial difference, and lack of understanding, between the homestay providers in GH about what they actually were able to do under the current arrangements.

Nevertheless, at the same time, nearly all participants acknowledged that the use of TMF such as TRF would enhance the marketing and promotion of their homestay programme. There appears to be a need for more marketing and promotion of the qualities of TRF in GH by the homestay providers. However, this will not happen unless the providers themselves are made more aware of possible benefits, such as an increase in tourists' numbers, and their interest and satisfaction, caused by promoting their traditional food.

This aside, the results from the analysis also demonstrated that the homestay providers in GH do recognise their role as promoters of TMF to tourists staying with them, to be important. They regarded their role to be more significant as they develop a closer relationship with the tourists throughout their stay. The homestay providers believe that domestic tourists are not familiar with TRF and therefore, with what their homestay destination have to offer. In relation to these results, the majority of participants agreed that they have much to gain by promoting TRF to the homestay tourists. A further discussion with providers also suggested that they had underestimated their importance as marketers and promoters as they had not regarded it as particularly important to promote local food to tourists as a means of marketing the programme. As Jamal *et al.*, (2011) point out, the positive impact on the host-guest dynamic relationship through sharing food provides added value to the homestay experiences, particularly in relation to social bonding that can be created during eating together and cooking activities.

Another result found that social bonding between the villagers in this homestay always begins with something that can be shared and eaten together. One of the participants commented that it was one of their traditions to ask from a neighbour (rather than going to a shop), if they run out of ingredients for cooking,

such as lemongrass, chillies, galangal, Vietnamese mint, or tapioca shoot. This social relationship builds a familial bond between the villagers. A small number of those interviewed (2 out of 15) mentioned that they have introduced those elements to the homestay tourists when they stay at their house. The tourists were quite impressed by the way this tradition is still practised by the providers and communities in GH. More often than not, the tourists are amazed to see how the person who has borrowed the ingredients will send food to their neighbour as an act of gratefulness for giving them the ingredients (see Figure 9.2).



Figure 9. 2 One of the participants picking raspberries from her neighbours' garden (Source: Author)

The above results indicate that the collective participation of the homestay providers in GH contributes to community-wide social relationships, including functional ones that could contribute to a further development of this homestay programme. However, there was another element that create social integration among the locals, as mentioned by participant GHP 1:

“Mak (mother) still remembers one time. The tourists (adoptive children) arrived earlier than expected. Of course, we had no food for them because it was unexpectedly early. So, some of my friends suggested that we cook extra meal for lunch and then exchange it among us.”

The providers also stated that sometimes they learn about food preparation, recipes and cooking of TMF and its related knowledge system of food resources through their local communities. Hence, the act of social gathering

and cultural occasions provide opportunities for the providers in GH to share foods and learn specific traditional knowledge of TMF from their homestay communities. However, the findings also revealed that the homestay providers still buy the essential ingredients for cooking TMF for the tourists from a nearby marketplace or local suppliers, even though some of ingredients are actually grown in their own gardens. The summary of theme 1 is given in Table 9.4 below.

Table 9.4 Theme 1: Homestay Provider’s Roles in Promoting TMF and Homestay

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
ROLE1	A very low proportion of providers reported that they cooked TRF for tourists, which explains the limited awareness among homestay providers of the opportunities of using TMF to promote their homestay programme.
ROLE2	Homestay providers have the assumptions that domestic tourists are already familiar with what the destination has to offer in terms of TMF. In contrast, international tourists prefer to eat their Western and continental breakfast.
ROLE3	The providers in GH do not depend on their home-grown produce for cooking the food for homestay tourists, and prefer to buy the ingredients from local suppliers. The providers have not realised that they could reduce their food expenditure by serving the tourists with their home-grown food.
ROLE4	The homestay providers in GH do recognise their role as promoters of Traditional Rawa Food (TRF) to the tourists. There are also substantial differences, and lack of understanding, between the providers of Rawa emigrants and original Malay on about which food that they should serve to the tourists.
ROLE5	The collective work of the homestay providers in GH creates opportunities for them to share raw materials and ingredients for cooking, recipes and learn about the related food knowledge systems.

9.4 Theme 2: Assessment of GH to be Developed as a Culinary Tourism

Homestay

Interestingly, after being introduced to the Rawa tradition of *Adet Bojojok*, the participants stressed their pride and ownership regarding their traditional cuisine, and particularly TRF. The Rawa settlements in Gopeng have many longstanding culinary traditions that help shape their identity and personality that contribute to a sense of community in this homestay. TRF has become a fundamental aspect of life in this homestay, as according to the Rawa they have specific characteristics in cooking and food preparation. Rawa women especially have to master all of the details and procedures for cooking and preparing this food. The cuisine also tells many stories about their families and the migrations and assimilation of the Rawa from West Sumatra to Gopeng. In their new homeland they have continued to base their cultural identity to a large extent on their culinary practices and traditions from the past.

9.4.1 Sub-theme 2a] Culinary Authenticity

TRF in Gopeng has its own unique characteristics. The majority of the providers reported that Rawa's cooking differs from other ethnicities as they use a lot of coconut milk, bird's eye chillies (famous for being one of the world's hottest pepper), toasted coconut paste, and shrimp paste. As GHP 6 mentioned, the spiciness of TRF is such that once you eat a few mouthfuls, you will be gulping down glasses of water. One individual noted:

“We use thick coconut milk only, and that is why every household must have their own coconut trees. So we know that the coconut milk is always there whenever we want to use it.”

And Participant GHP 5 commented:

“We don't use garlic and lemongrass in our chicken, meat or fish cooked in yellow coconut gravy with bird's eye chili. The coconut milk must be a thick one, and we never use canned or ready-made coconut milk.”

These comments underline how Rawa's food has its own unique characteristics related to their cultural identity, a fundamental aspect of how they maintain their culture in GH. The interviews also revealed how the locals have created a sense of understanding of their cultural identity in relation to their food and cultures, supporting the research carried out by Abarca and Colby (2016) who noted that this traditional food, cooked over many generations, has come to be intertwined with the Rawa cultural identity. One of the famous dishes associated with the Rawa community is *Kelamai*. This traditional food requires a high level of commitment to, and patience in, cooking as it involves numerous stages. As an example, the following section describes in detail the steps and process of making *Kelamai*.

9.4.1.1 Sub-theme 2a] i) The famous Kelamai

The Institute of Language and Literature of Malaysia (2017) defined *Kelamai* as one of the traditional kueh, similar to dodol, also known as *Gelamai*. Collecting the ingredients and the method of cooking *Kelamai* requires many hours of preparation. The essential components need to be prepared and cooked

before adding them to ground glutinous rice. The first ingredients are a mixture of white and brown sugar that needs to be cooked until it dissolves. Then, coconut milk is prepared until it becomes residue granules, after which it needs to ferment for up to three nights, through which process the batter gains its volume. Commenting on *Kelamai*, one of the participants said that the villagers always buy ground glutinous rice from the local store in Gopeng town. Most of the sellers know in advance the season for *Kelamai*, and therefore they have already purchased the ground glutinous rice in bulk. She reported that:

“During the festive season, the seller’s, especially Chinese store, already have stocks of ground glutinous rice.” (GHP 3)

The mixture of coconut residue granules, white sugar, brown sugar, and ground glutinous rice is called *Omei* by local people. *Omei* has to be mixed and then undergoes a fermentation process for at least two or three nights or until the batter has risen. Then, for *Kelamai*, the green outer-side of bamboo shoots is shaved off to make it thinner so it is easy to cook on an open fire. Figure 9.3 show slices of cooked *Kelamai*, which is similar to the taste of dried *dodol*¹⁵. But the additional flavour of the coconut residue granules gives a very specific character.



Figure 9. 3 The finished product of *Kelamai*, which can be kept for up to 12 months
(Source: <http://mata-hati-jiwa-matahatijiwa.blogspot.com/2009/11/Kelamai.html>)

¹⁵ *Dodol* is a popular traditional Malay food. It is one of the very popular snack food prepared from glutinous rice flour, coconut milk and demerara (also known as Malacca sugar, a type of brown sugar made from coconut flowers water) sugar, sometimes with the addition of permitted food additives. This product has a very special meaning in the cultural life of people in many parts of Malaysia, as it is served to celebrate special events such as marriage or the birth of a child (Chuah *et al.*, 2007).

The presentation is similar to a traditional Malay cake called *gula hangus*, due to the air bubbles inside the texture of the *Kelamai* and also the dark brown colour. However, the *Kelamai* is less oily than the traditional cake and can be kept for up to one year. The details of the preparation of *Kelamai* are demonstrated in Figure 9.4 below.



Figure 9. 4 The making of traditional *Kelamai*
 (Source: Author's Collection and Participants' Collection)

The communities in GH are preserving Rawa culture and traditions in particular through their traditional cuisines and rituals. All rituals come with a specific protocol and constraints during the ceremony and one traditional ceremony is usually practised for young children before they can walk. The tradition is one of the most significant events and activities in GH and the majority of the participants regard it as particularly important as a means of promoting GH for tourists. The author was intrigued to discuss of how food-related activities could contribute to and enhance tourists' experience, through participating in this age-old tradition and consuming its related culinary specialities. The food preparation rituals associated with this traditional ceremony also include a linguistic system of the Rawa communities, conveying social information that helps create and maintain its unique social identity (Shenoy, 2005). Moreover, the culinary aspects involved in this ceremony demonstrate the ways in which Rawa communities perceive as important the performance associated with their traditional *Adet Bojojak* rituals. This tradition is explained in more detail below.

9.4.2 Sub-theme 2b] Culinary Products and Attractions

9.4.2.1 Sub-theme 2b] i) Rawa Beliefs in Adat and Cultural Traditions

Rawa communities are proud of their traditions, principally the rituals associated with *Adet Bojojak*. The concept of Adet, according to Hooker (1973), incorporates judicially stated rules of law that can be described as canons of morality and justice, respect for tradition, and maintenance of kinship structures. Nagata (1974) stated that the term Adat has a multitude of meanings. It is sometimes understood to cover all aspects of Malay Archipelago culture and social life, from styles of dress and housing to rules of etiquette and social interaction. However, the precise term '*Adet Bojojak*' is most commonly restricted to the significant lifetime ceremonies of birth, engagement, marriage and death. The customs in *Adet Bojojak* events display these ceremonies from the perspective of the ethnic minority Rawa. Sanusi (2014) noted that this tradition stems from the common belief that royalty, traders, and those people who worked at the palace, were superior to the ordinary people, especially the lowest class of peasants.

9.4.2.2 Sub-theme 2b] ii) Adet Bojojak Ceremony

Analysis showed that the majority of the participants (15 out of 15) mentioned *Adet Bojojak* as one of the central communal rituals performed by the Rawa people, and highlighted it as a special feature of GH. These traditional ceremonies are still practised among those who are believed to be descendants of the Rawa royal family. These kinds of rituals that are associated with children are also known as ‘Berjejak Tanah’ and are primarily performed for children aged one to two years old or before they are allowed to step on the ground. This ceremony must be completed with certain customs that the family has to undertake according to Rawa tradition. This tradition has been passed down the Rawa royal family for generations and is witnessed by close family, relatives, and the wider Rawa community. Each one of the children has to go through the same routine, and subsequent children need to perform this ceremony before they reach the age when their oldest sibling did his/hers.

The superstition is that any members of the family who fails to uphold this tradition will be sick or that mishap will befall the whole family. The next section explains the food practices associated with this ceremony, which have also been passed down from generation to generation. The unique elements behind the importance of TMF in this ceremony represent the characteristics of Rawa communities living in GH. In this study, homestay providers in GH particularly recognised the significance of this traditional ceremony and the opportunity it provided to enrich tourist’s experience. This observation further supported Su (2015) who encourages destinations to enrich tourists’ experiences with food-related activities that relate to interesting stories and legends to enhance the image of the destination and make it more appealing. The interviews also indicated that *Adet Bojojak* symbolised the Rawa communities past ancestors and referred to the deep emotions embodied in these rituals, traditions, and memories. One homestay provider offered an explanation about the history of *Adet Bojojak* and the mystical stories of these old-age traditions.

“The history of this age-old ceremony dates back to the time of the royals in Rawa, West Sumatra, Indonesia where the story has it that a child of a princess was kidnapped by the people of Pagar Ruyung and forced to ascend the throne of their deceased Sultan. The princess was angered and immediately placed a curse on the descendants of Royal's family. To break this curse, staunch believers put their babies through this ritual before they are allowed to step foot on the ground. It believed that if the curse were broken, ill-fated would befall the family.” (GHP7)

Ismail (2015) described that before the family perform this ritual for a child, a new-born forbidden from eating fowl or wearing any gold jewellery until he or she undergoes the *Adet Berjojak*. Failing which, or so the Rawa communities' beliefs, family members will be struck with sickness or misfortune. It widely held that the practice of *Adet Berjojak* is a must for Rawa descendants upon leaving Pagar Ruyung soil. These observations suggest that homestay providers have the ability to tell a compelling story which could enhance the development of their homestay products. Consistent with the literature, this research found that using a story behind a brand name, for instance '*Adet Bojojak*' leaves a strong and lasting impression on tourists (Horng and Tsai, 2010). Such storytelling also provides tourists with a long-lasting relationship with it and therefore the community (Woodside *et al.*, as cited in Horng and Tsai, 2010).

9.4.2.3 Sub-theme 2b] iii) Culinary Practices Associated with the Ceremonies

The unique food practices associated with this event stem from the items and ingredients that must be prepared to complete the whole process of *Adet Bojojak*. The host family needs to ensure that they have prepared the sacrificial tray, the distinctive food to feed the child, and, as a gift to the shaman (*Bomoh* in Malay), a gift for the guests (*Beras rendang*), and also a typical dish (*Gulai Nangka*) especially made for this ceremony to serve to the family and friends after the event. Skeat (1965) elaborates that another form of religious observance in Malay superstition consists of the scattering of rice. The sacrificial rice (*Oryza sativa*) used in ceremonies is always one of the following kinds: parched rice (*Beras bertih*); yellow rice (*Beras kunyit*, i.e. rice stained with turmeric); and a particular kind of Glutinous rice called *Pulut* (*Oryza glutinosa*), which is also generally used for religious banquets. In the *Adet Bojojak* custom, all the relevant types of rices mentioned by Skeat (1965) are used as part of the ritual and

ceremony. Each of the elements on the sacrificial tray signify a different blessing for the child: husked white rice for fertility, yellow rice for nobility and determination, kernel for growth and wealth, and rose water for a harmonious family (Singapore Brides, 2016). As can be seen from Figure 9.5, all of the items on this yellow tray need to be prepared before the ceremony starts because the shaman needs to use all of these things during the rituals.



Figure 9. 5 The items to be used in the *Adet Bojojak* ceremony
(Source: Author)

i. Parched rice (*Beras bertih*)

The dry rice is used for scattering over the child before they enter the house, which occurs after they have been bathed. The child must be carried on the shoulder by his or her father while the family members throw over their head the parched rice together with the husked rice in three different colours.

ii. Husked rice in three different colours (*Beras tabor*)

According to Skeat (1900), the washed and saffron rice is used for scattering either over the people attending the ceremony, or else upon the ground or house floor. With reference to the selection of rice for this purpose, it has been suggested that the rice is intended to attract what may be called the “bird-soul” (i.e. the soul of a person conceived as a bird) to the spot, or to keep it from straying at a particularly dangerous moment in the life of its owner.

iii. *Beras rendang* or browned husked rice

Beras rendang is one of the symbolic TRFs given to the guests after the rituals have been completed (see Figure 9.6). The guests will be given this food as a *berkat* (food gift) for them to take home. *Berkat* is a food that becomes a ‘bonding mechanism’ from the host to their guests, which comprises family members, relatives, and the wider local community. This acts as a symbol or remarkable feature of the feast, or a part of a blessing in Malay society (Noor *et al.*, 2013).



Figure 9. 6 *Beras rendang*, or Brown husked rice, for the guest in *Adet Bojolak* ceremony
(Source: Author)

First, the husked rice is fried without oil under a slow fire until it becomes yellowish. Then, it is mixed with grated coconut flesh, sugar and a pinch of salt and cooked until it becomes brownish. In the past, the *Beras rendang* would have been put inside banana leaves, but today, for convenience, they use a small plastic food container as it is easier for the guests to carry home. During my observation, the homestay providers distributed this food as a souvenir of the ceremony to tourists. As Horng and Tsai (2010) explain, food-related souvenirs can embody a tourist’s memories of the place where they have been. The souvenirs also enable tourists to share some of their gastronomic experiences with friends and family back home. The author found that the homestay providers made concerted efforts to incorporate the element of souvenir-food gift giving to provide an authentic Rawa cultural experience for participating tourists. In brief, this study contributes to the understanding that TMF in GH is comprised of numerous types of food-related activity that have multiple aspects. For that reason, the homestay programme should make use of all of these aspects to

engaged tourists with the domestic local culture and, as a result, could increase tourists' overall understanding of TMF.

iv. Yellow glutinous rice, or *Pulut Kuning*

Participant GH8 informed me that the *Pulut Kuning*, or yellow glutinous rice, must be prepared a day before the ceremony and accompanied by chicken cooked in yellow coconut gravy (see Figure 9.7). Yellow coconut gravy is a traditional Rawa dish and is also a compulsory item to be prepared as a marker of this ceremony and their identity. The yellow represents the colour of royalty and this ceremony is a custom of the Rawa royal family.



Figure 9. 7 The food for the child (in a yellow tray) and for the shaman (in a food container)
(Source: Author)

Yellow is also often used in Malay belief as a symbol of the Sultan's protection of his subjects. Kesuma (2011) noted that common people may not use yellow for their clothing, accessories, or houseware as it is a symbol of royalty, especially in Malaysia and Indonesia. Yellow glutinous rice is one of the particular foods commonly associated with rituals, traditions and customs in Malay communities. It is served to the child after they have finished their ritual bath. In this study, the child (a girl) was dressed in her bright yellow-coloured frock and fed with the meal after she had taken her bath. The yellow coloured glutinous rice and half a chicken cooked in coconut milk with turmeric were prepared on a tray, covered with yellow cloth, for the child. The other half of the chicken and the rice are packed to be given to the shaman as a token of

appreciation for conducting the ceremony, along with a token amount of cash. The amount to give is entirely up to the family and varies from family to family.

v. *Limau Nipis*, or Key Lime

In this ceremony, the child's family must put three limes on a sacrificial tray to dispel demons and Satan from disturbing the descendants of the Prophet Adam. In addition, the limes need to be used on three consecutive days when the toddler bathes, one on the first day of the ritual, while the second and third limes are used on the second and the third day after the ceremony. The use of limes in this ceremony is very significant as the Rawa believe that it is imperative for the child to have a bath with lime juice added to the water for cleansing purposes after the rituals. It is also a formula to avoid bad luck, especially for the child (Haque, 2008, p. 690). Laderman (1991) noted that shaman in Malay communities use cold water with the addition of lime juice and chanting of a cooling spell in their treatment for a mysterious ailment or unusual illness cause by an attack by evil spirits. She emphasised that the juice of citrus microcarpa, the musk lime, is one of the ingredients traditionally used in the neutralisation of evil influences and noted that it is used widely in traditional Malay medicine and ritual. The lime juice is mixed with water and poured over the patient (Laderman, 1991, p. 136) during the cleansing ceremony and at the end of the treatment the shaman will provide the patient with neutralising water and lime as a substitute for the medicine.

vi. Turmeric

The symbolic meaning of turmeric as a core element in this ritual stems from its recognition as a cure for many diseases in both traditional and modern medicine. Turmeric contains curcumin, and it has an anti-oxidant with the ability to neutralise the free radicals that can go on to become the root of many diseases, including cancer (Rafi *et al.*, 2015). Rawa communities believe that turmeric is useful not only as a medicine but also as a main ingredient in cuisine because of its medical properties. Turmeric is used after the shaman has completed the ritual, and is applied to the baby's eyebrows, armpits and joints all over the body before the dry rice and husked rice are tossed on the bed of flowers. Fresh turmeric is also used to prevent mishap that might befall the child in a family that fails to uphold this tradition. The shaman must recite the prayers from *Holy Al-Quran* on

the fresh turmeric before it is applied to the child's body, hands, and feet in order to cure them. There are similarities between the superstitions expressed by the participants in this study and those described by Mohd Nor and Kayat (2010) who explain that among the main characteristics of Malaysian myths are traditional tales which: 1) have an element of magic and/or supernatural activity, 2) are intimately linked to rituals, 3) present nature as the source of supernatural and mystical occurrences, and 4) suggest that the human world is closely connected to a supernatural realm. Mohd Nor and Kayat (2010) suggest that a destination that can utilise supplementary exotic and mystical attractions, such as stories relating to ceremonies that may have elements familiar to tourists through their own culture, as a means of motivating tourists to visit the destination. This study suggests therefore that the inclusion of culinary tradition in the *Adet Bojojok* might be used to market this homestay programme as a destination associated with elements of mysticism.

vii. Passing a chicken, male domestic fowl or hen

Another tradition associated with *Adet Bojojok* that has to be followed is to give a chicken, either a male domestic fowl for a son or a hen for a girl, to the shaman. The chicken is part of a ritual that Rawa descendants follow directly before the shaman conducts the ceremony. According to one of the participants (GH8), she was asked to stand by a hen and pass it to the shaman before the ceremony started. She was not sure of the reason behind this exchange, but she was asked to follow the tradition in order to avoid any mishaps that might befall the family. According to her, they were all aware of the consequences that happened for those who fail to follow the tradition, and therefore they prepared everything that was asked by the senior members of the families.

x. *Gulai Nangko*, or Jackfruit Curry

Gulai Nangko or *Gulai Nangka* (in standard Malay) is a Rawa speciality, especially among their communities in Gopeng (see Figure 9.8). It is usually eaten and served for a wedding ceremony. The symbolic meaning of this food is associated with a unique, yellowish gravy that is cooked with pounded turmeric, birds-eye chillies, toasted coconut paste, shrimp paste and thick coconut milk. They used *Nangko*, also known as jackfruit, as the main ingredient of this dish. *Gulai Nangko* is a popular dish which has sustained its popularity among both

young people and senior citizens. *Gulai Nangko* is best served hot, together with the white rice, *sambal belacan*, and traditional Malay salad, or *ulam*.



Figure 9. 8 *Gulai Nangko* is one of the traditional Rawa dishes in Gopeng
(Source: Author)

The Rawa style of cooking *Gulai Nangko* includes a few more ingredients to suit the Rawa local taste, such as pounded bird-eye chillies, shrimp paste, *Talang* fish or salted Queen Fish and plenty of shallots. *Gulai Nangko* is a popular dish served to guests at the *Adet Bojojok* ceremony, and guests will expect the host to serve this dish during the ceremony. According to the Rawa communities, only those who originated from Rawa are able to cook this traditional dish. They always involve the cooks from Rawa communities when cooking this dish during their feasts and ceremonies. Participant GH8 told me that she tried to order *Gulai Nangko* from one of the famous local restaurants in Gopeng, but the end product was disappointing as the cooks were not from Rawa families. Since then, she only engaged with expert Rawa cooks.

Overall, the interviews with, and observation of, homestay providers in GH has provided a deeper understanding of the impact of the cultural importance of the preparation and consumption of TMF in their homestay programme. The analysis suggests that using TMF within cultural attractions such as *Adet Bojojok*, enabled better interaction and communication between homestay providers and tourists. In this instance, the showcasing of TRF through the *Adet Bojojok* ceremonies intertwined with the beliefs of the Rawa communities that these dishes represent their culture and societies. Talhah and Hashim (2012)

demonstrate that culinary tourism that provides tourists with unique experience by which they could experience the culture of a particular destination and become associated with its history, could provide a positive addition to tourists' overall experiences. In this way, the food is not only a basic need for tourists but becomes an element that represents a culture of a region embedded with a great quantity of traditional knowledge and values (Jones and Jenkins, 2002). As a result, the food is considered as a part of cultural identity and symbol of distinctiveness of a destination (Haukeland and Jacobsen, 2001; Santich, 2004).

9.4.3 Sub-theme 2c] Culinary Experience

9.4.3.1 Sub-theme 2 c] i) Collective Communal Living in Gopeng Homestay

The analysis of everyday life of the homestay providers in GH found that they are always active with communal activities such as *gotong-royong* (working together) for wedding ceremonies and feasts for other community occasions. For instance, the author was invited to one of the occasional events at Sungai Itek's homestay village to welcome the holy month of Ramadan in their mosque. The preparation of the events was organised by the community members of the mosque, but the food preparation was prepared and cooked by the women from three villages. Thus, it is noticeable that that the homestay providers in GH still practise certain collective communal activities as regular events in their villages. Figure 9.9 shows local women (most of them are homestay providers) serving and portioning food for guests for a communal occasion. The communal events like this according to Wall (2016) attached an emotive value among the communities in relation to their traditional 'foodways'.



Figure 9. 9 Communal activities in Gopeng Homestay (Source: Author)

‘Foodways’, or the entirety of behaviours and beliefs surrounding the production, distribution and consumption of food, not only act as a social event, but as a catalyst for the interrelationships, interactions, and social bonding among and between the individuals in the family and community (Muhammad *et al.*, 2013; Gutierrez, 1999; Freeman, 2002; Cusack, 2003; Vu, 2009). This observation, suggests that the homestay providers in GH should emphasise, in marketing and to tourists staying with them, these aspects of communal eating practices associated with their cultural events as they could attract tourists and enhance their experience. By reinforcing the community’s activities and eating practices as a cultural experience in GH, tourists could understand the social interaction and culture that has created a particular local identity.

Local people are involved in a specifically local cultural event called *Adet Bojojak*, a feast hosted by family descendants (see page 292). The community also still has the traditional practice of eating together with their neighbours for national Malay ceremonies, which invariably end with a *doa selamat* (prayer and feast) and *kenduri* (feast), such as for the marriage ceremony (see Figure 9.10). Raybeck and De Munck (2010) and Rahman (2014) remarked that all these celebrations and events help to cement social bonds within traditional village society. The guests and participants for these ceremonies are not only the immediate family and the extended families but also come from the close neighbourhood up to the entire village and even neighbouring villages.



Figure 9. 10 Eating together in a wedding feast (Source: Author)

All of these events and ceremonies are always tied up with a religious event. At the end of the feast, guests are served with a meal of many kinds of foods. The providers have informed me that in every religious event and feast in Gopeng, guests are served with their traditional cuisines such as *Gulai Nangko* (Jackfruit cooked in yellow gravy coconut milk). The food is one of the typical dishes of the Malay Rawa in Gopeng, and it has become almost ‘compulsory’ to serve this dish. Once again, the study provided an understanding that the cultural values embedded in the GH communities was one of their ways to reinforce their close relationship with other villagers especially through the production and consumption of TMF. In this context, the GH programme could use this as a platform to expose visiting tourists to their local culture. The food cultural events in GH, involve most of the villages within the area when they contribute their time and energy to help the host to prepare, cook and serve food to the guests. As Kamaruddin *et al.*, (2010) highlights, the social cohesion of the people living in rural communities is closer and more elaborate than that of people living in an urban society. Therefore, the cultural events that centre on food in GH could enhance tourists’ knowledge by enabling them to observe, experience, and learn about the way of life of rural communities (Bell, 2015). These kinds of activities can not only contribute to tourists’ overall satisfaction, in experiencing the culture of a homestay programme through its food, but could also encourage tourists to spend time in the domestic environment with a local family in the GH programme. The summary for Theme 2 is presented in Table 9.5 below.

Table 9. 5 Theme 2: Assessment for GH to be developed as a Culinary Tourism Homestay

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
ASSESSMENT1	The providers in GH have plans to emphasise on the value of their traditional Malay Rawa food to the homestay tourists. However, they also have a low degree of awareness on how to present their traditional food to the tourists.
ASSESSMENT2	The traditional Malay Rawa food consists of unique signature dishes that can be used as an image to represent GH. However, due to the lack of integration among the providers from the Rawa migrants and local Malays, the uniqueness and the value of this heritage food have not been well presented to the tourists.
ASSESSMENT3	The homestay providers are reluctant to demonstrate the cooking process of Kelamai to the tourists, due to the high costs involved in its preparation and cooking. The issue is also associated with the lack of interest by the younger generation to cook and prepare this traditional food.
ASSESSMENT4	The communities of GH are proud of their Adet Bojolak ceremony. The ritual is one of the primary attractions of GH to the tourists. However, the culture is under threat as people who are not from the Rawa migrants group believe that this tradition is against the practice of Islam.
ASSESSMENT5	GH is also located within the vicinity of natural attractions that is famous for water sports activities, caves, hills and mountains as part of tourism product. However, the homestay providers separate the natural attraction elements from their homestays, as they believe that the tourists are only interested in the uniqueness of their homestay and not other attractions.
ASSESSMENT6	GH did not manage to showcase Adet Bojolak as a main attraction for their homestay, due to the intense groundwork preparation and high cost. Hence, the providers only share about this ceremony and its related rituals verbally.
ASSESSMENT7	Modernisation has resulted in the gradual decline in the practices related to the cooking and preparing of traditional Rawa food among the Rawa migrants. Thus, revitalisation of this culture and heritage through the homestay programme could encourage the younger generation to increase their awareness and knowledge on the practices related to this traditional food.
ASSESSMENT8	GH can re-establish their cultural food demonstrations and cultural performances to attract tourists to their homestay. With an effective organisation, planning and implementation by the homestay leader, cultural performances can be presented to the tourists again.
ASSESSMENT9	GH has exciting legend and myth associated with food. The stories can be used as part of the development of their homestay activities, which can be shared with the tourists staying at their homestay.

9.4.4 Sub-theme 2d] Culinary Experiences through Storytelling

Helland (2008) pointed out that myth is usually a reflection of a group of specific community who has the desire to return to their homeland, and thus shaped their group identity. Moreover, myth also has the tendency to bring them closer to the ancestor country.

9.4.4.1 Sub-theme 2d] i) Mystery of Red Bananas in the Rawa Communities

Interestingly, an interview with one of the homestay providers in GH revealed that there is one common myth among the Rawa group about their Royal ancestors, which is related to culinary. The myth was regaled by GHP6 as follows:

“A long time ago, the prince of Rawa was severely injured during a battle with another Royal family. He escaped to the jungle and fainted under a banana tree. He woke up the second day and found that he was nursed and cured by a young and pretty maid. He bled a lot until the ground was stained with blood, and this maid has saved his life. He thanked her and went back to the palace and upon learning that the pretty maid who saved his life was a spirit of the banana tree, he rushed back to the site and found that the bloodstain was gone and there was a bunch of blood-red banana left hanging on the tree. The prince went back to his palace and ordered his countrymen not to cut the Prawn Banana trees, and the fruits cannot be eaten. So, that is why the Malays are not supposed to eat this Prawn Banana.”

In a different but relatively similar version, the Patriots and History of Perak’s website has a section on this myth that is well-known among the Rawa community. According to the history of Perak and the Patriots (<http://tamanbahasa.blogspot.com>), red bananas are regarded as forbidden to be eaten among the Rawa ethnic groups, with the fear that they will get a rare skin disease known as *sopak*. The red banana is a triploid cultivar of the wild banana *Musa acuminata*, belonging to the Cavendish group. Red bananas are a group of varieties of banana with reddish-purple skin. The descendants of Rawa are said to have banned their grandchildren from eating the red banana from time to time, due to the mythical association that the bananas have. It is believed that the Rawa people in Peninsular Malaysia consider the bananas as the apparition of Princess *Bunian*.

Eng (2010) classified Bunian people as equivalent to the Western fairy-folk. It is a belief amongst the Malay folk in the existence of the Bunian people, who, despite being unseen by the living, live parallel to, and often mimics, the socio-cultural structures of, the latter. Laderman (1988), on the other hand, describes Bunian people as invisible creatures, something like fairies, whereas Tan (2014) explains

that Bunian is one of the famous characters in the Malay folklore. Yousof (2015) explains that Bunian people may be seen only by those with spiritual sight. In appearance, they resemble human beings, are extremely beautiful and are dressed in clothes of an ancient style. They live far away from human habitation in deep forests or high mountains but are also said to live within human communities, even sharing houses with human beings. Figure 9.11 illustrates the red bananas that are linked to the famous myth among the Rawa communities.



Figure 9. 11 Red Bananas which are popular in Rawa myths
(Source: <https://siakapkei.my/2019/01/07/bukan-kerana-warna-tapi-khasiatnya-pisang-merah-menjadi-buruan/>)

The two stories presented above show that myths, folktales, and legends, do not only communicate the cues of an organisation, however, through storytelling and dramaturgy, an organisation can create a holistic image of the concept, shape the brand and generate experience in their destination (Mossberg, 2008). In a similar vein, Sthapit (2017) emphasised that storytelling is critical to understanding tourism experiences, and that the rich accounts tend to centre on episodic memories (for example, personally experienced events). Press (2012) described storytelling as a narrative in which artifice, spectacle, magic and fantasy are skilfully combined to produce a good story. Thus, she suggested telling a morality tale rather than a factual narrative.

9.5 Theme 3: Barriers faced by Homestay Providers in GH

9.5.1 Sub-theme 3a] Power and Influence of the Stakeholders towards the Programme

In this section, the most striking aspect to emerge from the data about the current situation of this homestay programme is discussed. At the beginning of the establishment of GH, the local community and the registered homestay providers were very excited to manage and develop this homestay programme. Usually, such excitement is stimulated by the motivation of the homestay providers to participate, in addition to the support given by the respective leader or coordinator of the programme. Interviews with the participants revealed that they are driven to participate in this programme by such factors as profits from hosting tourists (e.g. interviews GHP 14), the excitement to receive their tourists, the individual desire to become and remain a homestay provider, encouragement from the community and their families, and a desire to spend their leisure time and gain new experiences through the programme.

“Sometimes people don’t understand the nature of this programme. But do you know the most significant impact of this programme on the young generation? Some adoptive children told us that they felt being appreciated and loved even though we are not their blood families. They said the moment of eating together as a family warmed their heart deeply as they rarely do that with their own family.” (GHP 3)

“I was always hanging around by myself. Sometimes, I take a seat on my balcony and wait for my friends to come over. It would be great if adoptive children were still coming here. I could busy myself with all the activities. But now, it is all quiet.” (GHP 10)

When the participants were asked about the biggest problem about the GH programme, all commented that losing tourists had had a dramatic effect on the local economy in terms of financial benefits. The majority were convinced that this programme had originally had a very positive impact on the local community, and they feel encouraged to grow together with the project. Most of the participants remembered that their homestay was successful from 2006 to 2012 and was in high demand from domestic and international tourists. However, due to certain internal and external issues in the management of the homestay, many

providers have become far less optimistic about the programme. Demoralisation of the homestay providers also stem from when profits generated from the homestay programme fall, and they only gain a little profit. The following discussion looks at the weaknesses and threats currently facing this homestay. It is hoped that by objectively discussing these issues, this study might increase the help and support from the local and national officials about the current plight of GH.

9.5.2 Sub-theme 3b] Leadership and the Tension among the Communities

The first issues that struck this homestay was a challenge involving the leader/ coordinator and the management of the programme. The lack of mutual understanding and difference of opinion has slowly affected the level of communication and networking between the coordinator of this homestay and the former President of the Perak Homestay Association (PHA). The disagreement between them dramatically affected the hitherto smooth management of the programme as well as their desire to work on behalf of the homestay providers. Two significant reasons emerged from the interviews with the providers in GH. First, the current coordinator of their homestay programme is reluctant to communicate with the local MOTAC branch and the former President of PHA. Secondly, the interference of third parties such as the former President of the PHA and members of the local state government (the Honourable of Gopeng) in the governance of this programme is making matters worse, including what is seen as meddling in the financial management of the homestay. Talking about this issue, Participant GH11 said that they once had an active coordinator to lead the agenda. But after a conflict with the former President, he was removed from this programme. The reason was that he had not registered with MOTAC, and thus did not have an official license to become an official homestay provider. However, he is now the Chairman of the Tourism Cooperative Gopeng Berhad, and still promotes GH under this private company. Participant GHP 14, observed that:

“He was energetic and dynamic in his leadership. He charged higher than the standard rate that we receive from the current coordinator. Thus, we got extra money from the tourists that he brought to this homestay.”

The results indicate that some of the providers in GH have preferences regarding the type of leadership style they want from the coordinator of the programme. However, due to a lack of control over power and politics in the homestay, they cannot influence the situation. In another case, a participant noted:

“Sometimes, the former President of PHA led the activities without reference to the coordinator of GH, so that makes him [the coordinator] so angry.” (GHP 13)

Overall, issues about the leadership and lack of control over the management of the programme were identified as major sources of friction among providers in this homestay. These findings concur with a study by Rasid *et al.*, (2012), which suggested that the key success factors for a homestay were good leadership and the unity and understanding of its community, which together enhance a sense of ownership and pride. Without strong local leadership, third parties can easily manipulate the local communities if they are not ready to participate actively and thus lead to the dominance of external tourism interests.

9.5.3 Sub-theme 3c] Trust Issues and Abusive Power of the Third Parties

Trust issues are another striking result emerging from the interviews with the majority (13 out of 15) of the providers at GH. First and foremost, of these trust issues are the fees charged to tourists by third parties for the homestay programme. According to one of the providers, the former President of PHA charges from RM150 (£28.30p) to RM200 (£37.74) per tourist but pays the providers only around RM60 (£11.32p) per tourist. The travel agents agree that the payment should be separate for some of the activities, such as cultural performances and so forth, but they believe that they should receive more than RM60 (£11.32p). This problem occurred several times and some of the providers were even unwilling to take tourists, preferring instead to leave their room empty. Providers felt that MOTAC headquarters and the local MOTAC branch in Perak should be made aware of this issue because the manipulation by the third parties had demoralised them so much that they were no longer inclined to actively participate in the programme. One of the providers told me in their interview that they would like to have a meeting with the stakeholders, but they were not sure if

the local office of MOTAC in Perak will entertain their complaint. One participant said:

“We felt discriminated when the former President took advantage of GH programme. She invited tourists to stay in her parent's house as they also registered as the official homestay providers. The house is quite far from this village, and it seems like they are segregating us from this whole homestay programme.” (GHP6)

Another matter of concern was what the providers referred to as cronyism between the Honourable of Gopeng (the local state government) and the former President of PHA. Providers felt that most of the funding for infrastructure was channelled upwards and used for inappropriate projects such as the construction of a plant nursery in their homestay that was built by an outside contractor for twenty thousand Malaysian Ringgit, and both the amount and the fact that outsiders were brought in to construct the nursery, angered the providers. The plant nursery is part of the Plant-a-tree programme (PAT) through which tourists are encouraged to buy a plant from the homestay and then plant it there. The idea of this project is to create a sense of attachment between tourists with that homestay and it may increase the possibility of the tourists returning to that homestay. Five participants concluded from both aspects of the project that the former President must be making personal gain from it. As one of the participants reported:

“She (the former President) conned us several times. I felt a bit annoyed and irritated with her attitude. So I stay away and avoid dealing with her. Even some of the local agents also come directly to me and try to bypass her when dealing with homestay booking.” (GHP 13)

The majority of the participants agreed with the statement that the former President is not honest or sincere in her leadership and used the programme for personal benefit, especially concerning the charges for the homestay programme activities such as the performance of *Adet Bojojok* ceremonies and the *Kelamai* food demonstrations. The integrity and trustworthiness of the former President of PHA and a lack of commitment from the coordinator of the GH programme have become the provider's primary concerns. However, it must be noted that the decision to allocate the funding and all the resources given to the homestay

programmes in Malaysia, come from the Federal Government of Malaysia and is decided by MOTAC headquarters and that the local state department is not responsible for the moneys granted by the Federal Government or MOTAC. It therefore seems unclear how the former President could have controlled either the decision to build the nursery or which company would build it. Nevertheless, it is very clear that this is what the local providers believe, and the situation undermines the motivation of the homestay providers to participate in the programme. The next section discusses the impact of these issues on the homestay providers. All the important outlines for Theme 3 are summarised in Table 9.6 below.

Table 9.6 Theme 3: Barriers faced by GH in developing its Culinary Tourism

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
BARRIER1	The lack of involvement from homestay providers in the decision-making process and empowerment of their homestay development has led to more negative impacts in GH. Uneven distribution of power and uneven flow of information affected the benefits that should be received by the providers from the homestay programme.
BARRIER2	GH homestay providers are currently demotivated by the challenges faced by their homestay. The providers were frustrated with the management of GH and thus, refused to actively participate in the programme.
BARRIER3	Financial constraint is another factor that hinders GH from progressing in the industry. Manipulation of the financial aids given by the federal government to Gopeng's local authorities, such as through cronyism has left the homestay organisation with no control and power over the financial management of their homestay.
BARRIER4	Leadership problems in GH restrained the homestay providers from having the right flow of information and effective communication with the state government agencies such as MOTAC Perak. The leader of the programme is not interested to work together with the state government and NGOs to further develop their homestay programme.
BARRIER5	Safeguarding issues are one of the main concerns for GH, as they are struggling from being shut down by the state government due to no new development in their homestay.

9.6 Theme 4: The Potential of GH to be Developed as a Culinary Tourism Destination

9.6.1 Sub-theme 4a] The Malay Cultural Landscape as Home and Kitchen Garden

The next important subject emerging from the data concerns the pride of the GH homestay providers in their home and kitchen garden. A garden is a source of great pride for a village household. The front view of the house

represents the inner beauty of the residents. Indeed, Ismail *et al.*, (2015) described the garden as a reflection of sensual and personal experience. My visit to most of the houses in this homestay found that the majority of providers indicated that their garden is akin to the ‘soul’ of the house. They devote a lot of time and effort to tidying and ‘beautifying’ this area and the residents in this village are obviously very proud of their home garden. Many houses have a lovely garden, either in the front yard or the backyard. The author was brought to some of the participant home gardens and shown many local flowers and plants by name. Figure 9.12 shows the home garden of one of the participants from this study.



Figure 9. 12 The side view of the home garden (Source: Author)

Participant GHP 12 stressed the practical benefits of their home garden:

“Rawa people love to eat spicy food and thus we must have the bird’s eye chillies plants and turmeric in our garden. I also have a coconut tree because every time I want to use it, I will pluck it from the tree.”

The participants, on the whole, demonstrated the importance of having their kitchen garden in the backyard of their house compound (see Figure 9.13). As one of the participants noted:

“When you are older, you don’t have time to go to the shop and buy all these ingredients. So it will be good if you can get them from your garden. After all, you don’t want to bother your neighbour and what will they say if you always ask them? Thus, it is better to plant it on my own and use it whenever I want.”
(Participant GHP11)

This view was echoed by Participant GHP 14, who felt that:

“We are kampong folk, so we need to make sure that we have enough food to eat. At least we can go out and pick our vegetables and only buy the main ingredients like chicken or meat in the market.”



Figure 9. 13 The kitchen or home garden of the homestay providers in Gopeng
(Source: Author)

Another theme that came up in the analysis of the results of this case study was the excitement of the providers during the fruit season. For instance, Participant GHP 6 said:

“The most exciting time in this village is during the durian season. It is like having a night market because most of the villagers, especially those who have a durian grove, sleep in their orchard during the season to protect their fruits from being stolen. They only come home to change their clothes, to take a bath or to do other things.”



Figure 9. 14 Many Malaysians look forward to the durian season
(Source: <https://www.dreamstime.com/stock-photos-durian-image27335423>)

Visiting their durian orchard or other fruit fields is one of the favourite activities in this homestay (see Figure 9.14), and the tourists are fortunate if they are visiting during the fruit season as most of the providers bring their fruits to the community halls. As one of the participants said:

“Most of the foster parents are so generous with their adoptive children. They always bring fruits to the community halls for people to enjoy. Some of the fruits, such as durian, are expensive, and they can sell it to the supplier, but they give it free to the children (tourists).” (GHP5)

Participant GHP 8 stated that:

“The adoptive children told me that they wanted to sleep in the orchard. But it is dangerous if the durians fell from the tree onto their head. It could give them serious head injuries caused by the spikes. So I just let them stay until late at night in my shed and then return home.”

9.6.2 Sub-theme 4b] Community Opinion on Future Development

This section discusses how providers might contribute to the future development and improvement of their homestay programme. There was some suggestion that the Federal Malaysia Government and MOTAC should make extra funding available so that the providers could move on and start resolving their

problems, for example, by targeting younger domestic tourists and providing a wide range of water-sports equipment and facilities for water-related sports activities in their homestay. One provider noted:

“I think we were left behind by the government due to our current situation. I believe if we could get at least some of the profits back, we could strive again and save our homestay. At least to make us feel motivated to start again with this programme.” (GHP 12)

Another participant mentioned that:

“I firmly believe that the government should help us by promoting our homestay to the local state agencies and departments, mainly the youth programmes. If they propose one group of youth to come to at least one homestay in Malaysia, I think we won’t have any issues with the continuity and sustainability of this programme. They should promote us to the domestic tourists first and then go for international tourists.” (GHP)

Participant GHP 6 agreed that the government should encourage the younger generation to participate in the homestay programme. He mentioned that:

“We have to encourage the younger generation of this homestay to participate in the programme. The government should create and provide more youth activities for them so that they can develop an interest in the homestay.”

Additionally, other participants mentioned the short course endorsed by the local state government for the homestay communities:

“Sadly, the government only provides a one-time course for the homestay communities here. For instance, the batik making classes. After the session had ended, they took away all the tools and equipment for making batik, and we were not given any support to continue with the project.” (GHP 4)

Participant GHP 3 remarked that:

“I think MOTAC should monitor the progress of every homestay and not solely rely on the coordinator of the programme. They should come and talk to us. It would be great if they had a meeting with the coordinator and former President of PHA on how to resolve the conflicts. We need help from outsiders to break the ice, or otherwise, we are forever stuck in this way, with no solution.”

However, when local MOTAC officials were asked this question, they asserted that GH should resolve their issues first within their internal organisation. The officials need the providers to be resilient and move forward for the improvement of their homestay programme. They argued that they could not interfere with internal disputes as they have no managerial power or control over the providers. Officials can only provide solutions to issues that are related to how to increase the numbers of tourists coming to the homestay, matters in relations to registration and certification of homestay providers, and the rules and guidelines for the homestay programme. As Kamisan (2015) states, the homestay providers have to start becoming proactive and reenergise their commitment to ensure that their homestay is sustainable in the long run. As a result, the officials suggested that, with the full support of the homestay communities and extra help from other related bodies such as MOTAC and Tourism Malaysia, the GH providers could find new solutions and take the necessary action on these matters.

9.6.3 Sub-theme 4c] Safeguarding Efforts and Sustainability of the GH Programme

As reported above (see 9.5 on page 305), GH is now struggling and battling against closure of the programme. Therefore, this section highlights the impact of the internal and external issues on the development and safeguarding of the GH homestay programme. As Participant GH13 noted, even though they no longer receive tourists, he had tried his very best to promote their cultural performance groups to the private chalets in Gopeng, such as the Adeline Resort and others. They started to demonstrate the handicrafts they make to the tourists in this private resort and received payment. However, they cannot rely on this business for a steady income, as the opportunities are sporadic and seasonal. He also stated that the satisfaction in demonstrating the handicrafts to the tourists outside their homestay is an entirely different feeling and experience compared to

the previous times when they performed in front of tourists who came to their homestay to stay with them.

Participant GHP 9 expressed another view, pointing out that they still have the expertise to perform Rawa traditions. However, she was also concerned about the new generation's lack of enthusiasm for continuing these traditions. Because of this lack of interest, the current coordinator of GH started to bring together all of the youth from GH homestay villages to begin learning Rawa culture, such as making *Kelamai*, the steps in *Adet Bojojok*, increasing the practice of Rawa cuisine, and making handicrafts. In the meantime, he is also working with some private organisations to get funding so that he can initiate more activities for young people. However, regardless of the efforts to safeguard their homestay made by the coordinator of the programme, some of the homestay providers explained that they could not commit to the homestay programme. One of the reasons is the availability of accommodation for tourists in GH and the older generations leaving the villages to stay with their children. Some of the responses to this question included:

"I have no available room to offer for the programme. But I can still actively join in homestay activities." (GHP 9)

Participant GHP 11 remarked that:

"Most of the elder's generation in this village are no longer staying here. So not many people can commit to and get involved with the programme. That is the main issue."

The above comments illustrate that the sustainability of this homestay programme is getting weaker as it depends essentially on the participation from the older generation in the villages. GHP 9 stated that:

"The issues in GH are about the fact that the majority of the providers are the elder generation in this homestay. So, if they have health and well-being issues, of course, they are not keen to participate. These older adults lack energy, so we cannot ask them to join our programme actively." (GHP 9)

Another problem reported by some participants (6 out of 15) concerns the lack of effort by the homestay providers to promote their traditional Rawa cuisine. However, nearly half the number of participants (7 out of 15) indicated that they

have no time to cook this food for their tourists during the programme. According to them, traditional food is always served in the community hall on the same night as their cultural performance for tourists, so they believe that they do not have to cook the same food again as that which has been served in the communal activities. On the other hand, there was positive feedback and effort about promoting TRF to tourists. One provider said that:

“I always cook Asom Daging for my adoptive children because that is our traditional food. I want them to get familiar with this food so that they remember the authenticity of traditional Rawa food.” (GHP 8)

Overall, these results suggest that there is an association between the present culinary practices of the homestay providers in GH and their awareness of promoting the culture and traditions of the Rawa. However, the homestay providers do not appear to understand that the sustainability of their homestay programme depends on their commitment, and that they should be accountable for the growth and development of their homestay. In addition, the loss of a sense of belonging to their culture and traditions conveys the message to tourists that they are not enthusiastic about promoting their culture to them. Table 9.7 summarises the external threats and internal weaknesses facing GH in the preservation of their TMF.

Table 9.7 Weaknesses and threats in promoting TMF in Gopeng Homestay

Weakness (internal)	Threat (external)
1. Incompetent leadership (i.e., to exploit the potential of TMF)	1. Lack of segmenting tourists (i.e. food cultural tourists)
2. Dependability on the support from government (i.e, marketing and promotion of their TMF)	2. Lack of effective strategies and publicity campaigns in strengthening TMF in GH
3. Inefficient and lack of networking with tourism industry players (i.e., expanding the TMF opportunities)	3. Competition in TMF from other homestay programme (i.e., Sunga Klah bamboo rice, KBH, kampong food)
4. Lack of small and medium industry (IKS) (i.e., TMF products)	4. Lack of initiatives in branding GH as a cultural food destination
5. Communication problem (i.e., in focusing on TRF as main TMF)	5. Lack of creativities in expanding the food-related activities in GH
6. Lack of sense of belonging to the culture and traditions (i.e., TRF, <i>Kelamai</i>)	
7. Lack of quality and standard such as hygiene and cleanliness (i.e., in domestic kitchen of homestay providers)	

In other respects, the homestay programme has also clearly shown a lack of initiatives in expanding their TMF opportunities through networking and

partnership with the primary stakeholders. The possible explanation of these results, might be due to the lack of development of small- and medium-scale businesses relating to TMF products by the homestay providers in GH, a failure which has also been recognised as the fourth problem in promoting their food. Moreover, the results suggest that the communication breakdown among the homestay providers in GH to upholding the TRF as their main promotional food was another problem. This issue also linked to another problem in promoting TMF in GH, which is lack of sense belonging to the culture and traditions such as *Kelamai*. Interviews with homestay providers in GH have revealed that not many of them (from Rawa descendants) are still cooking this traditional food that belongs to Rawa communities. The fall-off of cooking practices of *Kelamai* among the Rawa communities in GH have shown that this traditional food is under-threat of being lost. As Ramli *et al.*, (2016) addressed in their study, a region's heritage food forms a valuable 'blueprint' of its people, whereby food involves not only a physical need but also local culture and custom. Finally, the results also indicated that some of the homestay providers in GH have a lack of quality and standards in the hygiene and cleanliness in their domestic kitchen which attributed to the negative image of TMF in the homestay programme.

Meanwhile, under the external threats, the lack of identification of a specific market segment by the homestay programme, to focus on culinary tourists, is the first threat. In addition, the lack of effective strategies regarding TMF in the marketing and publicity campaigns overall by the homestay has becomes a weaknesses. In this study, the homestay providers also mentioned that competition from other homestay programme with their unique TMF was another component that they identified as a threat to GH. For example, they believed that tourists preferred to eat TMF in KBH because of the location of this homestay near to Lake Raban. The results of this study suggest that the homestay providers in GH actually have failed to introduce initiatives to mark their TMF as unique in the eyes of tourists. They have all the characteristics to differentiate their TMF from other homestay, but the lack of effort on the part of providers has contributed to the development of this issue. The lack of creativity by the homestay providers in producing innovative products relating to their food-related activities, added another threat to the development of their TMF in GH. In summary, these results show that the homestay providers and GH organisation

need to tackle the preliminary issues between their internal bodies before solving the external problems that lie beyond their control. Finally, the Table 9.8 presents the summary of results obtained from Theme 4 as elaborated in the above section.

Table 9. 8 Theme 4: The Potential for GH to be developed as a Culinary Tourism Homestay

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
POTENTIAL1	The kitchen garden project is one of the potential food-related activities that should be used by GH to attract tourists. The cooking elements need to be incorporated with traditional food knowledge through the natural resources available in GH.
POTENTIAL2	The communities of GH are still hoping that their homestay programme could start again and be as prosperous as it was in the past. They hope that the challenges that they are facing now will strengthen the homestay communities to revive the programme.
POTENTIAL3	GH is proud to be located within the vicinity of natural attractions such as water sports activities, caves, hills and mountains as part of tourism product. However, integrating other natural attractions as part of the homestay programme can be a way for GH to attract various types of tourists in the future.
POTENTIAL4	GH needs to maintain their communal food activities and pastoral way of life in the village as part of the attractions to their homestay. Tradition is another attraction that can be showcased to the tourists, and it can be integrated as part of their homestay programme.
POTENTIAL5	The main characteristic of GH is the Rawa migrant community and their assimilation with the local Malays. The unique identity and culture of this group can be used as a tool to promote their homestay destination.

9.7 Summary

This chapter has dealt with several issues in the development of GH as one of the pioneer homestays programmes in Perak, Malaysia. The results have shown that the providers in this homestay are trying to sustain their programme by focusing on, and trying to address, the challenges they confront. However, there is significant evidence that they cannot cope with the issues and that they have neglected to maintain focus on the primary objectives of the homestay programme such showcasing their cultural heritage, including TRF. The most striking results from this case study are the internal and external barriers that are hindering the planning and management of this homestay, such as the manipulation by third parties and abuse of power by other stakeholders. As a result, the hard times in sustaining GH in the homestay industry in Perak have significantly impacted on the homestay coordinator and the whole group of providers, and undermined the extent to which they have felt willing or able to commit to preserving their homestay programme. In addition, the results also show that the issues in safeguarding this homestay are influenced by many factors, such as financial

matters, a lack of promotion and publicity, lack of a competent homestay coordinator, as well as the noted interference by third parties in managing this homestay.

These matters have been identified as the most prominent weaknesses and threats in sustaining GH. However, despite the internal disputes and external barriers, the community members of GH are still hoping that they could save the homestay instead of losing all of the efforts they have made to keep their programme alive. For the time being, they are seeking a new approach and devising workable solutions. The providers intend to start collaboration, working with government agencies to create more economic and social benefits for them by promoting their homestay and establishing an effective and transparent internal management. They are also enthusiastic about preserving their traditional culture, especially in publicising Rawa's traditional food for tourists. The providers realised that the only likely way to keep their homestay alive is by putting Rawa culinary heritage at the heart of their publicity and marketing efforts, but apparently they are waiting for the primary local stakeholders to provide them with the solutions. At the moment, the results from this study do not reflect a community seeking to strengthen the place of cuisine in their provision. The syndrome of over-reliance on continuous support from local authorities and related tourism bodies seems to have trapped GH in a condition of dependency, which in turn has stifled their own ingenuity and creativity in developing their homestay product further. The results have shown that the majority of the homestay providers, were relying upon the homestay programme as their primary village activities. In the end, this level of dependency has adverse ripple effects throughout the whole community. The results also revealed that the providers knew that through such an effort, and with the assistance of government agencies in marketing and promotion, they might generate a more encouraging economic and societal impact on the development of their homestay and manage to withstand all the challenges to ensure the continuity of this homestay.

Therefore, it is suggested that the homestay coordinator and providers must increase their awareness and efforts to provide local food to the tourists, adding significant value to their experiences at this destination. The providers need to be committed to showing their culinary practices and sharing them with

tourists as authentic, locally-defining experiences to integrate and promote their local cuisine as part of their distinctive culture. The results also show that the providers and the coordinator of GH need to understand and learn from the wider homestay destination industry, if they are to improve their own competences and knowledge of all matters, from the local to the bigger picture, related to the homestay programme.

Chapter 10. Homestay Programme Tourists

10.1 Introduction

Chapter 10 presents the results of the two case studies based on the analysis on homestay programme tourists, using qualitative methods. It then discusses the results from the tourists' experiences of consuming TMF in KBH and GH, as well as their experience of the cultural and heritage offered in this two homestay programmes. The data have been analysed by using thematic analysis. The themes that emerged from this analysis provide the answer to Research Question 4, "What are the essential elements of TMF that might enhance tourists' homestay experiences, and that would make TMF a central part of the homestay programme?" The chapter starts with an introduction of the demographic data of the homestay programme tourists, followed by the tourists' profile for both homestay programmes. The discussion is centred around three identified themes based on the thematic analysis gathered from interviews with the homestay tourists; 1) the purposes of visiting, 2) feedback from the homestay tourists on the tangible and intangible factors found in the homestay programmes, and 3) recommendations and revisit intention. The summary of each of the discussion is presented in a table as identified indicators for every theme.

10.2 Case Study 1 – Kampong Beng Homestay, Lenggong

This section explores the results collected and analysed from the domestic tourists staying in KBH. Twenty participants were asked to voluntarily participate in open-ended interviews to obtain their feedback and opinions regarding their overall experience of staying and consuming TMF in this homestay programme. The results from these interviews relate to research aim 4, "to investigate the different aspects of local culture that particularly appeals to tourists." These interviews were intended to explore three identified themes based on the thematic analysis as mentioned in the above paragraph (see Table 10.1). The views of tourists about KBH include their experience in consuming TMF, the relationship between the homestay providers and tourists, and other elements of cultural

heritage. Accordingly, the results in this section should facilitate an understanding of how TMF at KBH can be situated within overall heritage protection and promotion.

Table 10. 1 Identified themes from KBH Tourists

Themes	Sub-themes
1. The purpose for visiting	
2. Feedback of the homestay tourists	2a] Tangible factors 2b] Intangible factors i) The significance of TMF in KBH ii) Malay hospitality from host to guest iii) Gift-giving customs
3. Recommendations and revisits intention	

10.2.1 Demographic Profile of the Tourists

Table 10.2 gives a breakdown of the tourists who participated in this study according to gender, age, race, and education level. The table shows that half of the participants (10) were students from the University of Putra Malaysia (UPM), who were at the time on an educational visit to KBH to explore the food, culture, and traditions of local communities. The author was introduced to these students by the homestay leader, and due to their availability, she managed to convince ten students of Malay, Chinese, and Indian ethnicity to participate in this study. The rest of the participants (another 10) were domestic tourists who have experience of staying at KBH.

Table 10. 2 Demographic profile of the tourists

Items	N	%
<u>Gender (n = 20)</u>		
Male	5	25
Female	15	75
<u>Age (n = 20)</u>		
20-29	17	85
30-39	1	5
40-49	2	10
<u>Ethnicity (n = 20)</u>		
Malay	14	70
Chinese	4	20
Indian	2	10
<u>Education (n = 20)</u>		
Bachelor's degree	17	85
Master	3	15

Table 10.2 also shows that out of 20 participants, 15 are female and five are male. The age range was from 20 to 29 years old, with only one participant in the 30 to 39 years bracket and one between 40 and 49 years old. Ethnically, the majority of the participants are Malay (70% from N=20), with 20% being Chinese and 10% Indian. In Malaysia, the population of citizens by ethnic group were divided into Malay with 20.07 million (69.1%), Chinese, 6.69 million (23.0%), Indian, 2.01 million (6.9%), and others with 0.29 million (1.0%). All participants held a Bachelor degree, while one had a Master degree. Table 10.3 displays the history and frequency of the participants with regard to homestay visits prior to their experience at KBH. Some 90% of the participants had previous experience of staying in a homestay.

Table 10. 3 Previous homestay experience

Frequency	N	%
<u>Have you ever visited a homestay before this? (n = 20)</u>		
Yes	18	90
No	2	10
<u>Number of visits to a homestay (n = 20)</u>		
First time	2	10
Third time	8	40
Fourth and above	10	50

The second half of Table 10.3 shows the number of visits by the participants to any homestay in Malaysia before they came to KBH. The table shows that 50% of the participants stated that they had been to a homestay four times or more while another eight participants (40%) said that they had been to a homestay three times. Two participants (10%) stated that this was their first experience of staying at a homestay programme.

Table 10. 4 Travel information of the participants

<u>Travel party (n = 20)</u>		
Family and/ or relatives	20	100
<u>Length of stay (n = 20)</u>		
2 nights	10	50
3 nights	10	50

The next question concerned the travel information of these tourists to the homestay. As can be seen from Table 10.4, almost all of the participants travelled to the homestay either with families or friends. 50% stated that they were staying in the homestay for two nights, and the other 50% specified that they were staying for three nights.

10.3 Theme 1: The Purpose for Visiting

The next question concerned their motivations for visiting KBH. The participants were able to select more than one answer, as shown in Figure 10.1. The results show that all the participants said that they were visiting the homestay either for relaxation or educational reasons. Out of the 20, 14 also stated that they were also there for cultural activities in addition to vacation and educational tours. Of particular relevance to this thesis, 12 participants identified food events as part of their reason for visiting KBH. The results given by tourists in KBH showed that their reason to visit KBH to explore the TMF had the smallest percentage. The findings indicated two issues: 1) TMF is the least important draw for tourists; and 2) there is a significant opportunity to increase the role of TMF in KBH for tourist's attraction.

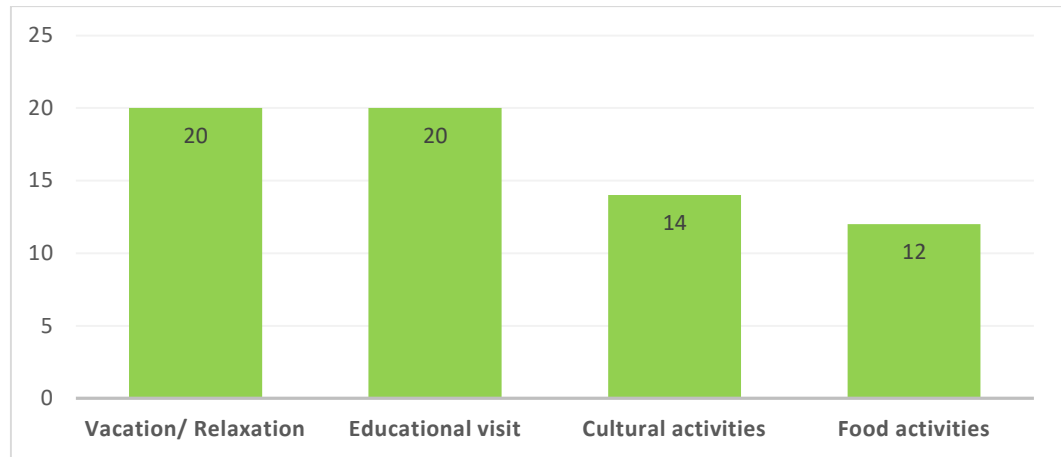


Figure 10. 1 Tourists' motives for visiting KBH (n = 20)

The following question addressed how the tourists had heard about KBH. In this question also, the tourists were allowed to choose more than one item for their answer. The results show that 12 of the 20 indicated that they knew about this homestay from family or friend referrals, while eight said they had found out about this homestay by using internet search engines (see Figure 10.2).

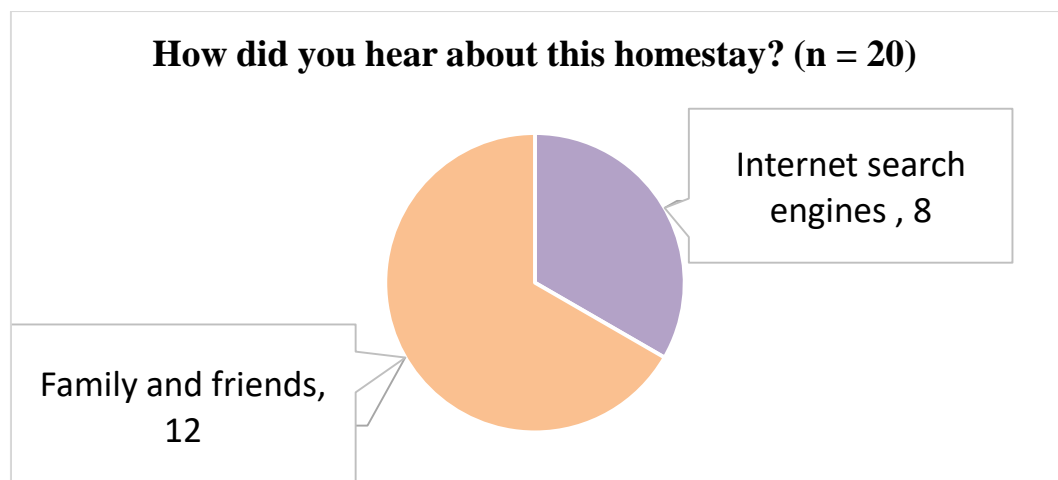


Figure 10. 2 Tourists' awareness of KBH

Figure 10.3 presents the results obtained from tourists regarding their prior awareness of the location of this homestay. The results show that 30% claimed to have had advance knowledge of this homestay. However, it is interesting to note that the results show little overlap with their knowledge of Lenggong Valley as a WHS. 70% of the tourists reported they had not known that this homestay was located near to Lenggong Valley, a UNESCO WHS. The results show therefore,

that 30% of the tourists who were interviewed knew of KBH as a homestay programme in Lenggong, with its own cultural attractions, independent of the aggressive marketing and promotional strategies by national or local government agencies promoting Lenggong Valley as a WHS. Lastly, Table 10.5 reviews the description for the indicators from tourists visiting KBH. The indicator ID for this review is TVKBH that stands for tourists visiting Kampong Beng Homestay.

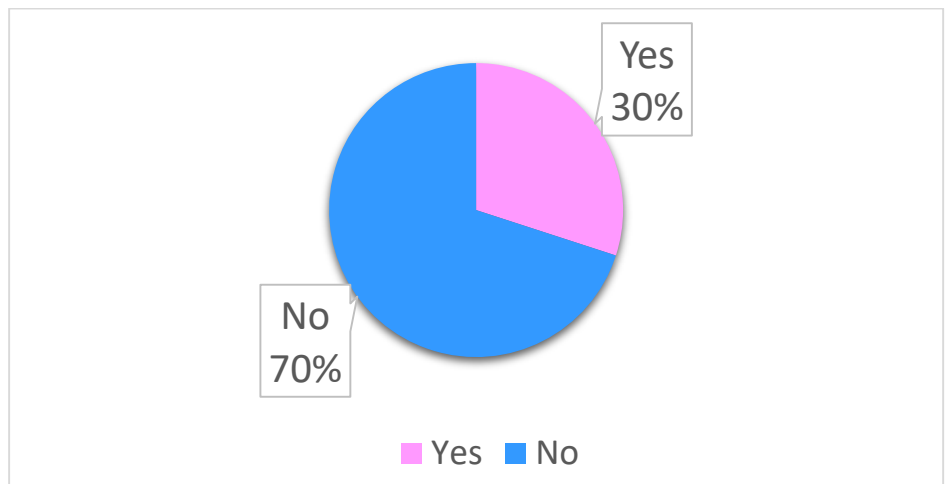


Figure 10. 3 Tourists’ knowledge of Lenggong Valley as a WHS in Malaysia

Table 10. 5 The identified indicators for tourists visiting KBH

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
TVKBH1	TMF was not the purpose for their visit to KBH.
TVKBH2	Most of the tourists found out about KBH from family or friends. It shows that KBH has gained popularity through word-of-mouth.
TVKBH3	The tourists were not aware of the location of KBH, which is near Lenggong Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

10.4 Theme 2: Feedback of the Homestay Tourists

The second theme of this study concerns the experiences of tourists at the KBH homestay, including their feedback and satisfaction with the TMF offered by the homestay providers. The results from twenty participant interviews are divided into two categories: tangible and intangible. As nourishment, food consists of tangible aspects, the material that humans consume. But the knowledge and practice of food preparation, the etiquette of eating and the

symbolic meanings attached to food culture are all intangible (Papuga, 2004). In this section, the tangible elements comprise the facilities and physical aspects that need to be improved in KBH other than food that the tourists consume. The tourists' experiences of such tangible aspects of their stay, such as the directions and signage to get to KBH, water facilities, and other services at the homestay are also explored. But the intangible factors such as the experience of consuming TMF constitute the most significant results of this research. The first section of the interview explored how tourists value the practice of the homestay providers in their food preparation, their etiquette of eating concerning Malay culture in a rural environment, and the symbolic meanings of other aspects of local life that the tourists experienced at KBH (see Figure 10.4). The intangible aspects comprise emotional satisfaction and the social experiences of these tourists, such as eating together, souvenir giving, and general host-guest relations. The participants' responses are classified under these two sub-themes on how to value and measure the feedback and satisfaction of the tourists visiting KBH. The questions also assisted the evaluation of how KBH can enhance their future marketing and promotion activities and materials, particularly concerning foods, culture, and traditions. Following practice at the homestays, henceforth the terms 'foster children' and 'foster parents' are used as these are the terms used by the participants - both providers and tourists – on the homestay programme.

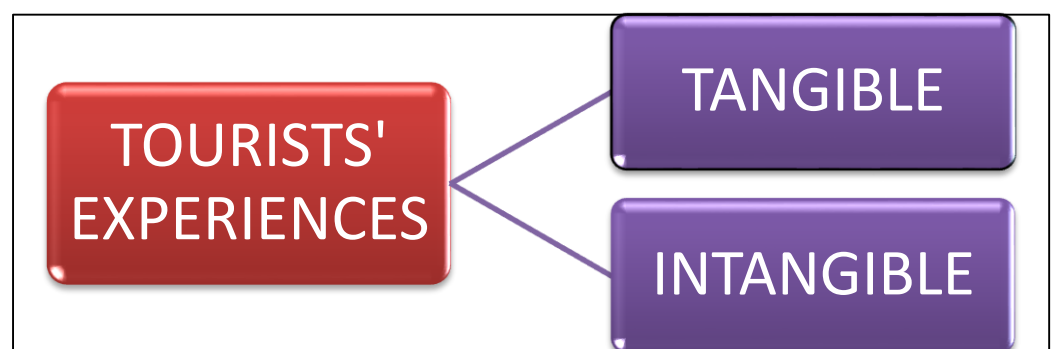


Figure 10. 4 The main results of the study from the tourists' experiences

10.4.1 Sub-theme 2a] Tangible Factors

The tangible aspects mentioned in the tourists' feedback are outlined in Figure 10.5. Three subjects were brought up: signage, water facilities, and services. The types of services described by tourists were the water supply, coffee shop facilities, and traditional village houses in KBH.

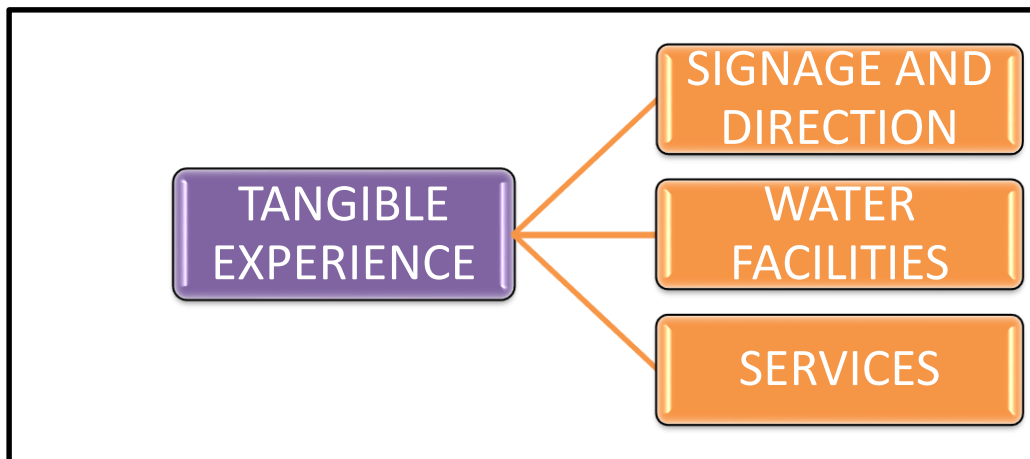


Figure 10. 5 The tangible factors from the tourists' experiences

More than half of the tourists (12 out of 20) had issues with signage. For example, KBT6 stated that:

“The route to the KBH was confusing as I had to ask the local people where I should be going. There was no indicator, especially how many KMs to go from the exit Kuala Kangsar to this particular homestay.”

Another participant added that:

“I think they should put more signage along the Grik road towards the Lenggong because before the Raja Nazrin Bridge I couldn't see any signage to this homestay.” (KBT20).

Another remark by one of the participants (KBT2) concerned the cleanliness and hygiene of the water facilities in the homestay. The tourists had been informed in advance that the KBH water supply came from the hills, despite there being a clean water supply provided, although charged for, by the federal government. This was due to the fact that the income level of the villagers meant

that most opted for the free natural water supply. They use this water sources for washing and bathing. In one case, one of the participants thought that:

“I was not sure about the drinking water in my host family house after they told me that they commonly used the water supply from the hills. But after I’d seen my foster mother boiled the water in the kettle, then I was convinced that their drinking water is safe to drink.” (KBT10)

Another participant stated that:

“I remember that we have to wait for about two hours to resume the water supply because of the disruption by a group of elephants up in the hills. This issue could cause a problem for the tourist especially if they are rushing for any activities and so forth.” (KBT4).

The services regarding the restaurants or cafés in this homestay village were one of the other issues raised. KBT17 stated that:

“I think the homestay should at least provide one small coffee shop in their village so that the tourists can mingle with the villagers while having some chit-chat over evening coffee and food.”

It might be an idea for the homestay management to take this idea on board as an additional facility for the tourists. Additionally, a small number of those interviewed suggested that the homestay management should consider providing safety jackets for tourists during the boat ride for their safety and well-being. The experience of riding in the boat from the jetty to the village was described by all participants as something of an adventure, but a number of them also raised concerns about their safety. One of the participants mentioned that:

“I enjoyed the view from the sampan, and the sightseeing part was beautiful. But I was also concerned about the safety of the tourists as they did not give any life jacket while boating. They should take this matter seriously as this is about the safety of the tourists.”

Finally, there were some negative comments about the conditions of the abandoned houses in the village. Two participants indicated that it was

disheartening to see abandoned and neglected homes, which give a negative visual impression of the place. For instances, one of the participants said:

“I was surprised to see a few houses decaying and abandoned by their owners in this homestay. It gave me a negative perception about the sustainability of this homestay and who is going to continue to run this programme if this kind of issue is prolonged in the future?” (KBT5).

In addition to the abandoned houses, other concerns were expressed regarding the misconception of the term ‘homestay’ in Malaysia, with the results from the interviews indicating that almost all the participants were confused about the term. The issue about the term ‘homestay’ is discussed in Chapter 5 with the stakeholders from the federal government and local state department, who believed they had managed to deal with the issue. However, this kind of information has not been properly communicated to the wider public or specific communities in Malaysia, especially concerning the difference between an illegal homestay and a registered homestay programme. When asked how many times they had stayed in this homestay programme, a number of the participants replied that they had stayed there three or four times. Participant KBT1, for example, said:

“I always stay in the homestay because it was very cheap and comfortable for a big group of families and friends. But I did not know that this is an official homestay under the government of Malaysia which is MOTAC.”

The quote from this participant shows that the term ‘homestay’ confuses some of the tourists in Malaysia due to the lack of distinction between the original homestay concept developed by the Malaysian government and the illegal homestays that are set up by private businesses and owners. Therefore, as discussed with the stakeholders from the federal government and local state department, the term homestay from now on should be specifically related to official programmes only. The Malaysian homestay programme has to be emphasised in all promotional materials and plans, and at every official homestay event and activity. Such measures should help to ensure that tourists will not be confused about the term homestay in the future. The summary of tourists’

feedbacks on KBH is presented in Table 10.6 under the indicator ID tangible factors tourists (TFT).

Table 10. 6 The identified indicators for tourists’ feedbacks on KBH

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions – Tangible factors</i>
TFT1	The tourists found that there are limited signage to KBH.
TFT2	The tourists complained about the water facilities in KBH, but the issue has not affected their whole experience in the homestay.
TFT3	The tourists suggested for KBH to have a cafe or a small shop for tourists to mingle with the villagers.
TFT4	The tourists suggested for KBH to provide a safety jacket for the boat rides.
TFT5	The tourists were concerned about the abandoned house in KBH.
TFT6	The tourists were not clear of the difference between an official and an illegal homestay in Malaysia.

10.4.2 Sub-theme 2b] Intangible Factors

The next section of the interviews concerned the intangible experiences and satisfaction of the tourists. Their perspectives concerning emotional involvement with the host-guest relationship, homestay activities, and food culture knowledge, were further examined to understand the importance of these elements among their overall experience. Figure 10.6 provides an overview of the emotional context of the tourists’ experience. Under this category, three elements were identified: the significance of TMF in KBH; Malay hospitality from host to guest; and gift giving customs.

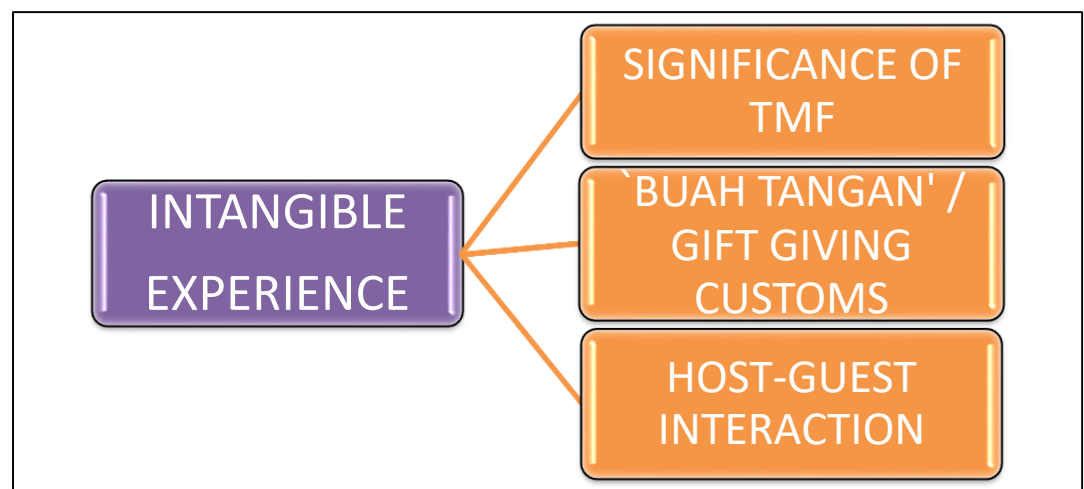


Figure 10. 6 The intangible aspects of the tourists’ experiences

10.4.3 Sub-theme 2b] i) The significance of TMF in KBH

The third set of questions in the open-ended interviews aimed to explore the experiences of these tourists regarding the consumption of TMF in KBH. The first question related to the importance of introducing TMF to the tourists in the homestay programme. Table 10.7 presents an overview of the findings.

Table 10.7 Participants' responses regarding the importance of TMF

Participants	Descriptions
KBH1	<i>'TMF is what represents Malaysia overall and what represents Malaysian culture. So we have to introduce Malaysian culture and heritage, especially food, to the tourists.'</i> (KBT11)
KBH2	<i>'Yes, it is important for the visitor to know about our local food. They come to Malaysia not only to visit but also to experience Malaysian culture and heritage.'</i> (KBT19)
KBH3	<i>'It is important to introduce TMF to the tourists, especially the foreign tourist, because this traditional food is rarely found in the cities. I also didn't know that this homestay has these types of food in Malaysia.'</i> (KBT06)
KBH4	<i>'It is critical to highlight TMF to the tourists because it is traditional and authentic. I am Malay, but I wanted to try all other Malay food in Malaysia.'</i> (KBT18)
KBH5	<i>'I always heard about the kampong dishes before this but never experienced them. I thought the dishes would be just like the ordinary meals that we eat at home, but they are different. It was authentic.'</i> (KBT03)

The above table provides an overview of the importance of TMF for the tourists. The majority of them agreed that initiatives to introduce TMF to tourists are very important for learning about Malay culture and traditions, especially those of rural village life. The participants were asked about their feelings regarding their gastronomic experiences at KBH, the originality of the food and the contribution of the food towards their enjoyment of this homestay programme. It is apparent from the analysis that the majority of participants believed that the TMF in this homestay was unique. For instance, one participant stated:

"The taste and the quality of the food were great and not like the quality of the food in the supermarket." (KBT17)

When the questions probed this further, this respondent established that the quality of the food was down to the fact that it was not polluted by pesticides and most of the vegetables and fruits in this village are free from preservatives and chemicals. He was delighted to know that all of the dishes cooked in this village are fresh and, in fact, most of the vegetables and fruits are traditional locally grown food. Another interviewee reported that he was able to pluck traditional Malay herbs and vegetables from his foster parent's backyard and use them for the cooking he helped prepare in the kitchen. He noted how the produce was fresh and home-grown in a garden rich with colour and fruits and vegetables.

Participant KBT16 expressed his appreciation of this beautiful village surrounded by lush green scenery and rivers. He had the opportunity to visit the villagers' orchards and was introduced to many different kinds of herbs such as ginger torch, the galangal, Malay basil, and others. But the most prominent herbs that he saw were the organic peanut, growing to his astonishment in the garden of his host family. According to him, he gained new knowledge and valuable experience of rural Malaysian life from visiting this homestay.

Further analysis shows that the 80% (N=20) of tourists interviewed mentioned the word 'authentic' when they described their experiences consuming TMF at KBH. Authenticity itself was mentioned in the context of the taste, texture, and flavour of the food but also the utensils and equipment and cooking methods. Participant KBT4 noted how the food was 'just like mum's cooking.' She stated that the feeling of eating this traditional food was like eating her mother's *air tangan* (a popular phrase among older Malays about water from the mother's hand). Interviewee KBT5 also noted that the food was both delicious and nutritious. He added that the freshest ingredients from the provider's home garden made the dishes special. In the same way, the way the food is prepared at KBH was authentic because of the traditional tools and equipment used in the preparation and cooking process. One of the participants (KBT19) noted how a traditional tool was still widespread in the homestay, with most dishes being prepared using the stone mortar and pestle, including the preparation of *sambal*

belacan (chilli pounded with shrimp paste). The homestay providers informed the tourists that the taste of *sambal belacan* was different when prepared using an electric blender compared to the traditional equipment. The tourists left the homestay convinced that modern tools and equipment cannot replicate the rustic charm of the traditional appliances. One participant noted that:

“My cooking experience in KBH was very authentic because we needed to sit down on the floor mat and do all the food preparation down there.” (KBT20).

One participant commented that the food preparation was nutritious and healthy:

“Besides the fresh ingredients from the home garden and nearby forest, the cooking techniques of this traditional food are also healthy. They only boil the food, instead of deep frying, and the dishes are always free from processed food.” (KBT9)

Another participant noted that not only is the food itself healthy and nutritious, but that the food preparation also contributed to the health and well-being of the communities:

“My foster mother is about 70 years old, but she goes fishing on her own, and she also works as a rubber tapper. That is amazing.” (KBT16).

Later, mentioning the food activities by the local communities, one of the interviewees said:

“Yeah, KBH food presentation was very authentic and completely different from other homestays. The food was delicious, and it tastes like real Malay food in a way because the vegetables are fresher.”

For another:

“The food demonstrations by the villagers were awesome. Mainly for the kebebe and beef cooked in soy and spicy sauce, the black colour one. It tastes superb!” (KBT11)

This comment supports a point made by one homestay provider about *kebebe* being a great source of local culinary pride that they want to show to the tourists. The food preparation is entirely different from other food as they use a wooden mortar and long pestle to pound all of the ingredients (see Figure 10.7). The complete version of this dish is a spicy, sour, bitter and sweet taste and the aromatic flavour from the wooden mortar and long pestle makes this traditional food authentic and unique. As one interviewee put it:

“The cooking demonstrations by the villagers are also authentic and traditional. We were working together with them to prepare the food from the beginning until the end of the day. I never thought that the demonstrations would really be in the traditional way. That was a good experience for us, and we appreciated their kindness and generosity in educating us about how they prepared their local and authentic food.” (KBT7).



Figure 10. 7 The preparation of *kebebe* as a local traditional food of Lenggong Valley
(Source: <https://malaysiaaktif.my/malaysiaaktif2/?p=9863>)

Another interviewee noted that:

“I was never involved with any of the Malay food preparation and demonstrations before. So I was thrilled and excited when they showed me step by step the cooking of the local food. It was fun, and I am looking forward to learning more about Malay food.” (KBT14).

Apart from the cooking demonstrations, eating together with foster families and local communities in their homes and having BBQs in their gardens

also gave the tourists a lasting impression of their stay. They mentioned that these events created a sense of social bonding between them and the local communities. The youth musical band in the village also entertained them and they played some games with the locals after eating. However, surprisingly *kebebe* was only mentioned by the group of students who participated in this study. Other tourists had not discovered about this TMF except for two tourists who had been told about it by the homestay providers. Moreover, despite the above feedback given by these tourists, the promotional booklet published by Tourism Malaysia Perak shows that KBH has not been promoting their TMF as one of the primary activities in their homestay to tourists. Figure 10.8 illustrates that KBH concentrates more on tangible cultural elements as the main attraction in this homestay programme. Therefore, it is worth pointing out that TMF is not publicised in the promotional literature for KBH, and thus loses its potential for reaching tourists who may want to experience the TMF in their homestay programme.

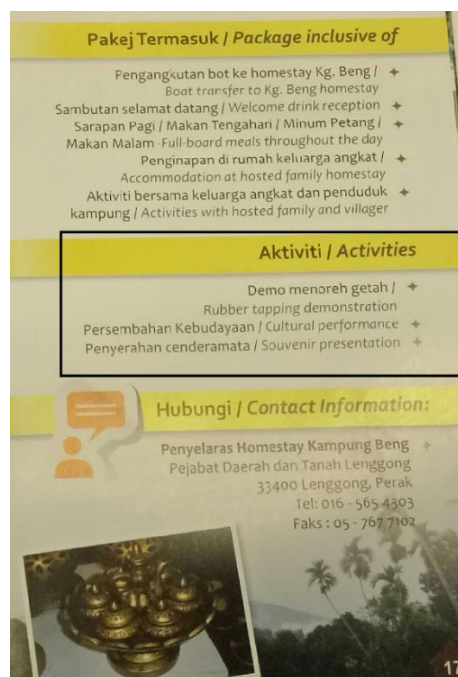


Figure 10. 8 The promotional booklet of homestay programme in Perak published by Tourism Malaysia Perak (Source: Tourism Malaysia Perak)

The above results seem to be consistent with other research which found that the local food in the form of regional cuisine is rarely presented as an

important resource in publicity material and promotional messages prepared for mainstream tourism (Rand *et al.*, 2003).

10.4.4 Sub-theme 2b] ii) Malay hospitality from Host to Guest

Host-guest relationships were identified as one of the unforgettable experiences by the participants. A variety of perspectives were expressed. KBT11 said that:

“My foster parents are very friendly and caring. They looked after me during the whole programme.”

Participant KBT13 added:

“The hosts introduced themselves as Mak and Ayah and it was pleasant to be welcomed in such a friendly manner. I felt closer to them and immediately felt a special attachment to this family.”

The tradition of hospitality is one the Malaysian homestay insists on highlighting in their programme as a means for tourists to learn about traditional rural Malay culture and traditions. This idea has been upheld from the beginning of the homestay programme to give the tourists a sense of fictive kinship¹⁶ whereby the tourists are treated as the providers' children would be. A common view amongst the participants was a sense of the warmth of traditional Malay hospitality shown by the host families. 90% (18 out of 20) of those interviewed reported that they felt pleased with the reception given by their host families. They were treated as family members and participated in the hosts' everyday life, living a traditional rural Malay lifestyle. As one of the participants said:

¹⁶Fictive kinship can be defined as the formation of a strong personal bond between individuals, that resembles or imitates that which conventionally or develops by virtue of blood ties or marriage (Aziz and Selamat, 2016, pg. 21). Fictive kin represent a different type of family tie that is based on the subjective definitions of the individuals in the relationship (Shaw, 2008). Sussman (1976) describes as imaginary ties of choice by either blood or marriage. Rae (1992) defines as unrelated individuals become "adopted" family members who accept the affection, obligations and duties of "real" kin (Shaw, 2008, pg. 1)

“My foster family were very kind, open and generous. They welcomed us with all their heart. They took care of me whenever I went and always asked me if I needed any help during my stay. They wanted me to feel relaxed and comfortable like at home.” (KBT6).

Another participant specified that she was amazed at the way her foster family had understood the rules and regulations of the homestay programme as set out by MITI. She stated that:

“One of the things I respect about these homestay providers is the way they teach their children to behave in front of tourists during the whole duration of the programme. I never saw any of their kids play inside the house or disturb us when we were eating.” (KBT3).

The homestay leader had already informed me that the behaviour and attitude of the family are important, and a good image of the Malay village family must be given. This was something that regularly cropped up at village meetings as fundamental to ensuring that tourists have positive experiences at the homestay.

In a humorous manner, another interviewee alluded to the difficulty in understanding the regional dialect when conversing with the foster families as well as the wider community:

“I was not sure about some of the words that my foster families used because of their local dialects. Sometimes we were laughing because I didn’t understand the dialect and I got it wrong regarding the meaning of certain words. But after a while, I managed to become familiar with a few words and kept asking them if I wasn’t sure about our conversation.” (KBT12).

Familiarity with the local dialect can be an issue for non-Malays as many words used locally have a different pronunciation and even meaning than in standard Malay, especially in the North and East of the Peninsular such as Sabah, and Sarawak. Some Malaysian tourists of Chinese and Indian ethnicity found it challenging to understand the local dialect and thus felt a bit awkward in their interaction with the host families. Furthermore, they also felt afraid to

mispronounce a word given the possible different connotations that different pronunciation might have. As one of the interviewees stated:

“I was struggling to have a conversation with my foster parents because my Malay language is not very good. Then, in this homestay, they have their local dialect, so I need to listen carefully to some phrases and be careful with my conversation so that they didn’t misunderstand me.” (KBT14).

This is the case even for standard Malay, as some residents of Chinese and Indian ancestry do not use Malay very much in their daily lives. Malay is used in textbooks and examinations in primary and secondary school, but after that English is used as a medium in education. Thus, even standard Malay is often not used very much beyond secondary school in many households. Despite this, language did not crop up as a major issue among the tourists, and in fact was seen as a source of humour more than tension.

10.4.5 Sub-theme 2b] iii) Gift-Giving Customs

In response to other questions about the tourists’ memorable experiences, most of those interviewed indicated that *buah tangan*, or giving gifts, by the host families on their departure day was one of the most cherished moments of their stay. *Buah tangan* is a unique take-home souvenir given by the homestay providers as a token of appreciation of the tourists’ visit, and is presented on the day of their leaving the homestay. In fact, one of the prevailing customs in Malay communities is, when invited to any Malay home, a guest should bring any *buah tangan*, maybe a small, practical gift or food for the family, and also leaves with some kind of gift (which is frequently food). Therefore, on this occasion, the majority of the tourists stated that they had brought souvenirs or gifts for their foster family. According to them, this is one of the ways to set a friendly context for their stay at their ‘adoptive homes’. One of the participants commented that:

“I firmly believe that the gift exchange is a unique way to say thank you to the host family for inviting us to stay in their homes and be treated as one of their valued guests. Even though we are paying for the package, their hospitality is more precious than money. Their lovely lifestyle has evoked our emotional experiences living in this traditional village.” (KBT10).

When the participants were asked about the farewell ceremony, the majority commented that it was a sad moment when they had to leave their foster parents and families. One of the participants stated that she could not hold her tears back at that moment because suddenly she felt so emotionally attached to her foster families. Another interviewee stated that:

“I think the majority of us cried on departure day because I noticed everybody was quiet and I could see that most of us tried to hold back our tears. We had to stand in front of our foster parents, and each of us had to say goodbye to them, which at the end of the day created a very emotional atmosphere in the community hall. I really won’t forget that moment of truth in my life.” (KBT17).

Such emotions are testament to the robust social bond that is formed during even a short stay with the homestay provider’s family and during the activities that they participate in together. Many of the tourists, in fact, have returned to visit the host families on other occasions and some of them stay in regular contact with the same foster parents. The outlines obtained from tourists’ feedback on KBH are shown in Table 10.8 under indicator id of tourists’ feedback intangible factors (TFITF).

Table 10. 8 The identified indicators for tourists’ feedbacks on KBH

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions – Intangible factors</i>
TFITF1	The tourists recognised the importance of promoting TMF in KBH.
TFITF2	The tourists acknowledged that the kampong food served in KBH were made using locally grown produce.
TFITF3	The tourists recognised that KBH provides authentic TMF and homemade kampong dishes.
TFITF4	The tourists can remember some of the local dishes in KBH. It shows that tourists can flag the dishes KBH according to their distinctiveness.
TFITF5	The tourists agreed that KBH has unique cooking demonstrations, such as of the <i>kebebe</i> . However, some tourists were not aware of these cooking demonstrations, indicating that KBH has not been promoting their TMF-related events, as one of the primary activities in their homestay to tourists.

TFITF6	The tourists admitted that the host-guest relationships in KBH is an unforgettable experience for them.
TFITF7	Some of the tourists admitted that they had difficulty in understanding the regional dialect when conversing with the foster families.
TFITF8	Getting gifts from the host families on their last day at the homestay is one of the most cherished moments of their stay.
TFITF9	Some of the tourists have returned to visit the host families on other occasions after their stay, and some stay in regular contact with their foster parents.

10.5 Theme 3: Recommendations and Revisit Intentions

The first section of the results from the tourist's perspectives explored how important local culinary culture was to the tourists (see 10.4 on page 328). This section explores the issue of recommendations and revisit intentions. Figure 10.9 gives an overview of the participating tourists' intentions to recommend KBH to their relatives and friends.

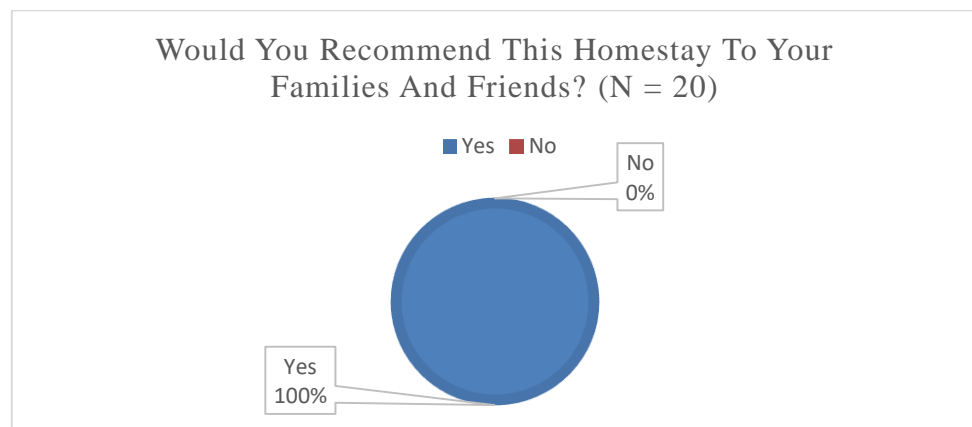


Figure 10. 9 Feedback from the tourists about their recommendations of this homestay programme

Figure 10.9 shows that the tourists were unanimous in their intentions to recommend KBH to others. The majority of participants agreed that they would be delighted to recommend KBH to their families and friends due to the enlightening cultural experiences that they had at KBH, with TMF being one of them. With this strong evidence, it is not hard to believe that these tourists could facilitate word-of-mouth advertising concerning their tourism experience in KBH to others, including people beyond their immediate close family and circle of friends. Furthermore, the results show that nearly all of the tourists felt that their gastronomic journey in this homestay had been valuable. Taken together, these

results suggest that there is a strong association between food and tourists' experiences at a homestay. Further evidence can be seen in Figure 10.10, which shows that all the participants said they would love to revisit this homestay due to the factors discussed above. According to one participant:

"I have been to Malacca and George Town, which are also UNESCO World Heritage Sites and tasted their traditional food, but the traditional food served in this place (KBH) is different and unique from those two cities. In KBH, we are not only eating the kampong food but the cultural elements that embedded in the presentation and cooking of that particular food was exquisite." (KBT18).

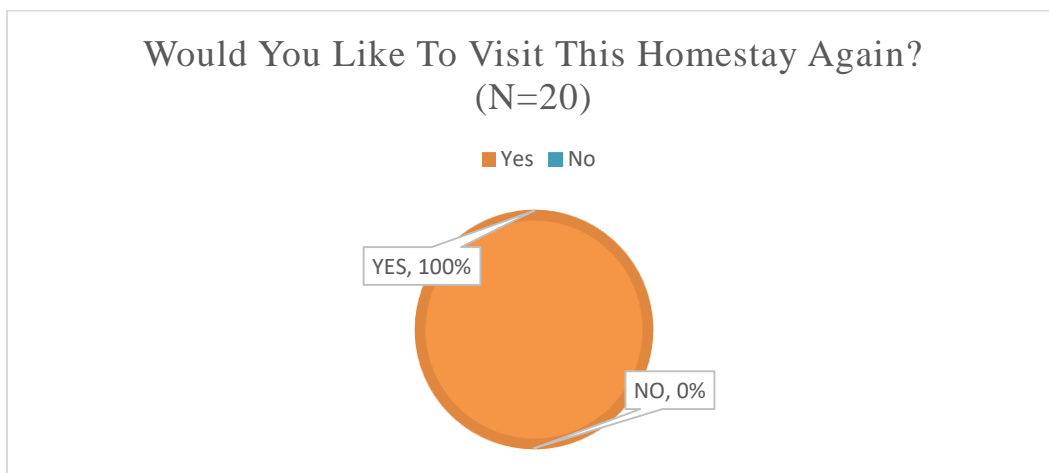


Figure 10. 10 Feedback from tourists about their revisit intentions

Overall, the results with tourists in KBH identified that the tourists came to KBH primarily for cultural assets such as natural resources and physical environment. However, the tourists realised that the TMF offer in KBH enhances their gastronomic experienced and thereby leaves a positive impression. From this observation, it is suggest that the TMF in KBH has the potential to become a key tourist attraction with the help of effective promotional materials and methods in marketing and promotion to tourists. The tourists also acknowledged that TMF in KBH provided a value-added element that produced a memorable experienced for them, and thus encouraged them to give a positive recommendation to their social network and inspire them to return visit to KBH in the future. Table 10.9 presents the identified indicators for tourist's recommendations of KBH under indicator ID of tourists' feedback recommendations (TFR).

Table 10.9 The identified indicators for tourists' recommendations of KBH

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions – Recommendation and revisits intention</i>
TFR1	The tourists were happy to recommend KBH to their family and friends due to its rich cultural experiences.
TFR2	The tourists agreed that their culinary journey in KBH is a valuable experience for them.
TFR3	The tourists acknowledged that the TMF served in KBH provided them with a unique experienced, which are different from what is offered in the other two WHS in Malaysia, namely Malacca and George Town.
TFR4	The tourists acknowledged that the TMF served in KBH enhanced their homestay experience.

10.6 Summary

The first half of this chapter has discussed in detail the feedbacks by tourists who stayed in KBH. The results are essential to the primary stakeholders, especially the homestay organisation of KBH, so that they can become an attractive homestay destination, by drawing on their local culinary culture and heritage. The results have revealed that the tourists are satisfied with the cultural experiences gained in this village. They also mentioned that the providers have allowed them to engage in authentic rural experiences, particularly in relation to their TMF, while gaining insights into local heritage and tradition, which are portrayed as a potent symbol of KBH local image and identity. Moreover, the rootedness of this community and their sense of belonging depicts a genuine and compelling emotional 'attachment to place', which tourists find appealing and exciting.

However, there are some drawbacks of KBH that needs to be improved based on the feedbacks given by these tourists. Some of the facilities and services in their homestay need to be upgraded or further developed, as part of the efforts to attract more tourists. These facilities include signage and water services. Some even suggested for a café or a restaurant to be opened in the village. On the good side, the most attractive elements as mentioned by the tourists of KBH are the intangible dimensions, such as the host-guest relationship, gift-giving customs and the Malay hospitality. They highlighted that the traditional food in KBH is the main element that contributed to the meaningful experience during their stay. KBH has received good recommendations by tourists in this study, in the

intention. The comments and feedback from these tourists should be taken seriously, as part of the efforts to increase the number of returning tourists.

10.7 Case Study 2 – Gopeng Homestay, Perak

10.7.1 Gopeng Homestay Tourists

This section begins with the results and analysis of tourists' experience of staying at GH and their feedback in understanding the cultural importance of, especially TMF and Rawa tradition in this homestay. Thirteen tourists participated in open-ended interviews to obtain their input and opinions regarding their overall perception and satisfaction concerning the homestay activities as well as, in particular, the TMF served by the homestay providers. The selection process for the participants was 'purposive sampling' as there were few tourists at the homestay due to it being the low season. The planned number of interviews for this study was planned to be fifteen participants. However, due to incomplete information given, two participants had to be discarded from the analysis. The results are able, nevertheless, to begin to answer Research Question 4 of the study, "What are the essential elements of TMF that might enhance tourists' homestay experiences, and that would make TMF a central part of the homestay programme?". By understanding the tourists' perception of their experience of consuming TMF in the homestay, the providers might be able to be more aware of the importance of local food in enhancing tourists' gastronomic experience and attracting more tourists to the homestay. Table 10.10 shows the identified themes for GH tourists based on the thematic analysis gathered from an interview with the homestay tourists. While many of the results are similar to those of Case Study in KBH (see Table 10.1 on page 324), different results have been generated under sub-theme 2a, regarding the amenities and services, cleanliness and hygiene, and marketing and promotions that have been highlighted by tourists in GH.

Table 10. 10 Identified themes from GH Tourists

Themes	Sub-themes
1. The purpose for visiting	
2. Feedback of the homestay tourists	2a] Tangible factors i) Amenities and services ii) Cleanliness and hygiene iii) Marketing and promotions 2b] Intangible factors i) The significance of TMF in GH ii) Malay hospitality from host to guest iii) Gift-giving customs
3. Recommendations and revisits intention	

10.7.2 Demographic Profile

Table 10.11 shows the list of tourists who participated in the open-ended interviews in this research. Thirteen participants agreed to give their opinions and feedback on their visit to this homestay.

Table 10. 11 Profile of the tourists in Gopeng Homestay

Participant	Gender	Age	Occupation	Origin	Race
Gopeng Tourist 1	Female	37	Lecturer	Selangor	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 2	Male	20	Student	Selangor	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 3	Female	26	Housewife/ Student	Perak	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 4	Female	32	Senior Administrative Executive	Perak	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 5	Female	32	Senior Executive Coordinator	Negeri Sembilan	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 6	Female	37	Manager	Pulau Pinang	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 7	Female	37	Manager	Selangor	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 8	Female	45	Businesswoman	Perak	Chinese
Gopeng Tourist 9	Male	23	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 10	Male	20	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 11	Male	22	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 12	Male	22	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Malay
Gopeng Tourist 13	Male	21	Student	Kuala Lumpur	Malay

Referring to Table 10.11, the majority of the participants involved came from the Malay ethnic group, and only one participant was of Chinese ancestry. The age range of the participants was between 20 years old and 45 years old. Seven of the participants are female; six males. The table shows that six of the participants were undergraduate students from local universities whereas one was a lecturer at a government university. The other four participants worked with private sector companies, while one had her own business and the last participant was a housewife who was currently studying for a part-time master's degree.

10.8 Theme 1: The Purpose for Visiting

The first questions aimed to determine the purpose and motives of their visit. Figure 10.11 shows the overall results which show that the majority (8 out of 13) of the tourists were visiting for recreational activities such as white-water rafting, cave hiking, and so forth. Four participants (N=13) specified that education and culture were the primary motives for their trip. One participant (N=13) indicated that she went to GH to visit her friend in this homestay. Her friend's mother actually once worked there.

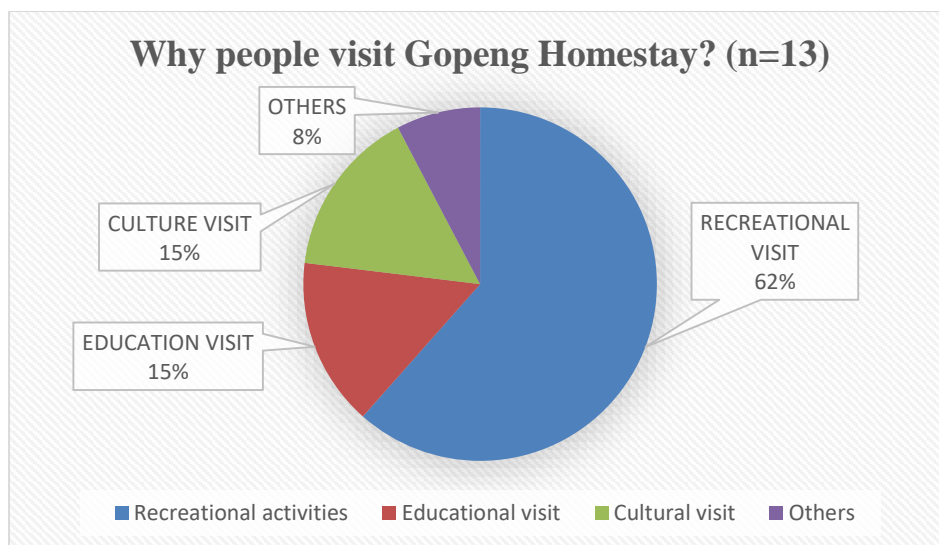


Figure 10. 11 The purpose of the tourists' visit to Gopeng Homestay

Closer inspection of the answers shows that those participants who had come on educational and cultural visits had known about the existence of GH.

They had also known that this village is one of the registered programmes authorised by MOTAC. The rest of the participants said that they only stayed here to enjoy the extreme water sports activities that were organised by one of their group members or for the caving expeditions. They were unaware that GH was an official government homestay programme. It was only after the water rafting, that the guides for the activities brought them to the villages and informed them about GH and other attractions in that area. The upshot of this is that it would appear to be the case that there is a lack of publicity about the GH homestay programme.

Table 10.12 summarises the reasons for tourists visiting GH.

Table 10. 12 The identified indicators for tourists visiting GH

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions</i>
TVG1	TMRF was not the reason for the tourists to visit GH.
TVG2	62% of the tourists only used GH for accommodation while they are involved in water sports activities, and were not aware that GH offers an official homestay programme in Malaysia.
TVG3	15% of the tourists who came to GH for educational and cultural purposes were aware that GH offers an official homestay programme.

10.9 Theme 2: Feedback of the Homestay Tourists

The questions that were asked to the homestay's tourists were the same as at KBH, namely to discover their impressions of the overall homestay experience such as their reason for visiting, their perception of GH, and the satisfaction they derived from consuming local food and their enjoyment of other attractions in these villages. Some of the questions concerning the tangible and intangible dimensions of this homestay programme appear to elicit significantly different responses to those at KBH. Therefore, one additional question was asked to the tourists regarding their opinions about GH and the quality of standards of this homestay.

10.9.1 Sub-theme 2a] Tangible Factors

The results regarding the tangible dimensions of GH from the tourists' perspectives are discussed below. The tangible dimensions that were discussed are

amenities and services, cleanliness and hygiene, and lastly, marketing and promotions.

10.9.2 Sub-theme 2a] i) Amenities and Services

According to the majority of the tourists (12 out of 13), the amenities and services in this homestay are limited to 'kampong' style facilities in the rural areas such as the community halls, local shops, football fields, and mini library.

As one of the participants mentioned:

"I think most of the people in this village rely on the amenities and services in a nearby town in Gopeng. But for me, it is quite a hassle for us to go there." (GT7)

Just over half of the participants in this study reported that they did not notice the amenities and services in this homestay as they were not using them.

GT8 remarked:

"I booked the homestay together with the food prepared by the host families. So every day the meal times were made by my foster mother, so I don't need to look around for food."

This view was echoed by other participants who were most interested in the cultural aspects of the visit. One noted:

"I don't need to use the facilities in this homestay because I went out in the morning and came back around night time." (GT1)

However, GT13 stated that the washroom facilities in Tempurung Cave were not available during weekdays and opened only at the weekend and on public holidays. She thought that the facilities in the recreational areas in Gopeng such as Tempurung Cave are under the same organisation as GH. The toilet in Tempurung Cave is closed during the weekdays. They only open on the weekend and maybe public holidays. Because of that, we have to ask the tour guide if we could change our clothes in any of the homestay providers' houses.

Although this statement does not relate to any of the amenities and services under the control of providers in GH, it is important because tourists travelling for extreme water-sport activities could become aware of the existence of GH as an official homestay programme in Gopeng because of the closed toilets. This could provide word-of-mouth promotion. Therefore, GH and its homestay organisation could use this opportunity to market and promote their homestay programme to the water sports tourists and others attracted to the area by recreational activities. Such tourists might book their accommodation with them in future and spread the free publicity to their families and friends about GH.

10.9.3 Sub-theme 2a] ii) Cleanliness and Hygiene

Another observation concerned awareness of the homestay providers about the cleanliness and hygiene of their properties and house surroundings. This subject was discussed as it was raised by the stakeholders in Chapter 7, who noted that the providers are not overly aware of, or concerned about, the matter of cleanliness and hygiene, and that they have to be reminded at multiple meetings. The providers replied to the officials in MOTAC Perak that the tourists should accept that they are in a rural homestay, and therefore their homes are not kitted-out with the facilities a modern urban area might be expected to have. The stakeholders indeed take these matters seriously because the image of the homestay programme depends on the quality and standards set by MOTAC. Figure 10.12 shows one of the examples of cleanliness and hygiene at one of the homestay provider's houses in this village. The tourists informed me that his room was located next to the host family barn, which was not an environment conducive to cleanliness and hygiene. He commented that:

“Just imagines the odour of the animals that I have to smell every time I stay in my room. I had a terrible state of mind throughout my stay because of this bad aroma.” (GT3)



Figure 10. 12 The barn in one of the provider’s houses, located next to a guest room
(Source: Author)

The same problems were reported by one of the tourists about the image and identity of the homestay providers and the surrounding of their house (see Figure 10.13). He commented that:

“I was shocked to see the surrounding one of the homestay provider’s houses in this village. The image is not consistent with what they advertise on the website. I thought that most of the homes in this village would be the same as the one that I saw on the internet.” (GT2)



Figure 10. 13 The outside area in one of the provider’s houses
(Source: Author)

The same concerns were expressed by another tourist who noted that:

“I am not sure about the international tourists, but I felt a bit uneasy about using the outside toilet. It was exciting to see that they are still having this kind of toilet in their village, but regarding cleanliness and hygiene, I was in some discomfort.”
(GT5)

The above comments illustrate that even the domestic tourists are not satisfied with the state of the cleanliness and hygiene seen in some of the providers’ homestays. The issue will remain unsettled if the providers do not take this matter into consideration and if they continue to make no effort to improve the current state of their facilities, such as the main toilet in their residential area. Figure 10.14 shows the type of outside toilet used by some of the local providers in this homestay.



Figure 10. 14 The outside toilet in one of the providers’ houses
(Source: Author)

10.9.4 Sub-theme 2a] iii) Marketing and Promotions

The final results from the tourists for the tangible dimension concern the marketing and promotion of TMF as part of the GH programme. Apparently, it was only possible to gather information about GH through the websites of

Tourism Malaysia and Tourism Perak, Malaysia. Other than that, the search engine always directed anyone searching to illegal homestays, which are not operated by MOTAC. I discussed this issue with some of the stakeholders from the local state department and federal ministry during my interviews with them, but they remarked that they have directed the homestay coordinator to set up and establish their own marketing and promotions, especially in relation to their local attractions such as TMF. On the other hand, they also stated that MOTAC and other government agencies have put a great deal of effort into promoting the GH programme through their official website, in addition to publishing promotional materials in the form of brochures, pamphlets, and leaflets that tourists can get from MOTAC or Tourism Malaysia offices all around Malaysia. Other than that, the officials in MOTAC Perak stated that the responsibility to promote the individual homestay lies with the coordinator of the homestay programme. MOTAC clarify this subject during the first training courses which are attended by registered homestay providers. Therefore, MOTAC expects that individual homestay programmes, led by the coordinator, should devise effective ways of publicising and promoting their homestay. The results, however, refer numerous times to poor local promotion of GH as an official homestay programme in Perak. As GT1 told me:

“I hardly saw any promotion about Gopeng Homestay in any of the water-related sports companies in Gopeng. I think that the homestay should do some networking with these companies to promote and give some publicity to their homestay so that tourists can have another choice of leisure and entertainment in this area.”

Another participant reported the same issue:

“I have seen the road signs to Homestay Gopeng on my way to the water rafting. Why have I not known that Gopeng has an official homestay?” (GT8)

My observation at the Tourism Perak office in Ipoh found that tourists can get promotional materials like brochures, maps, and other information about homestay programme in Perak. However, the staff at the reception office told me that the MOTAC office only distributed 100 copies of brochures and pamphlets to

them. If they ran out of these materials, then MOTAC will replace with other kinds of brochures because normally they will print only limited numbers of brochures. Thus, if a brochure runs out, MOTAC has to wait for another year to get new printed materials. The information provided in the brochures apparently indicated that GH has mixed Malay ethnicities, which is Rawa and common Malay communities (see Figure 10.15 below). The brochure does mention the specific cultural attractions in GH such as *Adet Bojojak* and food demonstrations of *Kelamai*. In the list of activities in GH, it listed *Kelamai* as one of the activities that tourists can request to be included in their homestay package.

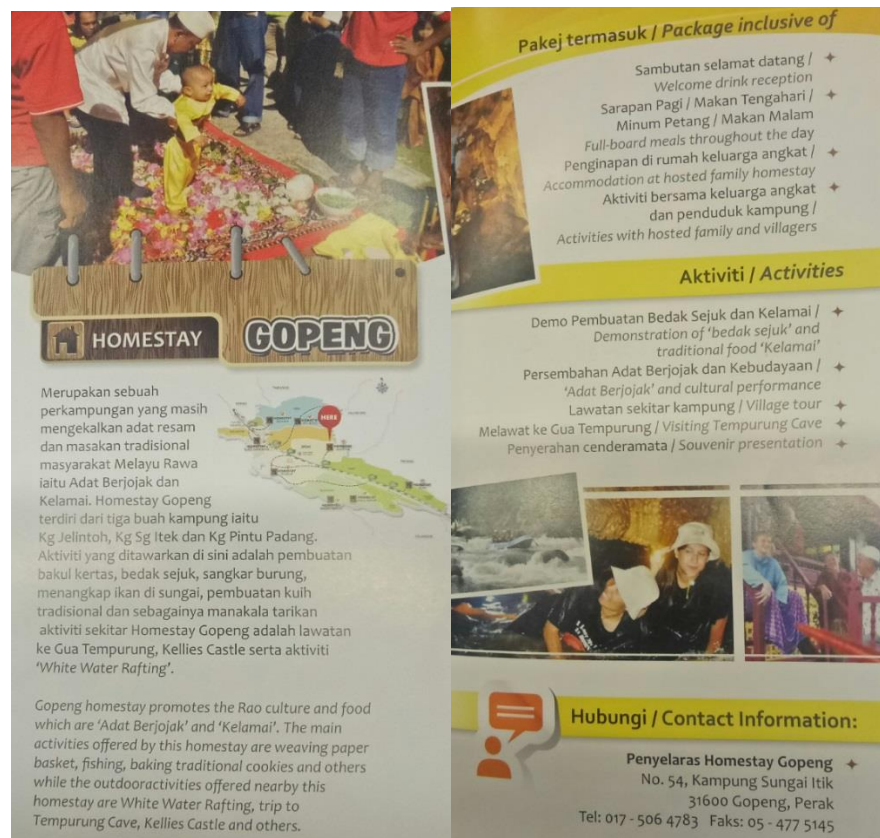


Figure 10. 15 The promotional materials for Gopeng Homestay Programme in the Perak Homestay brochure (Source: [Tourism Malaysia Perak](#))

The results revealed that GH recognised TMF is one of the elements that they can feature in their homestay programme to attract tourists. However, my interviews with the stakeholders and homestay providers in GH exposed that the execution of these activities was not equivalent with the promotion that they publicised in the brochures. They told me that the *Kelamai* activity is depending

on the availability of the one expert in GH. Tourists have to book in advance with additional fees if they wanted this activity demonstrated. Furthermore, food preparation also has to be done 3 days in advance of eating to allow for the fermentation process. This means that tourists have to fix the date of a demonstration with the homestay leader before arriving in order for them to arrange for a food demonstration. The making of *Kelamai* in Figure 9.4 (see Chapter 9 on page 290), showed that *Kelamai* have to be cooked in embers for more than 8 hours. Therefore, the homestay providers presume that tourists were not keen to wait for such a long time just only for this activity.

On the other hand, one of the tourists told me that there were a minimum number of tourists set by the homestay leader for the food demonstration. They require at least 5 tourists to put on these food demonstrations. My interview with the homestay leader supported this. He told me that he needs at least 5 tourists to put on food demonstrations due to the high cost of ingredients and long preparation time for making *Kelamai*. Furthermore, a demonstration requires villagers to look for quality bamboo in the forest and to prepare an ember fire to cook *Kelamai*. Thus, it was not worth it for him to showcase this activity for a small number of tourists, even though many tourists are very interested to know about this food and its preparation. When I mentioned to Stakeholders 5 and 6 that the GH homestay leader put a restriction in terms of the minimum number of tourists for their homestay activities in GH, they told me that the issues had never been resolved. They had discussed this matter with the homestay leader, but it did not work. The homestay leader told them that the providers would not get any profit from the homestay activities and sometimes they even use their own pocket money to buy the materials for the food preparation and so on.

The same issue happened for the *Adet Bojojak*. The homestay cannot bear the cost of showcasing these cultural activities to tourists, and thus they rarely suggested this type of activity to tourists. However, if by coincidence, the communities in GH were planning to conduct an *Adet Bojojak* ceremony in their family, the homestay leader will invite tourists to come and experience it.

Another of the tourists stated that he had not known about the existence of GH until he came here for the water sports activities. This subject was explored with the majority of the homestay providers and it was suggested that they need to organise continuous promotional efforts to market their homestay so that they are constantly visible to a targeted audience. They also need to devise a new strategy in their marketing activity so that they can approach the tourism industry players on how to aggressively promote their homestay to the tourists. Usually, government agencies and departments such as MOTAC, Tourism Malaysia and other ministries help and support with the publicity and marketing for homestays in Malaysia. But the responsibility to do the promotion and marketing strategies for their homestay rests squarely on the shoulders of the homestay coordinator and board. Although the homestay coordinator and board members could always get useful advice on how GH might promote itself in the homestay industry in Malaysia, action must be proactive; it must come from the homestay coordinator and the homestay providers so that the public are aware that GH is one of the unique homestays in Malaysia that offers a unique experience of Rawa traditional food, culture, and traditions. Table 10.13 illustrates the summary of tourists' feedbacks on GH under the indicator ID of tourists' feedback tangible factors (TFTF).

Table 10. 13 The identified indicators for tourists feedback on GH

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions – Tangible factors</i>
TFTF1	GH has very limited amenities and services to offer to the tourists.
TFTF2	The tourists were not satisfied with the cleanliness and hygiene of the homestay providers' house in GH. The negative image carried by these providers could ruin the reputation of GH in the future.
TFTF3	The tourists indicated that GH is lacking in promotion, particularly in terms of marketing and publicity. They were not aware of the existence of GH as an official homestay programme in Gopeng, Perak.
TFTF4	The tourists complained by stating that <i>Kelamai</i> and <i>Adet Bojojak</i> demonstrations are mentioned in the brochures, but they are only presented to a minimum number of tourists due to financial limitations.
TFTF5	Some tourists also reported of been given only little information about the traditional Malay Rawa food, due to the inconsistencies in promotion by the homestay providers. Some tourists were properly introduced to this traditional food, while others have no information about these dishes by their host families.

10.10 Sub-theme 2b] Intangible Factors

Another feature of the homestay experience at GH discussed with tourists were the intangible dimensions of their visit. Some of the tourists referred to authenticity, safeguarding, and best-ever experiences during their interviews. These comments have been grouped into several categories below.

10.10.1 Sub-theme 2b] i) The Significance of TMF in GH

In interviews tourists mentioned their experiences of the nature and wider attractions of GH as well as eating rustic kampong (traditional Rawa) dishes in a village setting. In response to this question, most of those interviewed said that they had had an enjoyable and authentic experience savouring TRF. As GT8 commented:

“We were presented with some of the ordinary food of Rawa dishes. I enjoyed the experience, and the food was terrific.”

GT2, when asked about the food, said:

“From my point of view, the food was as authentic as the kampong dishes could be. It shows that the people are, after so many years away from their ancestral homeland, genuine Rawa people.”

A variety of perspectives were expressed regarding consumption of the traditional local food, particularly Rawa cuisine. According to Sims (2009), local food has the potential to enhance tourists' experience by connecting them to the region and its culture and heritage. In conjunction with these experiences, some of the tourists explained that the differences in food-related activities in GH formed part of the long-lasting memories especially when the providers mentioned about *Kelamai*.

“I enjoyed the cooking activities with my foster mother in GH. A story about how they make Kelamai during Ramadhan was fascinating. She told me that this traditional cuisine has to be well-kept for three days and cook for 8 hours. That was interesting, but sadly, there is no food demonstration for this food.” (GT10)

This example indicates two things, the positive experiences of tourists in this homestay and that interaction with different cultures creates valuable memories. Therefore, the tourist experience is socially-constructed based on the local people and its surroundings that differ greatly from their usual experiences in life. As one of the participants said:

“The friendly locals, mainly elderly people always greet you with “As-Salaam-Alaikum” and start the conversation immediately. I am so glad to receive the warmest reception in this homestay, and they even invited me for food and drink in their house.” (GT13)

This section found that the elements of food and leisure activities could build a particular brand for GH so that they can establish a distinctive image and identity. Sims (2009) also suggested that these elements are essential for the development of sustainable tourism because it shows that there are market opportunities for local products that can satisfy tourists’ desire for experiences that promote a connection with place, culture, and heritage. The subsequent part of this section discusses the potential of GH to sustain itself by drawing on the experiences of the tourists analysed above. Even though this homestay is currently struggling with the issue of a lack of demand, management issues, and insufficient marketing and promotion, the majority of tourists thought that this homestay could potentially thrive and thereby boost the villagers’ confidence to regenerate their programme. One of the tourists mentioned the opportunity to experience TRF, culture and traditions:

“Food is the heritage that should be preserved. It is not easy for city folk to come across Rawa food these days unless they specifically make a trip to Indonesia. Therefore, by all means, GH has a significant opportunity to promote this food to the tourists in their homestay.” (GT 11)

The opportunity to focus on TRF, culture and tradition in their programme is thus something to be exploited to promote the GH image to domestic and international tourists. GT1 reported that this homestay requires a minimum number of tourists on top of an additional payment to showcase their cultural performances or otherwise they would not be able to perform them for tourists.

The cultural dance performances, for example, need to be paid separately to the dancers supplied by the homestay, and this incurs additional costs that have to be found by the homestay programme. The coordinator asked GT1 to organise a group if they are interested in experiencing a Rawa cultural performance such as *Adet Bojojak* or traditional food demonstrations. As a tourist, she felt slightly frustrated with this procedure as she expected that the coordinator might arrange something related to Rawa cultural traditions that were included in the cost that she had paid for the homestay package as she was very keen to learn about Rawa heritage. Thus, she suggested that the homestay coordinator could think through their package and provide a budget itinerary for the small number of tourists so that the tourists could learn and understand about Rawa culture and heritage.

Another tourist mentioned that she was lucky to be able to get involved in a cultural performance as she was there with another group of employees from the local state department. Therefore, when asked about the issue of sustainability, she firmly stated:

“As a city person, I am very much aware that I would never be exposed to such cuisine in this culture if I did not explicitly participate in this group’s activities in Gopeng Homestay. I appreciate the opportunity that I was given to understand the Rawa people, their cuisine and culture that they still have.”
(GT8)

The above comments demonstrate the desire of some of tourists to understand the Rawa culture and heritage, including cuisine. Therefore, the results suggest a strong possibility for GH to ‘exploit’ their traditional Rawa cuisine for tourists at the vanguard of a reenergised campaign to recapture the past success of the homestay, and develop a sustainable programme for the future.

10.10.2 Sub-theme 2b] ii) Malay Hospitality from Host to Guest

In traditional Malay hospitality, to receive a guest is a kind of honour for the host family. Guests will be given a cordial welcome just like a family member, and food and beverages will be offered to the tourists. However, one of

the distinctive features of a local rural community is their generosity and selflessness towards their guests. For example, when the author went to one of the provider's houses in GH, they would introduce me to other friends in their neighbourhood. Then, as a welcome gesture, they would say, "Please come to my house. I just lived next to the blue house" (for example). And if the author met any of their friends on my way to another house, then the person would say the same things too. "Please come to my house as well. I live over there near the river" (for example). Then, they would serve you at least a hot beverage or cold drink and food as a cordial welcome to their house. It is not unusual for a visitor to end up meeting everyone in the village due to their traditional need to show a warm welcome. As GT10 illustrated:

"I went to see my friend in one of the provider's homes and they invited me inside. I had some tea and snacks. They are also friendly and easily open for conversations."

This statement supported the view that tourists are pleased with the cordial welcome given by the homestay providers. Some of the tourists even mentioned that their host families expressed genuine concerns about their well-being throughout their stay at the homestay. Such sentiments are exemplified by one of the participant's comments on a free ride he was given by his foster parents:

"My foster father took me all over the place in this village and invited me to join the water rafting activities. It was amusing and unusual. I didn't know that the activity was so expensive and he just gave me a free ride." (GT2)

Another responded about the hospitality given by the host family:

"I was glad that I joined this homestay programme because the people here are friendly and thoughtful. They treat us like their children, and every time we see them, they always ask, have you eaten yet? They want us to feel at home and make sure we get enough food." (GT6)

These results indicate that most of the homestay providers are well-versed in offering the best hospitality experience to their tourists. Even though some of them are not staying with the providers (some of them are there for the recreational activities and not staying for one whole day in a homestay provider's

house), but the warm welcome and the cordial respect shown to the guests made them feel immediately at home.

10.10.3 Sub-theme 2b] iii) Gift-Giving Customs

In this Gopeng homestay’s culture and tradition, it is customary to offer tourists a gift when they are leaving. Sometimes they will do this for newly arrived guests. For example, the author was given a memento when she went to one of the homestay provider’s houses for an interview. GH is not a traditional village like KBH , which is why it was surprising to see the people still abiding by this tradition. One of the tourists commented that:

“My host family gave me a souvenir, and on top of that, she packed the jackfruit gravy dish for me. She knew that I love that food because I ate three plates of rice at her house.” (GT5)

GT4 also mentioned the generosity of her host family:

“My foster mother filled our car boot with a lot of durians and other fruits before we were leaving. On top of that, she also gave us another souvenir that she had made with her friends.”

This kind of act symbolises the kindness and generosity of the people living in the village. This traditional Malay Archipelago hospitality has been in place for centuries, and such practices are still rooted within local communities. Although a number of traditions are slowly vanishing, people adapt and continue them in other ways so that traditional hospitality is still very much evident, providing social bonding and community cohesion. Table 10.14 presents the summary of tourists’ feedbacks on their stay in GH with an indicator ID of tourists’ feedback intangible factors (TFITF).

Table 10. 14 The identified indicators for tourists feedbacks on GH

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions – Intangible factors</i>
TFITF1	The tourists recognised the importance of promoting TMRF in GH.
TFITF2	The tourists acknowledge that GH provides them with authentic TMRF and homemade kampong dishes.
TFITF3	The tourists remember <i>Kelamai</i> as one of the local dishes in GH. It shows that they can flag GH dishes according to their distinctiveness.

TFITF4	Some of the tourists acknowledged the great experience that they gained from the cooking demonstrations in GH, such as of <i>Kelamai</i> . However, there were some who were not aware of these cooking demonstrations. It shows that GH has not been promoting their TMRF-related events to tourists, as one of the primary activities in their homestay.
TFITF5	The host-guest relationship in GH is an unforgettable experience for the tourists.
TFITF6	Getting gifts from the host families on their last day at the homestay is one of the most cherished moments of their stay.

10.11 Theme 3: Recommendations and Revisit Intentions

The overall response to the interviews with the tourists about their recommendations of GH were somewhat surprising as 62% (8 out of 13) of them said they would not encourage their friends and families to visit this homestay (see Figure 10.16). However, the other 38% (7 out of 13) were delighted and had no reservations about recommending this homestay to their acquaintances. Half of those interviewed reported that they were not intending to recommend this homestay due to the lack of cleanliness and hygiene of some of the homestay providers in GH. Secondly, almost two-thirds of the participants (9 out of 13) indicated that they were frustrated that the water sports activities were not included in the homestay packages and therefore they would not propose this homestay. As a result, they had to spend additional money on recreational activities. Thirdly, the participants also revealed that they were unsure as to whether they would recommend this homestay as a result of the limited number of activities offered by the homestay. The activities, such as a demonstration of *Kelamai* and *Adet Bojojok*, need to be pre-arranged with the homestay coordinator, but for him to do this he needs a minimum number of tourists. Finally, the tourists noted that the providers should be aware of the current market for tourists, especially regarding the homestay activities, so that they can be more innovative in developing their products and devising creative activities according to tourists' interests. Additionally, there were some suggestions that the providers should improve the quality of the homestay for the tourist to come and visit their homestay programme in the future.

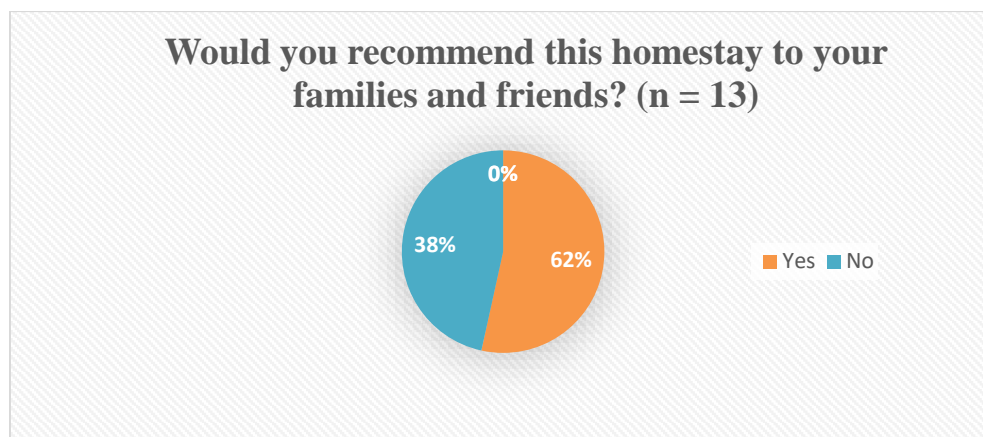


Figure 10. 16 Feedback from participants about their recommendations for GH programme

The participants also reported that the chances of them revisiting the homestay are rather low, as demonstrated in Figure 10.17. Only 6 out of 13 of those interviewed stated that they might come back to this homestay to revisit their foster parents as they felt a ‘belonging’ to this group of people. The other 7 (N=13) said that they might come to visit if the homestay providers determined to improve the quality of their homestay, most specifically the cleanliness and hygiene of their houses. Concerns regarding the quality and sanitation of GH were more prevalent in the findings of this study than other factors. One individual stated that he might visit GH again if the homestay could provide an affordable package for the water sports and the cultural experience activities. He believed that the homestay will be viable in the future if they devise budget packages for students to experience the recreational activities.

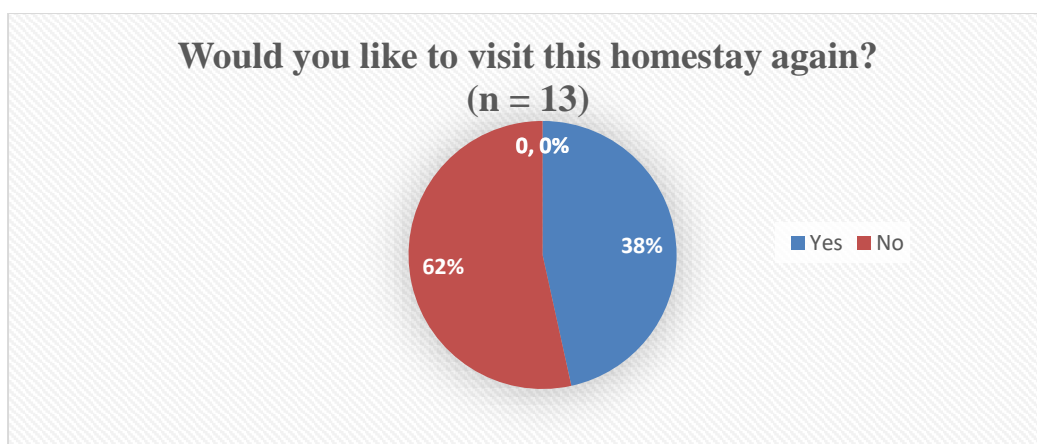


Figure 10. 17 Feedback from the participants about their revisit intentions

Finally, Table 10.15 outlines the identified indicators for the tourist's recommendations of GH with indicator ID of tourists' feedback recommendations (TFR).

Table 10. 15 The identified indicators for tourists' recommendations of GH

<i>Indicator ID</i>	<i>Indicator Descriptions – Recommendation and revisits intention</i>
TFR1	62% of the tourists were happy to recommend GH to their family and friends due to the cultural experiences, whereas another 38% would not.
TFR2	50% of the tourists stated that cleanliness and hygiene are amongst the factors for them to not recommend this homestay to others.
TFR3	69% of the tourists said they were not very happy with the fact that water sports activities are not included as part of GH homestay package.
TFR4	The limited activities available in the package is one of the factors of why they would not recommend this homestay to others. They also suggested for GH to create more exciting activities for tourists.
TFR5	46% of the tourists reported that they would revisit GH to meet their foster parents.
TFR6	The tourists suggested for GH to revise the price of the packages, for instance, by including water sports activities in the package to attract students to come and visit their homestay.
TFR7	The tourists also suggested for GH to improve the quality of their homestay to attract more tourists in the future.

10.12 Summary

The results from case study 2 were obtained based on the feedbacks given by tourists visiting GH. A majority of the tourists visiting GH suggested that improvements should be made in the physical aspects of the homestay programmes, which include but were not limited to amenities and services, as well as the cleanliness and hygiene of the homestay providers' private homes. The lack of promotion and marketing of their homestay programme have also been highlighted by the tourists. The tourists highlighted that the significant experience of them staying in GH is very much attributed to their intangible dimensions. The traditional Malay food and kampong experience are the elements of the homestay that are most cherished by the tourists. They commented that the homestay providers should be more active and innovative in portraying the value of their traditional Rawa food (TRF), as it is the main culinary attraction for the homestay. In addition, there is a general sense among tourists that the homestay experience is somewhat artificial and staged like *Kelamai*-making, and does not allow them to

genuinely interact, however fleetingly, with the local people and their ways of life.

In GH case, tourists noted that they felt the overriding aim of the homestay providers and associated activities was not to showcase their TMF traditions but rather to make a profit in any way possible and as quickly as possible. In turn, some tourists feel that they were seen as merely individuals on a 'conveyor belt' of tourists with money in their pockets rather than as potential contributors to the survival of local food traditions and ways of life. Naturally, such an overriding sensation will have detrimental effects on their revisit intentions and recommendations to visit GH.

Moreover, they believe that the homestay programme could be more successful if the homestay providers are proactive in building their homestay's image and identity concerning Rawa culinary culture and heritage. However, it was also found that the tourists were not sure if they have the intention of coming back to GH, as there are not many activities organised in the homestay that could provide them with a richer and a more authentic homestay experience. They commented that they have to pay extra money for some of the authentic experiences, such as for the cultural performances of Adet Bojolak. Having to pay extra for what is supposed to be included as the whole programme is the main factor that discourage the tourists from returning to GH. Furthermore, they were also not keen to recommend GH to their family and friends, as it is only offering a standard homestay package of accommodation that includes meals. Apart from that, there are not many activities that they can participate in, in this homestay.

Chapter 11. Discussion, Analysis and Synthesis

11.1 Introduction

The following section presents a total of four organising themes to conclude the thematic network analysis. It starts with a brief description of data and evidence collected from the study with supporting literature to show that traditional Malay food (TMF) has a significant influence on the homestay programme in Malaysia. The identified themes are structured using an adapted conceptual framework (after Kayat 2014) as is shown below. Table 11.1 presented an illustration of the results and findings of the qualitative analysis based from the two group of themes; a) basic themes; and organising themes followed by the identified sub-themes as presented in Chapter 7, 8, 9 and 10. The findings of the qualitative analysis from Chapter 7, 8, 9 and 10 are merged and compared into one overall understanding to effectively address the research question and derive a conclusion.

Table 11. 1 Basic and Organising Themes of the Thematic Analysis

Basic Themes	Organising Themes
Stakeholders	
1] Homestay provider’s roles in promoting TMF and homestay	
2] Assessment of KBH to be developed as a culinary tourism homestay	
3] Barriers faced by KBH in developing its culinary tourism	
4] The potential of KBH to be developed as a culinary tourism destination	
Case Study 1 – KBH	
1] Homestay provider’s roles in promoting TMF and homestay	
2] Assessment of KBH to be developed as a culinary tourism homestay	
3] Barriers faced by KBH in developing its culinary tourism	
4] The potential of KBH to be developed as a culinary tourism destination	
Case Study 1 – GH	
1] Homestay provider’s roles in promoting TMF and homestay	
2] Assessment of GH to be developed as a culinary tourism homestay	
3] Barriers faced by homestay providers in GH	
4] The potential of GH to be developed as a culinary tourism destination	
Tourists – KBH and GH	
1. The purpose for visiting	
2. Feedback of the homestay tourists	
3. Recommendations and revisits intention	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The role of the homestay programme in promoting traditional Malay food 2. TMF as an element for homestay branding 3. Enforcement by the primary stakeholders 4. Safeguarding TMF in the homestay programme

11.2 Thematic Analysis and Results

From the analysis and interpretation of results in previous chapters, this study presents a proposed framework for promoting and safeguarding TMF in the homestay programme in Malaysia adapted from Kayat (2014, see Figure 11.1). Kayat suggested six dimensions: 1) community involvement; 2) empowerment and leadership; 3) benefits to the community; 4) collaboration and networking; 5) marketing and promotion, and; 6) conservation contributing to sustainable development in the community-based rural tourism. However, the results here recognise several more components to add to the framework for promoting and safeguarding TMF in the homestay programme. This study suggests adding four additional dimensions to the structure proposed by Kayat (2014), which may help the homestay providers, primary stakeholders (government and non-governmental organisations (NGO's), tourists and all the related parties in planning and developing the homestay TMF in the future (see Table 11.1, the organising themes). The suggested four dimensions are:

- The role of the homestay programme in promoting TMF;
- TMF as an element for homestay branding;
- Enforcement in upholding TMF at the homestay programme;
- Safeguarding TMF in the homestay programme.

Adding them to Kayat's framework provides a holistic understanding of the contribution of TMF to the homestay programme.

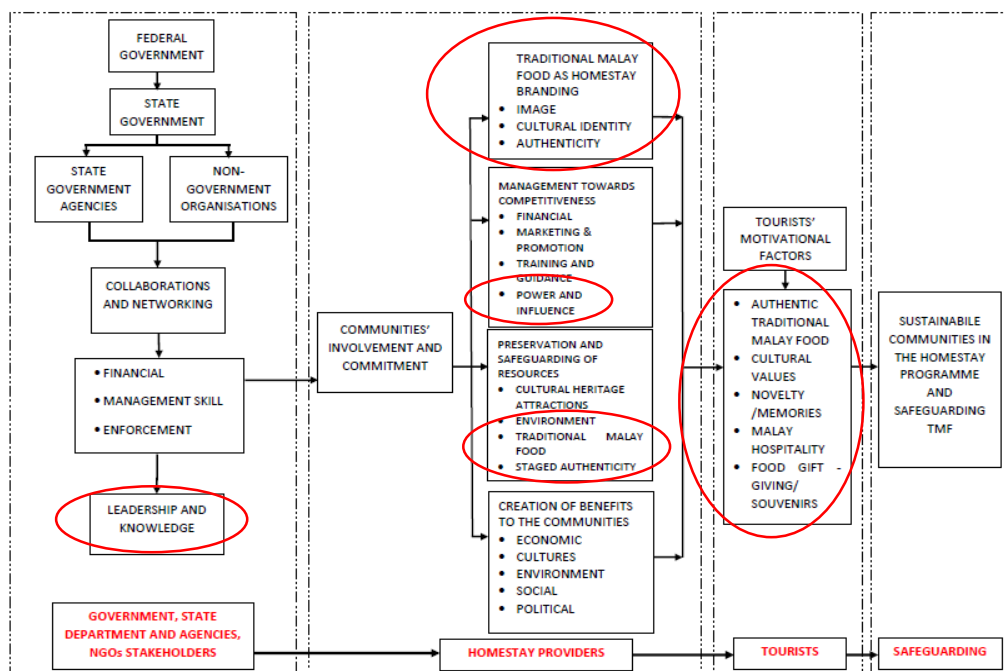


Figure 11. 1 Proposed sustainability framework for the homestay programme in Malaysia (Adapted from Kayat 2014)

11.3 Theme 1: The Role of the Homestay Programme in Promoting Traditional Malay Food

This study showed that TMF in the homestay programme received a low level of publicity from primary stakeholders, homestay organisations, and other stakeholders. Six elements have been identified as contributing to this this:

1. TMF is not a primary motivation for tourists to visit the homestay programme;
2. TMF has been recognised as a supplementary product;
3. Lack of awareness from the homestay providers in Gopeng Homestay (GH) to promote TMF;
4. Lack of initiative to build a clear image for TMF in the homestay programme;
5. Homestay programmes are not using TMF as a platform for promotion;
6. The strategy to promote TMF to tourists using the concept of staged authenticity.

11.3.1 TMF is not a Primary Motivation for Tourists to Visit the Homestay Programme

Tourists who visited GH and Kampong Beng Homestay (KBH) were not motivated primarily by TMF. Their responses to the question ‘What are the main reasons for your visit to this homestay?’ were:

“I came here for water rafting activities with my friends. We have done some research from the website and found that accommodation here is cheaper than other places.” (Gopeng Tourist 2, Male, 20, Student)

“I am here with my fishing group. We knew about KBH from our other social networks. We choose to come here for fishing because the place is so quiet” (Kampong Beng Tourist 5, Female, 44, Research Assistant)

“We need to do our food and culture assignment given by our lecturer. After a few selections, we decided to come here as it is near to Lake Raban where we have to ride the small boat to go to the homestay.” (KBT12, Female, 24, Student)

In GH 62% (N=13) of tourists came to the homestay mainly for leisure and recreational activities, 15% (N=13) for educational experiences while 8% (N=13) for the food. The results from GH were similar. In the interviews, 50% (N=20) of tourists indicated that they came to KBH for a vacation or relaxation. Subsequently, 30% tourists (N=20) specified that the second purpose for the visit was for educational purposes. Again, 20% tourists said they were in KBH for a cultural holiday and to experience the homestay TMF. It must be noted that half the tourists, (10, N=20) in KBH were students. Similar results were collected in GH as 54% (N=13) of tourists were also students from nearby colleges who came for recreational activities.

The outcomes suggested that students visited these two homestay programmes because of affordable accommodation that included meals. Yusof *et al.*, (2014), concluded that the majority of tourists who came to the homestay programme were young people. A possible explanation for this might be that the younger generation are eager to explore new experiences because they are frequently travelling compared to older people (Izzat and Othman, 2009). In

another study, Saraithong and Chanchaoenchai (2011) noted that Thai homestay business received a high level of satisfaction from well-educated and young travellers from ages 21 to 41. They also mentioned that this age group tend to be friendly, open-minded and easily adjusted to the new environment and experience. The results may be explained by the fact the homestay programme offers cultural events and activities that also fit the characteristics of this type of age group.

The homestay programme in Malaysia may be viewed as being important for young people because it is affordable and provides an attractive cultural experience. This observation, while preliminary, suggests students were attracted to visit the homestay programme due to their preference for budget accommodation, flexible travel schedules, and being different from their usual holiday (Haigh, 1995). Therefore, the homestay programme in Malaysia should focus upon this age group as they are eager to seek new experiences and may have different views about experiencing different foods.

11.3.2 TMF has been Recognised as a Supplementary Product

The analysis identified local communities in GH and KBH which recognised the importance of promoting TMF, and thus safeguarding this cultural heritage through the homestay programme. However, looking at the results given by the primary stakeholders, homestay providers, and tourists, the meaning of cultural heritage is always associated with other cultural assets or activities in the rural areas such as kite flying, fishing, village tours, etc. Primary Stakeholder 14 (Female, 29, travel and tour agencies) stated:

“Homestay must have other primary elements to attract tourists to visit them. Besides food and accommodation, the homestay needs to have eye-catching activities like kite-flying for tourists to participate.”

“The reason tourists come here is to join the water rafting activities or going to the cave. We have a lot of activities in this homestay like fishing, but the tourists said, they want to experience something adventurous.” (Gopeng Homestay Provider 9, Female, 63, Housewife)

“Usually, I will invite the tourists (especially men) to join me for fishing. The women normally will be in the kitchen with my wife, chit-chatting and cooking the food. But for the men, I have to add another activity to suit their interest. So I take them for a village tour to expose them to the beauty of our traditional village.” (Primary Stakeholder 11, Male, 67, Coordinator and Head of Village)

TMF is not regarded as one of the significant factors in providing important experiences for tourists. None of the homestay providers described TMF as the core activity preferred by tourists in their homestay programme. The discussion in Chapter 2 demonstrated that TMF elements had not been mentioned explicitly in the guidelines developed by MOTAC. The evidence also showed that there were no specific guidelines to guide the homestay providers to explore and exploit TMF but instead directed them to focus more on products and activities such as water sports activities in GH and fishing activities in KBH. In addition, the results found that the majority of participants related the activities of TMF in the homestay as merely eating and cooking. This is limited to what TMF can offer with regard to other food-related products and activities in the homestay programme. Besides, the analysis shows that the preservation of TMF in the homestay programme was characterised by the collective work and practices of the homestay providers. The interconnections were naturally expressed by the use of TMF in the homestay products and activities. The discussion of KBH in Chapter 8 shows how the homestay providers can utilise TMF by showcasing the uniqueness of their culinary culture. Whereas in Chapter 9, the exclusivity of culinary activities in *Adet Bojojok* ceremonies established that GH should exploit these elements to provide tourists with more understanding about their culture and food-related events.

Additionally, the results also show the inclusion of TMF products and activities in GH and KBH consequently has an impact to the homestay programme. KBH stated the business they make through local food products such as traditional fermented fish contributed to the development of their small businesses. Moreover, by showcasing the uniqueness of their homestay by providing TMF through the image of kampong food, this homestay has been invited by the local state of Lenggong to demonstrate their TMF dishes to the

public in the Lenggong Food Festival organised by the National Heritage Department of Malaysia. However, the homestay providers stated that they need to cooperate and actively participate in the programme to gain more benefits, and thus preserve and safeguard their TMF. On the contrary, the homestay providers in GH revealed after a declining number of tourists, the homestay programme was not making a profit, resulting in small businesses like local food products shutting down entirely. As a result, the providers were demoralised and unlikely to continue with the homestay programme. The findings from this study support Mohd Nor and Kayat (2010) and Nor and Awang (n.d) who stated that local communities are more reluctant to give full commitment when they see little benefit to be gained from the programme.

11.3.3 Lack of Awareness from the Homestay Providers in Gopeng Homestay (GH) to Promote TMF

The current study has found that the reason behind GH homestay providers failing to explore and exploit the advantages they can gain from TMF was due to their lack of awareness of the interests of visitors. The response from GHP5 (Female, 60, Pensioner), for example, stated:

“Some of the tourists prefer to eat simple food because they are in a hurry. So, I always asked them what kind of food they would like to eat, and I’ll cook for them. If I cook the food they don’t like, then it will go to the bin.”

GH providers assumed that the tourists were not interested in eating unfamiliar food like traditional Rawa food (TRF). A possible explanation for this might be that GH homestay providers could not see the benefits of promoting TMF to the tourists. On a comparative basis, the findings from KBH providers revealed they have great awareness about the importance of TMF. They refer to TMF in KBH as local kampong food specialising in fresh-water fish from Lake Raban. Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 2 (Female, 57, Businesswomen) for instance, noted:

“We have one dish called roasted bamboo pith salad. The bamboo is only available in the nearby forest. It is delicious, but only the experienced know which bamboo to choose and how to cut and slice it for cooking.”

The above example shows that the KBH provider was enthusiastic to enlighten tourists about the local ingredients taken from natural resources. Additionally, the providers have shown a tendency to promote the consumption of local produce in their homestay programme. The findings also demonstrated that the providers in KBH explore and exploit their TMF, which they knew is their most significant tourism opportunity. Moreover, it indicates that KBH providers have a sense of local pride and ownership towards their TMF, and due to that reason, they are eager to promote it to the tourists. These results corroborate with the findings of Suarathana *et al.*, (2015) in exploring the community participation in tourism village: the degree of village communities involvement started when they empowered the natural environment activities such as women groups are advised to take advantage of local tubers for local food, farmer groups in-charge in agriculture and plantations thereby to boost the social-economic impact of their village. This finding is in agreement with Kayat (2010); Pusiran and Xiao (2013) and Hamzah (2010) that empowerment success and failure of homestay programmes depends on the level of benefits received by the local communities.

Furthermore, Prabhakaran *et al.*, (2014) believe that the community deserve wider benefits from tourism such as environmental, social, political and cultural benefits as received by KBH. In the same vein, Pusiran and Xiao (2013) stated that to achieve equal benefits, the local people within the community must be fully responsible for the development and the tourism product on their sites. Thus, with full empowerment from the local community in strengthening their sense of belonging towards TMF in their homestay programme, they are empowered enough in managing the food tourism development in their area. Above all, the food tourism strategy needs to fit the inspiration and needs of the local communities as they are the activators of the programme.

11.3.4 Lack of Initiative to Build a Clear Image for TMF in the Homestay Programme

On the question of lack of initiative to build a clear image for TMF in GH and KBH, this study found that the efforts of the providers and the primary stakeholders were not congruent. In GH, for example, the providers failed to realise the importance of having a distinctive image for their TRF as part of the homestay destination. Whereas, the results in KBH shows that the providers noticed the importance of having distinctive value for their local food but had not realised that they have the responsibility to portray it to the tourists as the main attractions. Moreover, the results also shown that the image and identity of TMF in these two homestay programmes does not stand alone as a leading product and to some degree is overshadowed by other products. However, both homestays managed to symbolise the identity of its village and communities.

In discussing with tourists about the GH programme offering TRF as their unique selling point for local cuisine, tourists noted there was no publicity about the food. They observed TRF is unique and by providing this TMF to the tourists, it could enrich their culinary experience and enjoyment of the whole visit. As GT2 (Male, 20, Student) said:

“I never heard about TRF before? It is unique when I’d heard they have this food in this homestay. Why they never promote it to the public?”

Conversely, my interview with another tourist revealed some homestay providers in GH were very excited about sharing TRF with tourists. However, providers only share information verbally. There were no hands-on presentation by the providers in preparing and cooking this traditional food. 90% (N=13) of tourists stated that the homestay programme should showcase TRF as a major unique selling point as these factors are critical in their homestay evaluation. The food has been perceived as unique by tourists, and its characteristics will enhance the GH programme.

Similarly, providers in KBH also noted that the primary stakeholders did not widely publicise the image of their kampong food to tourists homestay programme. KBHP4 (Female, 64, Businesswomen) stated:

“Usually, the tourists knew KBH is a traditional village, but they have no idea what kind of food we are going to prepare and cook for them. The only thing they knew is, it must be a home-cooked kampong food.”

The above quotes may explain that there is not enough publicity given to the TMF in GH and KBH from the homestay organisations and local authorities. There are, however, several explanations for these results. Firstly, this study establishes that TMF would have the potential to contribute to the tourist overall culinary experiences in the homestay programme if the relevant parties especially government and homestay organisations, working with the proper marketing and promotional methods, publicise TMF properly. Secondly, GH and KBH clearly showed they failed to use the image of their TMF to signal food distinctiveness to their prospective tourists. Lastly, the evidence shows homestay providers in GH and KBH programme ineffectively exploited the potential of their TMF by connecting the resources to the place and the people within the area.

Therefore, these results suggested TMF has the potential to benefit from the growing niche of culinary tourists. However, to brand the homestay destination using TMF requires collective work from all related tourism bodies, especially the primary stakeholders and the local communities, as the process requires significant investment (Kayat, 2008). Mohd Yusof and Ismail (2015) suggested that the primary stakeholders need to be involved in creating TMF brand identity development particularly for homestays in rural areas as the image projection to the visitors needs to be congruent with the tourists' expectations. Homestay providers also need to develop insights into the factors influencing tourists' choice of homestay so they could position their product, especially food, to create a distinct image in the potential tourists' mind (Kimaiga, 2015). A comparison then needs to be made with the intended TMF brand identity. The whole process, therefore, requires the cooperation of primary stakeholders' and homestay providers to achieve effective homestay TMF destination branding. For

that reason, enforcement is needed to enhance the sustainability of this cultural tourism product in Malaysia. Therefore, these results suggested TMF has the potential to benefit from the growing niche of culinary tourists. However, to brand the homestay destination using TMF requires collective work from all related tourism bodies, especially the primary stakeholders and the local communities, as the process requires significant investment (Kayat, 2008). Mohd Yusof and Ismail (2015) suggested that the primary stakeholders need to be involved in creating TMF brand identity development particularly for homestays in rural areas as the image projection to the visitors needs to be congruent with the tourists' expectations. The homestay providers also need to develop insights into the factors influencing the tourists' choice of homestay so they could position their product, especially food, to create a distinct image in the potential tourists' mind (Kimaiga, 2015). A comparison then needs to be made with the intended TMF brand identity. The whole process, therefore, requires the cooperation of primary stakeholders' and homestay providers to achieve effective homestay TMF destination branding. For that reason, enforcement is needed to enhance the sustainability of this cultural tourism product in Malaysia.

11.3.5 Homestay Programmes are not using TMF as a Platform for Promotion

Apart from the unique characteristics of TMF in both homestays, senior homestay providers demonstrated how life experiences, knowledge, and skills may support the provision of TMF to tourists. Most of the providers have been inspired to share their TMF preparation, cooking, and recipes in the interviews. They have also shared traditional food knowledge, such as the benefits of fresh herbs and planted vegetables for the tourists, as well as medicinal properties. In KBH, KBHP5 showed me how to use a firewood stove, several traditional Malay tools, and equipment located in her backyard that she still keeps in her possession. She told me that these skills are no longer practiced among the younger generation. She noted:

“The young people nowadays have never seen the firewood stoves. Do you know how to use it? [Asking the author]. I baked the cake you ate just now with this stove. If I want to smoke my fish, I will put it on top of this stove. I use this stove since I was twelve years old. My father made this for me.”
(KBHP5, Female, 65, Pensioner)

The firewood stove provided a sense of pride and attachment to her memories of the past, and toward the future. She stated that the firewood stove was demonstrated to the UNESCO delegation, after Lenggong had been inscribed as a World Heritage Site. Established homestay providers use their homestay as a platform to share information about the knowledge and skills in preparing and cooking TMF. In this context, homestay providers in KBH had seen TMF knowledge as a piece of information they could share with tourists. For this reason, the homestay providers in KBH preferred their homestay programme to be recognised as traditional and authentic, which would represent their memories, identity, life experience, and achievement. Homestay providers in GH associated their TMF practices with old recipe tips.

“Rawa people only use bones and head of the salted Queen Fish or Mackerel in making Jackfruit yellow dishes. We prefer to eat the bones instead of the fish flesh. The bones have to be grilled first, and then we add to the cooking. But these days, the young generation doesn’t know about these secret tips.” (GHP10, Female, 84, Housewife)

“This recipe is handed down from my great-grandmother. It is our family recipes tradition. Usually, we fry the anchovies first to get rid of the bad smell and then use the same oil to sauté the pounded shallots, bird’s eye chillies, and turmeric. I usually can sense the difference because I knew some people instantly add in the anchovies to the cooking without fried it first. It tastes bad.” (GHP2, Female, 63, Religious teacher)

On the other hand, my observation at provider GHP4’s home showed that a lack of constant practice in cooking TRF will gradually affect the knowledge and skills of households in the future. For example, when the provider was preparing TRF, she was being helped by her mother in the kitchen. However, I noticed that she was unsure of the measurement for the ingredients to be used in the cooking because she kept on asking her mother. Finally, she confessed to me that it was her first-time cooking TRF. She remarked:

“Usually, my parents cook TRF dishes for us. But I know the recipe because I always helped them in the kitchen. But in practice, this is my first attempt at cooking these dishes. It tastes good right? So, my cooking is not bad [laughing]?” (GHP4, Female, 54, Businesswoman)

The above examples from GH providers show that knowledge in preparing and cooking TRF has slowly eroded due to the lack of practice by new generations in the family. The outcomes of this study matched those observed by Wright *et al.* (2012), in that modernisation and urbanisation continue to erode traditional extended family practices, particularly in cooking TRF. The traditional knowledge belonging to these homestay providers represents the collected wisdom of many generations of people who have learned how to produce and prepare food, and pass on their skills not only in food provisioning but also in other elements. The work of these people (usually women) is often unrecognised and undocumented (Kwik, 2008). Therefore, this study suggests the sharing of traditional food knowledge through informal education, which could promote awareness among younger generation in the transmission and continuity of this cultural understanding.

11.3.6 The Strategy to Promote TMF to Tourists using the Concept of Staged Authenticity.

Although Rawa immigrants dominate the population of residents in GH, it is difficult to eat traditional Rawa food (TRF) in GH due to the conflict of interest between the original Malay community and the Rawa community. Besides, it was also found that the majority of the homestay providers in GH were not keen to offer traditional Rawa food (TRF) to the tourists (see section 11.5.1 on page 390), due to the lack of sense of identity among the Rawa community. Surprisingly, TRF or other products such as *Kelamai*, were no longer offered or demonstrated by the homestay providers to the tourists in the homestay. Ironically, GH has their local cuisine that could be used as an attraction. However, they did not realise the importance of having a specific culinary brand to create a distinctive feature for their homestay programme through local food consumption, as stated by GHP7 (Female, 69, Housewife):

“We have a few ethnic groups in this homestay, such as the original Malay community from Perak and the Rawa community. How do you want us to promote it? We are not Rawas and are not the expert in cooking Rawa cuisines. But, because we are in the same village as the Rawas, thus we must promote their food? Is it enough to promote other ethnic’s cuisines to the tourists without having the same passion as the other Rawas? I’m sorry. We don’t have an answer for that.”

Apart from that, there is also some evidence from the study that tourists are confused about what TRF is (see section 11.3.3 on page 373). The tourists admitted that the food offered by the homestay providers in GH was influenced by what they are expected to eat during their stay in the homestay. The tourists also assumed that the food served to them in GH are the local cuisine of the village, based on the promotion of the homestay (see section 11.4.1 on page 382). They believed that the food they consumed in GH was authentic and represented the local TMF based on the cultural and natural surroundings of GH. This finding further supports the idea of Richards (2014) about tourists’ understanding of authenticity in consuming local heritage food, and thus explaining the reason for the lack of discussion on the meaning of authenticity. Richards highlighted that many tourists who are in search of authentic local or regional food have a different idea and understanding of what is authentic, as compared to the local people. Research conducted in Santiago proved that various tourists’ groups have a distinctive profile of eating in terms of the food they expected to eat, and which they eventually ended up eating (Richards, 2014). The present findings are consistent with other research, which found that some of the real, local favourites are discovered by tourists themselves and not promoted directly by the locals (Avieli, 2015). Avieli also supports the notion that the invention of culinary heritage is not merely a staged and superficial phenomenon, but a self-generating multi-directional process that influences and alters the local culinary environment.

In another study, it is interesting to note how KBH managed to create a specific culinary brand known as lake food or village food together with the customised authenticity in their rural village in an overtly staged or constructed context. Offering tourists home cooked food comprised of freshwater fish (that they caught from the lake) accompanied with fresh-picked Malay herbs and

vegetables in a traditional village scenery provides the tourists with a glimpse of authenticity. This shows that KBH is promoting its rural identity through food-related practice. At the same time, providers also encourage tourists to pursue and embrace the intersection of food and tourism, based upon their natural capital and related food-cultural activities in the homestay. These findings confirm the association of the idea of Wang (2007), which explained that tourists who are looking for elements of home-oriented dimension will find that staged authenticity is acceptable and satisfactory. In that study, Wang also highlighted that the tourists are not only yearning for an exotic place that can provide differences, uniqueness, or artistic enjoyment, but also the sense of being at home. The homestay providers in KBH stated that:

“We noticed that most of our tourists have a greater desire to escape the pressure of urban life. Thus, we try to release their pressures by offering the elements of home, but in a village background together with freshly home-cooked meals in a traditional setting.” (KBHP13, Female, 60, Housewife).

“The tourists are looking for something that reminds them of traditional Malay culture in a village that they can remember as a past nostalgia. They are excited, especially when they visit the village communities. It reminds them of the strong ties among the neighbourhoods that have only been nurtured and practiced in the village.” (KBHP5, Female, 65, Pensioner).

“Some of the tourists admitted that they have heard about the village life from their parents, but never had a chance to experience it. That is why when they came to our homestay, they feel like they were at home, while having a strong connection with the village communities.” (KBHP2, Female, 57, Businesswomen).

The above three statements given by the homestay providers in KBH reflect that they managed to satisfy the tourists' feeling from being in an 'unfamiliar place' to 'feeling at home'. As described by Wang (2017), authenticity is not merely defined by significantly hoping to find comfort, privacy, home-likeness, familiarity, authentic self, or even sometimes self-reversals or inversions in the place that they travel to, but it also represents the comfortable sense of belonging to the unfamiliar home. These ideas similarly support the study by Kontogeorgopoulos *et al.*, (2015), revealing that tourists who stayed in

homestays in rural areas in Thailand, were excited with the glimpse into the facets of Thai life, as this alternative tourism experiences provided them with a certain level of authenticity. This study observed the elements of sharing a house with tourists are not only the major factor that makes the tourists feel at home, but that the staged authenticity could also be one that can lead to the production of tourist's perception of customised authenticity.

11.4 Theme 2: TMF as an Element for Homestay Branding

The second element added to the framework is the use of TMF for homestay branding. It is important to include tourists' motivational factors in consuming TMF to the framework. Five aspects of the homestay programme should be focused upon:

1. Authentic TMF experience;
2. Cultural values;
3. Novelty/Positive memories;
4. Malay hospitality;
5. Food gift-giving/souvenirs.

These motivational factors are also consistent with those identified by Kim *et al.* (2009), who examined the factors that influenced consumption of local food by tourists. Several elements are also consistent with results found by Sthapit (2017). By acknowledging the importance of tourists' feedback on their satisfaction in consuming TMF, homestays could focus upon those aspects that contribute to the tourists' food experience.

11.4.1 Authentic TMF Experience

Tourists in GH and KBH noted that homestay providers served fresh Malay produce for lunch and dinner. In KBH, one of the tourists noted that most of the Malay herbs served by the providers were rarely found in the market anymore, so they were excited when the herbs could be easily found in these homestays. 80% tourists (N=20) said that they could relate to the cultural identity

of people in rural areas when they consumed fresh Malay produce in KBH. One of the homestay providers (KBHP1) also revealed a similar feedback, as one the tourists asked her to serve only Malay produce and *kampong* food throughout their stay. The findings are consistent with tourists' feedback in GH, as they also revealed to have been intrigued to eat TMF that connected them with an image of a traditional village. They described the food served in GH as mostly TMF, with 54% tourists (N=13) noting that their host family had cooked TRF for them. Even though there was an inconsistency between TMF and TRF prepared and served by homestay providers in GH, the tourists admitted that GH represents the local cuisine in a rural village. They also linked TMF in these homestays as authentic, i.e. prepared using Malay ingredients, herbs, spices, and self-produced *kampong* food. When tourists were asked about the meaning of this description, they noted that *kampong* food is usually an elaborately prepared dish, the best home-cooked dish that instils values, such as the connection among family members. These findings can also be linked to the authentic experience described by KBH tourists, especially when they said that certain food is no longer easy to find in the city, such as pounded chilli mixed with *Tempoyak*, Malay fresh produce, and so forth. One tourist responded:

“Tempoyak (fermented durians) is seasonal food, and I can't eat it because it was not always available in the market. But in this homestay, I can eat heavenly chilli pounded mixed with Tempoyak.” (KBT10, Female, 21, Student)

Some of the tourists mentioned that they ate local food they had never tasted before, such as *Asom Ikan Keli* in GH, and *Belotak* and *Umbut Bayas* in KBH. They also described the food in these homestays as traditional *kampong* food. The findings are consistent with the homestay providers in GH who also revealed that they had cooked TMF with a traditional village approach. Some of the homestay providers utilised their back garden for food resources. They revealed that tourists were thrilled to pick the herbs and vegetables for their lunch and dinner. They were also happy to share the types of plant species grown in the garden and informed the tourists about the benefits of those plant. One provider noted:

“I always share with tourists about the medicinal plants like traditional Malay herbs. I remembered one day, one tourist had rashes on his skin’s surface after they came back from waterfalls. I used this plant (while showed me the plants) to rubbed on his skin. After he showered, all the rashes were all gone.” (KBHP13, Female, 60, Housewife)

TMF in the homestay programme could be enhanced with other elements, such as the garden utilised by homestay providers as a resource for food, medicine, cosmetics, and so forth. These results also reflect those of Mura (2015), that *kampong* food represents the characteristics of being simple, yet tasteful. Similar terms such as ‘original’ and ‘authentic Malaysian food’ also emerged in these findings.

Additionally, these homestay providers could progress beyond the description of a provider with full board meals or a tour guide for tourists. The homestay providers have shown their ability to inform tourists about the benefits of Malay herbs and plants, histories of TRF, such as *Kelamai*, and the taboo associated with this food. However, the tourists were domestic, so this potential might be limited. Nevertheless, homestay organisations and primary stakeholders should consider this factor as important.

11.4.2 Cultural Values

The majority of tourists viewed their TMF experience in GH and KBH as improving their cultural understanding of local communities. Tourists mentioned the cultural aspects of food experiences in GH and KBH as meaningful. For example, they cited the traditional Malay table manners, whereby TMF was laid on a square tablecloth with an old-style Malay silver jug to wash their right hand before and after eating. The tourists also remarked that sitting on a floor mat was significant as many modern households no longer practice this. However, PS3 noted that homestays in Malaysia gradually neglect these elements as the main features for their programme. He mentioned:

“It is about time for the homestay programme in Malaysia to asserting space for the recovery and renewal of traditional Malay practices. Tourists come to the homestay to see these elements and homestay have to convey the image of traditional kampong. Let the tourists engage with the local communities so they can experience the kampong life.” (PS3, Male, 30, NGO 2)

Undoubtedly, this is one of the significant values that homestays should be presenting to tourists: the traditional way of living in a rural village. A presentation of cultural values could enhance the overall meal experience of tourists in the homestay programme. The results can also be used as a strategy for homestay organisations to promote TMF in the food tourism niche market. As Okumus *et al.* (2007) remarked, food can be a colourful image for tourists to retain information of a particular destination, and through eating local food, tourists can experience a truly authentic cultural tradition for a long-lasting memory on a specific destination. Adzahan and Karim (2012) concluded that images that meet tourists’ expectations will satisfy them, and in return will motivate repeat visits. Thus, they will most likely recommend this homestay programme to their family and friends. As noted by Kwik (2008), the traditional value can fade from households and communities, as regional food systems and cultures change with pressures from modernisation. Therefore, by asserting the element of Malay cultural values by presenting TMF in the homestay programme, tourists could learn about the social practices of the rural people through informal cultural education in the homestay. After all, the homestay programme could also preserve cultural heritage from becoming lost by continuously sharing this cultural knowledge with tourists.

11.4.3 Novelty/ Positive Memories

Topics discussed by tourists include the physical environment of GH and KBH. TMF Homestays have been connected to the image of a traditional village setting as described by 50% (N=20) of tourists in KBH and 31% tourists (N=13) in GH. Subsequently, this image has also significantly contributed to memorable experiences in consuming TMF in homestay programmes on top of enhancing their overall experience. The physical environment of a Malay village in the

countryside, with a rustic village setting surrounded by lush tranquil forest, is mentioned by tourists as another element that adds to their overall satisfaction. For example, the position of KBH situated in the rural areas of Lenggong along Lake Raban contributes to the development of satisfaction in consuming TMF in the homestay programme. When tourists mentioned that the homestay providers caught freshwater fish from the lake using a small boat and served them as lunch or dinner, it signifies TMF in KBH has distinctive characteristics around their physical environment. Tourists predominantly associated their TMF experience with this sort of novelty. Tourists also mentioned riding a small boat to another KBH village to attend prayer and feast activity by one of the homestay provider's relatives. He noted:

“The food was amazing as all of the villagers worked together to prepared, cooked and served it to the guest. I remember attending this kind of event with my father in my grandmother's village when I was a little kid.” (KBT16, Male, 27, Lecturer)

These elements were interesting as he did not expect that the villagers still cook and prepare food for their communal activities. He also recognised that the act of communal activities centred on TMF strengthen the relationship amongst villagers in KBH. The tourists perceived this as a new experience, as they usually eat food prepared by caterers in many Malay events, such as wedding ceremonies in cities. In some cases, tourists mentioned local specialities in GH and KBH as extra value added to their overall experience in the homestay programme. For instance, KBT3 noted:

“I remember eating grilled freshwater fish with chilli condiments, and fresh Malay herbs and vegetables picked from the homestay provider's backyard garden as a reminiscence to village life. I went to the nearby forest with my foster family to get the bamboo shoots. That experience was amazing.” (KBT3, Female, 36, Lecturer)

The tourists also mentioned that their picking fresh herbs and vegetables from the provider's backyard garden and bamboo shoots from a nearby forest as an authentic experience, which enhanced their positive memories of consuming TMF. Meanwhile, another tourist noted that eating TRF, jackfruit cooked in yellow gravy coconut milk pounded with bird-eye chillies, in GH as being hot and spicy. She described:

“I like spicy Malay food especially dishes cooked with bird eyes chillies. But TRF in GH is spicy and only brave people can stand with the level of spiciness. Instead, it still tasted good and delicious.” (GT8, Female, 45, Businesswomen)

From the two examples provided, it appears that these local specialities are being remembered by tourists due to the uniqueness of their food attributes. Indeed, the tourists referred to their eating experience as sensory perceptions in both of the homestay programmes as part of their memories. The tastes of local food have had an impact on tourists’ TMF experience in the homestay programme, which could prolong their memories of that TMF. These results support the findings from previous research, which linked the sensory stimulation in food tourism and its influence on the memorability of the trip (Sthapit, 2017). Meanwhile, Ismail (2010) identified that physical environment contributes to the development of ‘identity of place’, as physical environment provides a location with individuality or distinction from other places. The identity of place represents a sense of belonging to the communities living in the area. Therefore, Everett and Aitchison (2008) encouraged a destination to promote tourists’ awareness by associating its location with local food. They explained that this valuable aspect will not only rectify a perceived loss of identity within the traditional village, but that it will also inspire the local communities to preserve their culture and traditions. These results explain the vital reasons for homestays to take advantage of their physical environment, by creating a unique selling point via TMF.

11.4.4 Malay Hospitality

Another attribute that contributes to this component is Malay hospitality. In the interviews with tourists living with host families in the homestay programmes, they stated that the Malay hospitality has enriched their TMF experience. The findings showed that the people living in the village still maintain a traditional way of life. They are humble and have welcomed tourists into their families. In GH, GT1 noted:

“The homestay providers were friendly. I was welcomed at every house when they knew I was a tourist. They even served food and drink when I dropped by at their house.” (GT1, Female, 37, Lecturer)

Another participant recollected her memories of the Malay hospitality of homestay providers in KBH. She said:

“My host families informed me, one of her neighbours, also a homestay provider, sells traditional food snacks to the tourists. I wanted to buy as a food souvenir for my family and friends. But, when I gave her RM50 (£9.43p) for the total amount of the payment, she only takes RM40 (£7.54p), and the rest is a gift for me.” (KBT15, Female, 26, Officer)

Tourists mentioned that eating together with host families, receiving food souvenirs, and picking herbs and vegetables from the garden and forest created a bond of kinship with their host families and enriched their TMF experience. This relationship is the primary factor for tourists to cherish the homestay programme in GH and KBH. These results are in line with Dube and Le Bel’s (2003); Fields’ (2003); Mynttinen *et al.*’s (2015); and Tung and Ritchie’s (2011) research. Hamzah *et al.* (2013) explained how family and kinship linkages are significant in the life of the Malays which reinforce their values, norms, and cultural identity. Therefore, highlighting these elements in the homestay concept could contribute to the development of the homestay programme as a tourism product in Malaysia by stressing the importance of hospitality and real interactions between the host and tourists in the homestay. The results from this study also show that providing local food to tourists helps to create a strong sense of place and destination for them.

11.4.5 Food Gift-Giving/Souvenirs

Tourists mentioned food souvenirs as the most memorable component in the homestay programme which affected their overall experience in consuming TMF. For example, a tourist in GH mentioned that his host family packed some TRF for him to take home. In addition, he was also given a souvenir as a memento of his holiday in the homestay. He stated:

“My host family gave me the traditional food snacks packed together with a towel embroidered with GH on my last day at the homestay programme. She told me, the towel would remind me of her and the homestay programme.” (GT11, Male, 22, Student)

Moreover, a majority of the tourists revealed that food souvenirs given by the homestay providers prolonged the memories of their food experience in the homestay. The response given by one tourist in KBH stated:

“The food souvenir given by my host family in KBH reminds me of her traditional tools in making this Malay cake. I still remember the way she showed me how to bake the cakes using firewood and how to control the fire with one particular stick. Glad to know KBH still uses interesting old methods and tools.” (KBT6, Female, 29, Librarian)

The tourists saw homestay providers as hospitable and that they still maintain traditional Malay cultural values. These results suggest that Malay hospitality is associated with the positive impact of TMF consumption in the homestay programme. Tourists in KBH frequently mentioned Malay table manners. They illustrated that the elements of sitting cross-legged on the floor mat and eating TMF with the right hand have enhanced their experience in the homestay programme. It is interesting to compare these results with Sthapit's (2017) as cited in Mill's (1990) who saw “hospitality, or the general feeling of welcome that tourists receive while visiting the area, is most often what is remembered after returning home.” Ariffin (2013) also noted that hospitality is defined as hosting acts motivated by the desire to please and regard the tourist genuinely as an individual, to create a memorable and meaningful experience for them. Tavakoli *et al.* (2017) proposed that the hospitality factor could lead to the provision of better tourist products and more meaningful tourist experience. This subject also plays an essential role in promoting the way of life of the Malay people, culture, and traditions in the homestay. Therefore, Malay hospitality and food gift-giving may well be a significant factor that contributes to the enrichment of tourists' TMF experience.

11.5 Theme 3: Enforcement by the Primary Stakeholders

The third factor that contributes to the framework is the enforcement by primary stakeholders such as the Federal government, departments, agencies, NGOs, and local authorities in guiding the homestay programme to build their TMF strategies. The enforcement theme is derived from several key attributes in the study, such as:

1. Inconsistent promotion of TMF in the GH programme;
2. TMF not being widely publicised in promotional materials;
3. The discrepancy between TMF offers and the actual homestay package;
4. Power and influence of the stakeholders towards the homestay programme.

11.5.1 Inconsistent Promotion of TMF in the GH Programme

Inconsistent promotion of TMF could have a significant influence on the homestay programme's efforts to build a good image. In GH, there were differences between the expressed objectives and their practices in providing TMF. About 8 of the homestay providers (N=15) promoted TRF as their main selling point, but the other 7 did not. Cross-analysis of interviews with tourists in GH also established that some of the providers had not served TRF as the main menu for tourists. One of the tourists commented:

"I only knew about TRF after been informed by another provider. She asked me if my foster family ever cooked Asom Iken Koli (catfish cooked in coconut gravy), Tempoyak Kacau (anchovies cooked with fermented durian) during my stay, which I never heard from them before." (GT13, Male, 21, Student)

Tourists admitted that they only knew about TRF after other homestay providers from Rawa families had introduced it to them. These findings were unexpected and suggested that the homestay providers in GH should re-establish TRF as their main unique selling point and keep on promoting this food as a strategic culinary appeal and cultural asset in their homestay programme. Moreover, the interviews with tourists in GH also revealed that the homestay

providers were not keen to cook TRF for them. This was supported by observations and interviews with the homestay providers in GH when 7 of the homestay providers admitted that they would not prepare TRF unless the tourists asked for it. Some of the providers admitted that they are not from the Rawa family and they will only make these dishes because of the demand from the programme. For example, GHP7 emphasised:

“I hardly cook TRF because my children are not really into it. They prefer to eat common Malay food. So, I cook it for the tourists if they asked me to. Of course, I need to know the tourist's preferences first before cooking this traditional food for them.” (GHP7, Female, 69, Housewife)

The findings from KBH were different. The tourists revealed that the homestay providers took the initiative to tell them about TMF. The providers asked the tourists if they would like to try *kampong* food, such as grill freshwater fish eaten with fresh herbs and chilli paste condiments. The tourists said that they were excited when the providers explained about the TMF. Observations and interviews with homestay providers also discovered the same information given by these tourists. The majority of the homestay providers in KBH made an effort to share their TMF with tourists. KBHP2 stated in the interview:

“The tourists usually come from the city. They hardly eat the kampong food especially the rare delicacies such as bamboo shoot, jackfruit, and tapioca. In KBH we served them this sort of food. We let them taste the original kampong food.” (KBHP2, Female, 57, Businesswomen)

Meanwhile, evidence from GH showed that some providers did not see TMF as a unique selling point. In contrast, the results from KBH showed that the providers were passionate to let the tourists taste and experience their *kampong* food. Therefore, tourists enjoyed the experience of eating TMF, particularly in the village surroundings. The results also showed disagreement among GH providers in determining that their TMF identity not only has contributed to the internal challenges in their homestay programme but also has safeguarded TMF in the future.

Even though TMF is rarely the principal reason for visiting the homestay destination, it can help to enhance the experience. Most often, TMF and other cultural food are only considered as part of the overall destination experience (Yayli *et al.*, 2017; Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Long, 2003; Du Rand and Heath, 2006). Kwik (2008) also noted that the act of consuming a homemade meal itself offers some level of exposure to traditional cuisines. Therefore, the reproduction of these meals through experimentation is suggested to be able to provide an avenue for the sharing of traditional food among the communities. In the context of this study, homestay providers in GH need to support each other in reconnecting their TRF through formal or informal community education to share such knowledge and skills, especially to the younger generation. Collective kitchen, neighbourhood produce markets, and community gardens, according to Kwik (2008), could empower the cultural communities to share their existing knowledge from their traditions. As Fox (2007) argued, the destination will not only depend on the uniqueness, attractiveness, and quality of local food, but it will also need to speak through the identity; a discourse practice embracing all verbal (spoken and written) representation of gastronomy-related topics and situations.

11.5.2 TMF is not widely Publicised in Promotional Materials

There is an identifiable lack of publicity for TMF in the promotional materials developed by homestay programmes, like websites, brochures, pamphlets, flyers, and other materials published either by the Perak Homestay Association (PHA), Tourism Malaysia Perak, and other government agencies. The data were cross-analysed with homestay providers at both of the homestay programmes. Several homestay providers said:

“We informed the tourists about our TMF especially the signature dishes from this village. Most of them said they were not once heard about our food.” (KBHP 15, Female, 51, Housewife)

“Tourists said they never heard about TRF before. They also have no clue what does the dish looked like.” (GHP13, Female, 53, Housewife)

“Usually, I cooked TRF first without informing the tourists. Then, I asked them to taste it and asked for their comment. It's quite funny because no one ever tastes the food before.” (GHP8, Female, 51, Housewife)

The above findings revealed that the homestay providers had to inform and explain to the tourists about their TMF and dishes associated with their homestay village. They also stated that the majority of tourists had never heard about their TMF before they came to the homestay. These results were significant, as findings from tourists also established that they had not received information about TMF in these two homestay programmes before their visit. The above contradicts what was said by primary stakeholders in Chapter 7, stating that they had provided relevant information to the tourists about TMF in the homestay programme. According to PS6:

“We are promoting the homestay TMF at all the government food events and activities. The government also had put so many efforts in marketing and promoting TMF through related promotional methods such as brochures, pamphlets, websites and other promotional materials.” (PS6, Federal Government 3, Male, 35):

An analysis of GH and KBH official websites discovered that TMF was only offered in a homestay package as full board meals, such as breakfast, lunch, teatime, and dinner. KBH websites, for instance, did not mention any TMF related activity in the brochures, whereas GH publicised the demonstration of TRF *Kelamai* on the websites. The findings constitute two significant results. First, GH and KBH websites have not provided detailed information about the TMF offered in their homestay programmes for tourists. Second, the promotional materials published by Tourism Malaysia Perak also contain insufficient information about TMF for tourists to look through. Clearly, as explained in the work of other studies in this area, to have effective marketing and publicity of TMF, there must be well-organised promotional materials (Beer *et al.*, 2002; Mynttinen *et al.*, 2015). For example, the visibility of local food products and local cuisines need to be enhanced by better product placements in the materials (Mynttinen *et al.*, 2015). Information should include the development of local food, like background information on the local food culture, detailed recipes, and ideas for menus.

Constructing informative and useful tourism websites is very important as the internet is deemed a powerful marketing tool for advertising food (Kivela and Crofts, 2005; Boyne *et al.*, 2003; and Rand *et al.*, 2003). Overall, the websites constitute a critical element in the promotion of TMF in the homestay programme, as Horng and Tsai (2010) reflected, it will directly influence the perceived gastronomic image of the destination and create a virtual experience for culinary tourists.

11.5.3 The Discrepancy between the TMF Offer and the Actual Homestay Package

Interviews with homestay providers in GH discovered that the food demonstration of *Kelamai* was not included in the homestay package. One tourist stated:

“I had to reschedule my stay in GH for a few times because the homestay leader could not fit in the Kelamai activities in my programme.” (GT5, Female, 32, Senior Executive Coordinator)

In another interview, PS10 pointed out:

“It is difficult to demonstrate Kelamai for a small number of tourists. I only offer it to a group as it is equivalent to the cost of money we spent on the demonstration.” (PS10, Male, 45, Coordinator).

Primary stakeholders claimed aggressive promotion of TMF to tourists and the public, but the data from the study has shown that the information has not been adequately delivered. An effective marketing strategy in the homestay programme should offer an understanding that tourists have different concerns, interests, and purposes in their visit to homestays. These results have further supported the idea of Jamal *et al.* (2011), that homestay providers and marketers should consider appropriate measures in providing tourists with a high level of satisfaction, as this will affect their willingness to recommend others to visit. Moreover, the inflexibility of the homestay leaders in GH to include food activities in visitors' itinerary has made tourists unhappy. As a result, tourists may

not be interested in coming back to the homestay due to the unaccommodating homestay leaders' provision of their required itinerary.

11.5.4 Power and Influence of the Stakeholders towards the Homestay Programme

The findings provided evidence that the homestay providers in KBH and GH have little power or influence in decision making for their homestay programme. The providers in KBH showed that they have chosen to be involved in the planning, but have no power over decision-making, due to trust and respect to their respective leader. 80% of those interviewed (16, N=20) reported that the leader is known to have been making good decisions for the economic benefits of their homestay. Thus, they preferred a passive role in homestay decision-making. Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 1 (Female, 62, Housewife) said that:

“We always asked the homestay leader to decide for us because he knows how to plan and develop this village as a homestay better than us. I am not involved regularly in the meetings, but he would always inform us of any development for the homestay programme.”

The findings have also shown that the small-scale local tourism enterprises in KBH benefit both the homestay programme and their providers. The tourism planning in this homestay has proved that it has strong potential to encourage the local communities to improve the socio-economic based on 70% (18, N=20) of the feedback gathered from the participants in KBH. They believed that there is no issue in determining the power and influence over the homestay programme decision-making, as they are doing well with the current arrangements made by their leader. Based on the results, it can also be concluded that even though there is no issue of power relations and economic development involving the local community, shared decision-making processes were not strongly promoted in KBH among their homestay providers. Kampong Beng Homestay Provider 7 (Female, 60, Housewife) explained that:

“Usually, the homestay leader officially represents us to the higher authorities, and acts as a representative of our village as he is also the head of the village. He has done many things to improve our village’s facilities and in economic terms. Thus, we follow whatever he thinks is best for us.”

This study produced contradicting results from those of Okazaki (2008), who suggested that tourism is dependent on many external factors. The partnerships ought to involve multiple types of stakeholders, featuring public-private sector partnerships, community-private sector partnerships, cross-sectoral planning, shared decision-making processes that aim to bridge cultural distinctions (Jamal and Getz, 1995; Vellas, 2002; Ashley and Jones, 2001; Wahab and Pigram, 1997; and Robinson, 1999). On the other hand, 100% (13, N=13) of the homestay providers in GH reported that they would prefer to have a control over the decision-making process in their homestay programme. However, the homestay leader have chosen to have the maximum power of authority over the planning and development of GH homestay, as stated by a Gopeng Homestay Provider 6 (Male, 62, Businessman):

“I have never had a chance to raise any matters or issues about this homestay. We used to voice out our concerns over profit-sharing and rotation of tourists to the homestay leader, but they never listen to us.”

The findings showed that there was a high interest and intention to participate in decision-making process, however, the local community have been completely excluded from the system. The issue of limited participation in decision-making is in agreement with the findings by Kim *et al.* (2014), highlighting similar situation in developing countries such as Laos. They concluded that due to the highly centralised governmental systems that focus solely on the structural, operational and cultural aspects, there were limitation at the operational level, making the participation of local communities rarely go beyond mere consultations and information exchange. In the same way, if GH improves the financial circumstances for their providers, it does not alter the struggles inherent in the culture, as many of them were made worse by tourism. The challenges faced by GH include high unemployment, competition from

private chalets and other illegal homestays for tourists' attractions. As Gopeng Homestay Provider 3 (Female, 58, Businesswomen) described:

“We are competing with other private chalets and resorts around this area. We found that tourists prefer to stay in those places for privacy reasons. They like to do their activities, and those places have all the facilities within the establishment. Why should they bother to stay and visit our homestay?”

The results of this study showed that homestay tourism in GH was driven by disparities in power relations among their providers. In another example, they must deal with the planned interventions by dominant parties such as the former President of PHA, head of the political parties and their homestay leader. The complexities created by the involvement of these parties has led to distrust in GH tourism development and its authorities by the homestay community. GH also suffered from an internal conflict at the village level over inequalities in tourism benefit sharing. Despite encouraging the homestay providers to be more involved in decision-making, the root cause of issues in GH is coming from the disparity of power and benefits among the primary stakeholders.

The findings of the current study are consistent with those of Kim *et al.* (2014), who found that the imbalanced power of, and distrust in tourism development authorities are a hindering factor that affected community participation in tourism planning and development process at both operational and structural levels. Kim *et al.* also highlighted that the lack of trust in tourism authorities have resulted in the reluctance of the local people to be receptive towards tourism development activities and their associated changes. The study showed that residents who were empowered to take part in consultations and decision-making in tourism management tend to be more satisfied with their community. They also proved to be more supportive of tourism activities than those who were less powerful, which is proven in the case of the Langkawi Islands in Malaysia. Power disparities, institutional disincentives and locals' distrust in authorities are one of the five barriers that prevented the local community from being involved in the CBT programme in Laos (Kim *et al.*, 2014).

11.6 Theme 4: Safeguarding TMF in the Homestay Programme

For TMF to play a role in the homestay programme, primary stakeholders must focus on the element of preserving and safeguarding TMF as homestay culture resources. This aspect is the last component that needs to be added to the framework. Under this theme, two elements need to be underlined:

- (1) Modernisation of TMF in the homestay programme;
- (2) The sense of pride among homestay providers in their TMF tradition.

11.6.1 Modernisation of TMF in the Homestay Programme

Other outcomes in GH revealed that one TRF called *Kelamai* has been gradually declining due to modernisation and commercialisation. Through the interviews with the homestay providers, primary stakeholders, and tourists, the majority of respondents agreed that *Kelamai* is no longer prepared and cooked by the local communities in GH. The results also established that modernisation has lessened the ability of Rawa's younger generation to make this traditional food. An interview with PS8 also indicated the same finding on GH providers' practices in producing and preparing *Kelamai*, stating that:

“Majority of the people in GH buy Kelamai from the same vendor. He will open his stall near the junction of this village so people can enjoy this food during the festive season.” (PS8, Female, 52, Former President, NGO 2)

The same result was given by other homestay providers in GH, stating that they usually place an order to this local seller before a festive season so that they can enjoy this TRF with their family. In addition, the results from GH indicated that the young generation of Rawa is no longer interested in continuing the tradition of making *Kelamai*. The reduced interest among the new generation in producing *Kelamai* might also be related to the evolution of the community and society, which innovates and utilises current and old knowledge, patterns, techniques, and resources in all areas of activities (Zahari, 2011). The findings noted that there is no urgency for the younger generation of Rawa communities to learn about this food, as they can outsource from someone else. Other factors that

contribute to these issues are the concepts of food convenience which comprises three components like time, physical energy, and mental energy. The said components are relevant to *Kelamai*, as it has been described as time-consuming due to the extended hours of preparation, the tedious process of production, and the delicate development of ingredients by the GH communities.

Therefore, this evidence provides an understanding of why *Kelamai* is no longer prepared among the Rawa communities in the GH programme. An interview with PS8 unveiled that hard work is needed to promote this traditional food to the tourists. She said:

“The association of Rawa communities in Malaysia had documented Kelamai, but I made the initiative to record a video about the preparation of this traditional food together with Adet Bojojok. However, the continuity of making traditional food depends on the interest of the future generation. I cannot do much if the new generation has no interest in preserving this tradition.” PS8 (Female, 52, Former President NGO)

These findings were consistent with the results from Ming’s (2014), mentioning that the local history, wisdom, knowledge, and other cultural memories would vanish with the loss of elders who were willing to preserve and pass along what they knew. The above findings from the GH programme have provided the insight that preservation, modernisation, and commercialisation of TMF could provide a significant impact on the future of the homestay programme in Malaysia. This group of people have less interest to learn, prepare, and cook this food due to the low awareness and appreciation of their TMF. If the TRF like *Kelamai* is continuously ignored by the Rawa communities in GH and no effort is undertaken to retain its production, the uniqueness and cultural identity through this TMF will be diminished (Langgat *et al.*, 2011). Therefore, action should be taken either by individuals, communities, or primary stakeholders to preserve and safeguard *Kelamai* among the Rawa communities. From other perspectives, the emergence of modern lifestyle issues, such as the aging population, the changing of household structures, the desire for new experiences, individualism, declining cooking skills, the breakdown of traditional meal times, and value for money, are all parts of the elements that contribute to this problem (Zahari, 2011). The

analysis of data from these findings show that the aspects of cultural experience involving a great quantity of traditional knowledge and values, such as *Adet Bojojak* and *Kelamai* making, could be enriched if tourists participate in the activities instead of only consuming food in the homestay programme. According to Talhah and Hashim (2012), tourists who visit a homestay are those who seek existential meaning and those who search for a rural lifestyle. They place a value on learning the host community's culture and way of life. Thus, one of the best ways to learn culture is by experiencing and participating in the culture itself.

11.6.2 The Sense of Pride among Homestay Providers in their TMF Tradition

This relates to how the homestay providers take charge of governing and administering their homestay programme without the involvement of primary stakeholders like the government and the NGOs. The results from the two homestay programmes found that the communities were willing to increase their participation in the homestay programme, when it comes to communal activities centred around TMF. Both types of homestay demonstrated understanding and appreciation of their cultural food during these kinds of events. Homestay providers in GH actively participated in the programme, since everybody was ready and was willing to cooperate. GHP8 stated:

“At present, there is not much homestay activities going on. The only things that make the providers active in this homestay are the communal activities related to TMF. I noticed this activity very much received active cooperation among the providers.”
(GHP8, Female, 51, Housewife)

In another vein, KBHP13 explained:

“We still have the tradition of working together for the events like wedding, religious activities and other big occasions in this homestay. Usually, all of the villagers will come and help the host family to support them. The women help with the food preparation while the men do the cooking. If you noticed, every house in this homestay has one shed for the firewood outside of their house. The tradition of contributing the firewood to help the host family is still customary.” (KBHP13, Female, 60, Housewife)

These results are in agreement with those obtained by Omar (2013), that promoting high quality cultural heritage attractions enables communities to retain the uniqueness of their destination and increase tourist satisfaction levels. It is inspiring to compare this result with that found by Claxton (1999), noting that when a local destination emphasises serving their local cuisine to tourists in every food establishment, along with the local people who frequently eat it, tourists will show their corresponding appreciation towards the local food. The tourists will value the local cuisine, in the same way as the locals take pride and embrace their indigenous food and culture. As Claxton (1999) stated, to promote a sense of belonging and ownership to the homestay programme, homestay providers need to be educated in building strong community relations and an organised homestay structure. As a result, homestay providers will also be motivated to be continuously active in participating and structuring their homestay programme, to ensure they can survive longer in the trade.

11.7 Summary

In this study, four themes have been identified that need to be supported by the homestay providers' active involvement and explicit commitment. By analysing the criteria required to uphold the TMF, the proposed framework can be a basis for further research in promoting and marketing this culinary appeal in the homestay programme in Malaysia. In addition, the current study also offers theoretical and practical implications using this proposed framework extracted from other research. However, homestay providers and their organisation are the pillars for this framework to be successful in the future. The predominant attitude and behaviour of the homestay providers will determine the success or failure in upholding TMF as an attraction. The primary stakeholders, on the other hand, have to play a role in supporting the need of this homestay programme by providing advice, guidelines, collaboration, and network to manage and ensure the survival of the homestay industry.

The results have indicated how cuisine could be promoted as a commodity in the tourism industry. At the beginning of the study, the importance of culinary

and heritage activities to strengthen the appeal of these two homestay programmes in Malaysia has been determined. The results show that various primary stakeholders in Malaysia have been supporting homestays to promote TMF to tourists. However, communication has not been appropriately delivered to the homestay providers. The study also reveals that tourists have not been receiving information on all aspects of the homestay culinary experience. Clearly, the primary stakeholders need to have excellent knowledge and first-hand information of the local cuisine and food heritage. This is crucial, as the stakeholders e.g. from federal and local state government, admitted that they meet tourists directly during homestay marketing and promotional campaigns. Thus, this study proposes that the primary stakeholders increase their knowledge on local foods in the homestay and guide homestay providers to raise the value of their local culinary traditions to the tourists. Furthermore, the primary stakeholders and other tourism-related bodies should also motivate and encourage homestays to sustain and safeguard their culinary heritage as branded images for marketing purposes.

As this chapter has shown, the practices of homestay providers in their traditional food habits and the awareness of their local cuisines' potential have been explored. There is a positive indication that they have recognised their local cuisines as one of the most valuable experiences and products that could be highlighted and promoted to tourists in the homestay. Nevertheless, homestay providers in GH did not see themselves as promoters of culinary assets to tourists. Furthermore, they did not see the importance of their TMF's marketability to tourists on a large scale. Food is only offered as a physical need in the homestay programme, and thus, there is no substantial effort in promoting TMF to tourists. Contrastingly in KBH, the providers seemed to understand the value of TMF in their homestay programme. However, with a lack of publicity given by the homestay organisation and also by local government bodies, TMF in this homestay has no potential to reach the targeted tourists. This is an important issue for future research, so that stakeholders, particularly the federal government and local state departments, will give special attention to TMF in the homestay programme. The TMF should be positioned as a leading segment in the homestay

programme, and thus, specific marketing and promotional materials should be developed for this purpose.

Lastly, this study also aims to recognise and respond to feedback and opinions given by tourists regarding their experience in consuming local cuisine and other aspects of cultural heritage in homestays. The tourists' emotional experience regarding how they create memories of local cuisines, undeniably contributes to their overall homestay experience. Even though the findings of this study revealed some of the tourists' experiencing unforeseen circumstances in the homestay, the negative impressions did not undermine the overall package that the homestays had offered to the tourists. The evidence found that unique and enjoyable experience in consuming local dishes encourages them to consider the homestay as a culture of the destination. This finding may help us to understand that some tourists travel solely for culinary experiences, and perceive food as one of the products in their cultural exploration. It can thus be suggested that a close relationship has been found between food and tourists' experience at a destination. Developing culinary experience for touristic consumption has become a challenge because the link between how visitors could learn and grow their interest needs to be focused, rather than emphasising merely on food consumption traditions. The homestay providers should understand the current market and demands from cultural tourists, as the needs and wants of these potential travellers are always changing. Therefore, further work is required to establish the viability of TMF as a driving force in attracting tourists and visitors to visit and stay at Malaysian homestays. It is hoped that the tourists' feedback might stimulate homestay providers and primary stakeholders to be more responsive in keeping updated with the ever-changing tourism demands.

Additionally, this study has generated the finding that local heritage food can be one of the central reasons for primary stakeholders to promote homestays. However, there is an abundant scope for further progress in determining how primary stakeholders could improve their role in planning and developing this product to ensure long-term sustainability of the homestay industry. The findings suggest that community leaders and homestay providers should take proactive

measures to recognise the challenges faced by their programmes and to overcome such issues by seeking advice and consultation from experts, who are mainly the primary stakeholders. They should also work out their strengths and capabilities to promote their homestay creatively to provide an authentic life experience to tourists. Lastly, the TMF and heritage concept created through homestay provision should aim to ensure that tourists will attain a genuine understanding of local life, to prevent them from drawing conclusion that local food culture is showcased as a gimmick solely or predominantly for commercial purposes. Therefore, in this examination of the results, based on the findings from this study, three components are identified as the main features that can contribute to the development of tourist experience in consuming local food at the destination. First, is to encourage deep engagement and collaboration among primary stakeholders, especially the Malaysian government, NGOs, and private agencies; second, is to increase the economic and social interest among homestay providers, so they can see the important role they play in promoting TMF through culinary and heritage activities. Finally, is to improve the visibility of traditional food in the homestays through better services, resources, and surroundings.

Chapter 12. Conclusions and Recommendations

12.1 Introduction

This thesis evaluates how homestay programmes in Malaysia could effectively utilise traditional Malaysian food (TMF) to promote themselves as destinations. The results show that local food is not always seen as an important way of promoting homestays. The primary challenge arising from this thesis is therefore to capitalise more fully on the potential of TMF for marketing a homestay experience. The results offer insights into understanding the primary goal of this study; to explore ways in which the value of culinary heritage can be enhanced by the host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities, so that they could proactively promote their local food culture to tourists. Firstly, this chapter begins by presenting the limitations of the study and, then by answering the research questions. Then, the chapter discussed the theoretical and policy implications of the work and also the research contributions of this study. To conclude, recommendations for further research are made in the final section, together with some concluding remarks.

12.2 Research Limitations

The study has a number of limitations that need to be acknowledged. Firstly, based on an analysis of the viewpoints of relevant stakeholders through interviews, observations and face-to-face interviews of homestay tourists, the research was conducted at only two homestays in one state in Malaysia, and as such the findings are not as generalisable as might be expected in this sort of research. Although the results drawn from this fieldwork are in themselves reliable and valid, the results can only be taken to refer to the viewpoints of the participants involved in this particular study, especially the opinions and information given by the primary stakeholders regarding the two specific homestays. Future research should be conducted with a larger sample that also incorporated viewpoints from a larger number of homestay destinations in Malaysia. A further related limitation concerns the sample characteristics of the tourists. The tourists participated for this research were all domestic tourists, and

so it would be fruitful for future studies to survey international tourists to allow a comparison between national and international tourists' views on their experiences at homestays. This study is an essentially qualitative study. In future studies, quantitative methods could complement this approach, so that both methods can capture the complex assessment of TMF to be effectively utilised and promoted as the homestay products and activities in the homestay programme.

12.3 Research Questions

The main empirical findings are chapter specific and were reviewed in chapters 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 and discussed in chapter 11. This section focuses upon the study's four main research questions.

12.2.1 RQ1: What Elements of UNESCO's and ASEAN's Homestay

Programmes that can be Applied to Malaysian Homestay Programme, in using and Revitalising Culinary Heritage as a Strategy to Promote Cultural Tourism?

This thesis notes the recent strategies by UNESCO as presented in Chapter 6 (see page 161) and also the initiatives of ASEAN member state countries (see Chapter 5, page 117) some of which might be useful to the Malaysian homestay programme in using and revitalising culinary heritage as a strategy to promote cultural tourism. The Malaysian homestay programme could emphasise their kampong food experience in rural villages, to provide a better food experience to tourists. The 2003 UNESCO Convention has introduced a new paradigm for safeguarding aspects of national culinary culture which have a "sense of identity and continuity" for the local communities eligible to be protected under these policies.

The insights gained from these case studies should be of assistance to the government and related stakeholders in the Malaysian homestay programme to put greater efforts into using TMF as part of a homestay's identity. These efforts should correspond with the recognition, granted by UNESCO, which covers all

aspects of the safeguarding measures in food and culture such as the identification, documentation, preservation, promotion, enhancement (through formal and informal education campaigns), as well as the revitalisation of various aspects of culinary heritage. It is clear that a number of aspects of the Malaysian homestay programme will have to be (re)considered as the 2016 ASEAN Homestay Standards are implemented. More optimistically, these Standards provide a platform for the ASEAN member states to start increasing their efforts and initiatives to mainly focused on the role of local food as a fascinating attraction by enhancing the quality of TMF, and use it more overtly in the promotion of their homestays as tourist destinations.

Given these observations it is suggested that elements of both the UNESCO and ASEAN homestay programmes could be of significant benefit to the Malaysian homestay programme if implemented carefully.

12.2.2 RQ2: To What Extent, and in What Ways, Do Stakeholders Integrate Local Food as a Strategy in Promoting Homestays?

Previous studies have noted the importance of stakeholders in assessing and improving an individual homestay's specific cultural distinctiveness by emphasising its existing cultural tourism products to tourists. However, little is known about stakeholder involvement in developing and promoting culinary heritage as a central component in the homestay programme (see Chapter 7, page 177). This is also true for the stakeholders' failure to emphasis homestays' local food to tourists through promotional methods and activities. This thesis demonstrates the importance of stakeholders' in the promotion and development of local cuisine to heighten the potential tourist experience as well as to become one of the trademark features of all homestays in Malaysia.

Although, much more work needs to be done to fully convince stakeholders of the importance of the integration of local food in their general promotion of homestays, ensuring the visibility and sustainability of the TMF in the homestay programme would be crucial.

12.2.3 RQ3: How Much Emphasis is Placed on the Value of TMF in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay, as a Means of Promoting and Publicising their Homestays in Order to Enhance the Tourist Experience?

The results show that promoting TMF is intimately linked with the value and preservation of local culture and heritage as discussed in Chapter 8 on page 227 and Chapter 9 on page 275. These factors are connected to TMF's unique identity and image, elements which tourists are frequently looking for when they seek out a homestay destination. This search for, and availability of, culinary authenticity and uniqueness contributes to tourists' overall satisfaction with a homestay experience and indirectly encourages local communities to consider the importance of upholding their TMF culture and traditions. The results from Gopeng Homestay, for instance, show that traditional Rawa food is becoming less valued due to internal and external challenges identified during interviews, which has affected the homestay programme. As a result, a lack of a formal homestay plan and agreed future orientation prevents TMF being adequately promoted by the homestay providers; interconnections with the primary stakeholders have not been established.

The value of traditional Rawa food has been gradually eroded due to the impact of modernisation. With fewer younger people living in villages and being less interested in continuing the tradition of making this food, *Kelamai* is currently at risk of being lost. It would be of value to highlight, and so to safeguard the future of, *Kelamai* among the Rawa communities in Gopeng. However, there is little awareness of the importance of this. When the homestay programme cannot provide any TMF benefits to the communities involved, then the sustainability of the programme is at risk.

The investigation of TMF in KBH indicates that homestay providers in this context have no food tourism plan. However, the providers are passionate about sharing the information about their TMF even though there is no clear approach to marketing and publicity. For this reason, detailed TMF planning is needed in KBH to ensure that homestay providers understand the potential socio-

economic impact of promoting their TMF. Collectively, sustained awareness-raising efforts on behalf of all concerned parties are required to ensure that the local communities preserve their traditional ways of life, cultural kampong values, knowledge, and practices while at the same time resisting any tendencies towards de-authentication or excessive commodification of their programme.

Ultimately, the youth play a pivotal role in presenting their everyday life and displaying pride in their local culture to tourists. One of the ways to retain the younger generation in the village is by providing employment opportunities through the homestay or associated local cultural activities, and perhaps in particular, TMF related events. Passion for running the homestay needs to be nurtured from the earliest years. These foundations are fundamental to ensure the agenda has a solid basis upon which local communities are able to promote TMF to the higher level and thus sustain the programme for the sake of successive generations.

In general, therefore, it seems that the analysis from RQ3 provides a new understanding that the homestay providers need to identify the tourist's needs and demands in consuming the local food, especially of what is being perceived as attractive by the tourists.

12.2.4 RQ4: What are the Essential Elements of TMF that might Enhance Tourists' Homestay Experiences, and that Would Make TMF a Central Part of the Homestay Programme?

The importance of tourist's perspectives in determining the success of the homestay programme in Malaysia are presented in Chapter 10, page 323. The widespread interest and enthusiasm for tourists to consume local heritage, including cuisine, in the homestay programme are based on five aspects: Malay hospitality, the authentic TMF experience, novelty or positive memories, cultural values, and gift-giving or souvenirs. The above aspects are the key components that create a positive homestay experience in the eyes of homestay tourists, providing them with enjoyable, pleasant, memories which serve to encourage recommendations and/or revisit intentions. The hospitality itself is enveloped by

an entire 'food process' which is unique in terms of the preparation, cooking, and consumption of cuisine in an authentic village setting. The unique and authentic local heritage represented by the homestay programme can unquestionably act as a vehicle for promoting the branding of particular homestays as desirable destinations.

The above conclusions relating to RQ4 have shown that TMF is not only a basic need for the tourists to visit homestay, but it is also an essential element for understanding and learning about the local culture and identity that adds extra value to the image of a homestay destination. Furthermore, the findings of this study should provide a way of linking TMF with the characteristics of the destination, such as the economic activities of the homestay communities to create a positive food image in the eyes of the tourists.

12.4 Policy and Theoretical Implications of the Study

The results of this thesis contribute to the evaluation of how TMF can be utilised as a factor for promoting the homestay programme in Malaysia. The implications that follow from this are:

1. Government and administrative stakeholders must be committed fully to working hand in hand with the homestay providers by providing support and guidance to local communities. The thesis found that the roles of stakeholders are still uncoordinated, and a number of inter-related planning, developing, and managing challenges stem from this. Therefore, measures to develop an effective overarching coordinating structure should be taken, aimed at empowering the local level in the planning and development of their TMF in this rural tourism product.
2. Evidence suggests that continuous support and guidance is needed from the administrative stakeholders to guide every homestay programme to align with the 2016 ASEAN Homestay Standards. However, the results indicate that most of the homestays remain unaware of the new regulations. Therefore, the relevant stakeholder bodies should start informing the registered homestay

providers about these standards so that they are able to draw on them to begin upgrading the quality of TMF using the proposed unique selling point as suggested in the Standards.

3. Organising continuous training and workshops for the registered homestay providers should become a hallmark of an effective homestay programme, serving to equip them with consistent entrepreneurship skills and knowledge of TMF. By strengthening their SME businesses, communities could also generate more income and thus positively impact their financial circumstances, resulting in a better quality of life, serving in turn to instil more pride in their entrepreneurial efforts. Efforts to inculcate pride across local communities are fundamental to stimulating entrepreneurial thinking, creativity, and innovation embedded in local food culture and traditions. Hence, these elements are considered critical assets to empowering and safeguarding the revival and maintenance of a variety of traditional expressions among the host communities of the homestay programme.
4. Homestay leaders and host communities should provide commitment and cooperation among themselves to promote TMF and do their utmost to provide high standards in their homestay provisions, including not only the provision of accommodation but also activities and other amenities. This is one of the reasons why local communities should commit to engage tourists with homestay TMF activities, events, facilities, food service and so forth.
5. Partnerships with tour operators and agencies are important for every homestay programme to ensure that, firstly, they are consistently updated about tourists' needs and wants in the homestay industry, and, secondly, that the expertise and know-how of these agencies are drawn on. Thus, marketing campaigns, including through tour agencies, should focus more attention on the variation of activities at their homestay, including the authentic experiences revolving around culinary traditions. They could expose more of their culture and traditions as well as the cultural events to motivate tourists to come and stay with the local communities to develop their destination branding.

6. Culinary identity has a significant influence on successful branding and destination image. Identifying and branding the culinary character and setting in a specific and often unique geographic and climatic environment is essential for homestay programme success. This observation has significant implications for understanding how environment and culture play an important role in developing the gastronomic identity of homestay programmes. Situating the gastronomic identity of each of the homestay programmes in a wider framework could help the marketers and stakeholders to define and promote their unique characteristics and products, serving to differentiate their particular homestay programme from others for example, mapping of state-of-origin dishes in every homestay programme in Malaysia.
7. Many positive images and linkages can be built upon the interests of tourist in consuming local cuisines with the marketing strategies that can be developed by the stakeholders and homestay provisions. The distinctiveness of local food evidently adds to the tourists' overall experience, as the majority of them are seeking novelty. First, the homestay providers should consider promoting and marketing their regional cuisines in advance of the visit to trigger the imagination of their potential tourists about the uniqueness of their homestay destination. For example, more publicity about the traditional local food in the brochures, website, flyers, guides, etc. so that tourists have a clear expectation about the homestay's food.
8. Most of the homestays are located in rural areas, therefore the concept of fresh vegetables that are healthy and nutritiously balanced can be used in marketing. Besides that, homestays also can state the uniqueness of the local cuisines that consists of food with aromatic flavour, unique, spicy and exotic to tourists to make them eager to know the type of food that they will be eating in the homestay. Secondly, by emphasising that the homestay food is inexpensive and cooked from scratch, it will make tourists excited to try the food. In this way, homestay providers should maximise their opportunities by stressing the 'localness' of their produce as well as their culinary uniqueness. The culinary image should be nestled in the imagery of the traditional village

homestay theme, representing rest, relaxation, cultural experiences, and authentic discovery.

Contact and interaction with tourists during the consumption of TMF are the most essential elements in providing an excellent and friendly experience in the context of the homestay industry. The study suggests that less satisfied tourists influence their future decision to probably not revisit a destination. Therefore, steps should be taken to provide more exceptional hospitality experiences for tourists so recommendations can be considered as the most reliable information for others interested in enjoying a homestay experience.

12.5 Research Contributions

The results of this study identify several benefits to rural destinations in Malaysia considering that homestays play an essential role in the rural cultural tourism industry. The study offers a number of insights into how TMF and associated skills and ways of life of the people in the homestay might stimulate the programme, while at the same time safeguarding their traditional food through the homestay programme. The results of the study should be of great benefit to:

Stakeholders. The results provide stakeholders with some suggestions on how homestays in Malaysia could revitalise the value of TMF through their actions. They indicate to stakeholders that by promoting and developing traditional food as a primary aspect of the activities in the homestays, they could contribute to tourists' overall satisfaction regarding the homestay programme in Malaysia. The results also should encourage stakeholders to recognise and acknowledge the potential of local communities to be more creative in presenting their cultural food in more exciting ways to stimulate the interest of tourists. Stakeholders should realise that by developing more focused marketing activities promoting TMF in homestays in Malaysia, both the domestic and international market could be developed.

Homestay Providers. The thesis results should encourage homestay providers to include more information concerning their authentic local food and

sharing skills and knowledge relating to TMF in innovative ways with tourists. The providers also should be able to understand that they play an integral role in this tourism market as the offer entirely depends on the uniqueness and attractions of their food and place, cultural and traditions, handicrafts as well as other activities offered by the local community.

Tourists. By considering the feedback from tourists concerning their principle motives for visiting homestays, the stakeholders, particularly the homestay organisations, should be able to recognise which products, activities and attractions the tourists want to experience. The tourists' satisfaction in relation to TMF in the homestay may help the homestay providers, tourism marketers and other industry players better understand their potential homestay customers. The results also will help the tourism planners to develop more innovative approaches to attract prospective tourists by identifying which attributes most satisfy tourists in visiting the cultural and heritage destinations.

Lastly, by understanding the link between promoting traditional homestay food and the wider homestay experience, the thesis contributes to an understanding of 'satisfaction research' in cultural tourism. Therefore, this study hopes to contribute to the future development of homestay traditional food culture, especially from the standpoint of key homestay players in the tourism industry in Malaysia.

12.6 Applicability of Results

Although this study was conducted in only two homestay programmes in one state in Malaysia, the results can be assumed to be broadly applicable, because of similarities in contexts, to TMF in other homestay areas in Malaysia. The results suggest that this approach would be beneficial in other sectors such as community-based tourism, rural development programmes, and small- and mid-scale industry development in rural areas of the country. Additionally, the results might also be used in other sectors such as the marketing of local foods to tourists and restaurateurs or for investigating the tourists' attitudes to local food and heritage in the tourist destinations.

12.7 Recommendations for Further Research

Several questions remain for researchers conducting studies into how culinary tourism can be used as a core marketing element in homestay destinations. This thesis has shown that, while homestay research in Malaysia has increased in frequency in the last few years, examining the value of traditional Malay food to enhance tourist experience in the homestay programme is an area that academic literature has yet to explore in detail. This thesis suggests that, by identifying a ‘food destination image’, the homestays could portray this aspect in their promotional materials and marketing strategies to promote their local distinctive culinary specialities as key attractions. However, to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the perceived value of promoting TMF in homestay tourism, additional research is needed to address [a] the perceived authenticity of the homestay, [b] destination image/branding strategies, and [c] destination loyalty, to determine more fully the subject of culinary heritage tourism. In addition, it is also recommended that future studies incorporate tourist expectations before and after they have visited and consumed TMF at a homestay so that the perceived image of the local culinary culture can be identified and investigated.

Secondly, key policy-makers, particularly MOTAC, have to start enforcing the ASEAN Homestay Standards in every homestay provision in Malaysia, to increase the quality of provision across the gamut of services, including TMF, by the homestay providers, facilities, infrastructure and human capital. Doing so would also ensure a more professional level of management and administration (including financial resources) across the programme. The homestay programme requires a long-term food tourism strategy, with the purpose of maximising the opportunities of local communities to increase their economic wellbeing and quality of life by drawing on local economic, social, cultural and natural resources around TMF.

Thirdly, training and education programmes must be created and put into practice for local residents, especially young people, including training as professional tour guides, drivers, translators, etc. Since this thesis reviewed TMF

in the homestay programme, it is suggested that training in the context of food tradition and special occasions has to become a key, if not the major, conduit for tourists to experience the culinary heritage of a homestay destination. In addition, training should also take into consideration culinary cultural awareness, particularly when it comes to handling large groups of tourists such as we have seen in recent years from countries like China, India, and across the Middle East. Such training would mean that guides would be able to help both the host communities and tourists understand one another and their needs better. More broadly, research is also needed to stimulate ideas about how the young people in the homestay programme could safeguard traditional ways of life surrounding food for future generations. Therefore, it is suggested that the association of these factors is investigated in future studies.

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Appendices

APPENDICES A (a), A (b), A (c) and A (d)

A (a) Written Consent Form - Stakeholders

A (b) Written Consent Form – Homestay Providers

A (c) Written Consent Form – Tourists



CONSENT FORM
RESEARCHER USE OF WRITTEN INTERVIEW
(STAKEHOLDERS)

Project Title: A comparison of how two homestays (Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay) safeguard traditional Malay food (TMF) as a means of promoting cultural-based food tourism in Perak, Malaysia.

Investigators: Nurul Ashikin Bte Ismail, Phd student in Media, Culture and Heritage

Purpose: I am conducting a research about the culinary practices of the homestay providers in promoting the traditional Malay food at the homestay programme in Kampong Beng, Lenggong and Gopeng in Perak, Malaysia. The goal of the study is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be utilised by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities. The first research aim is to examine how various stakeholder groups in Malaysia have considered culinary heritage as an essential aspect of homestays, including encouraging the use of TMF, as a means of attracting tourists to utilise the Malaysian Homestay Programme.

Procedures:

Semi-structured Interview

I would require less than two-hour voluntary commitment of your time to participate in this discussion. You will be asked to respond to the questions related to the study objectives. Your ideas, comments and suggestions are extremely important to the findings of this study.

Risks of Participation:

There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits:

There are no personal direct benefits to you for participating in this study. Your valuable input will provide important insight for the study. However, a souvenir from United Kingdom will be given as a thank you and appreciation for their

cooperation. A follow up questions and interview will be notified if there is needed for additional information.

Confidentiality:

Your contribution will be recorded in writing and tape recorder. The data collected will be transcribed in electronic format and will be archived in a retrieval system until Jan 2020. Your personal identities will be kept confidential and will only be known to each other in the group and to the investigator. There are no foreseeable risks related to participating in this study. The Newcastle University, United Kingdom has the authority to inspect consent records and data files to ensure compliance with approved procedures. All data collected from participants will be treated with the utmost protection. The data that have been collected will be stored on a password-protected computer and cloud storage; which will be accessible only to the researcher and the supervisors. The participants' confidentiality will be protected as their names will be kept anonymous in the report. The collected data will be stored for a minimum period of five (5) years in accordance with the British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines for storing electronic and physical data. After the period has passed, the data will be disposed.

Compensation: There is no compensation for participating in this interview session.

Contacts: For information about your rights as a subject, please contact Mr. Gerard Corsane and Professor Peter Gregory Stone at International Centre of Cultural Heritage Studies (ICCHS), School of Media, Culture and Heritage, Newcastle University, United Kingdom, contact email: Gerard.corsane@newcastle.ac.uk; peter.stone@newcastle.ac.uk. Also please feel free to contact me with any other questions you might have at: n.a.b.ismail1@ncl.ac.uk, telephone +447 478 749 797.

Participant Rights:

Your participation is totally voluntary and can be discontinued by you at any time without reprisal or penalty. You may take a break at any time during the discussion.

I, the undersigned, confirm that (please tick box as appropriate):

.	I have read and understood the information about the project, as provided in the Information Sheet dated _____.	
.	I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and my participation.	
.	I voluntarily agree to participate in the project.	
.	I understand I can withdraw at any time without giving reasons and that I will not be penalized for withdrawing nor will I be questioned on why I have withdrawn.	
.	The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (e.g. use of names, pseudonyms, anonymization of data, etc.) to me.	
.	I consent for the interviews, audio, images, video or other forms of data collection being shown to other researchers which the researcher has been explained and provided to me.	
.	I consent that this information will be held and processed for the following purposes; use of the data in the final report of the research, thesis, future academic journals, publications and presentations and the researcher has explained to me as well about sharing and archiving for this data.	
.	I understand that other researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the data and if they agree to the terms I have specified in this form.	
.	<p>Select only one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like my name used and understand what I have said or written as part of this study will be used in reports, publications and other research outputs so that anything I have contributed to this project can be recognised. • I do not want my name used in this project. 	
0.	I, along with the Researcher, agree to sign and date this informed consent form.	

Participant:

Name of Participant	Signature	Date
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Researcher:

Name of Researcher	Signature	Date
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CONSENT FORM

RESEARCHER USE OF WRITTEN OBSERVATION, INTERVIEW AND VIDEO RECORDING (HOMESTAY PROVIDERS)

Project Title: A comparison of how two homestays (Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay) safeguard traditional Malay food (TMF) as a means of promoting cultural-based food tourism in Perak, Malaysia

Investigators: Nurul Ashikin Bte Ismail, Phd student in Media, Culture and Heritage

Purpose: I am conducting a research about the culinary practices of the homestay providers in preparing the traditional Malay food at the homestay programme in Kampong Beng, Lenggong and Gopeng in Perak, Malaysia. The goal of the study is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be utilised by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities. The research aim is to investigate how much emphasis is put on the value of TMF and the culinary practices by homestay providers in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay as a key part of the promotion of their homestay programme to tourists.

Procedures:

First Phase: Observation

I would require of your voluntary commitment of your time to participate in this food related cooking activities at your home kitchen to be observed and for video to be taken of your work and activities in preparing the food for the tourists. The notes taken on your food preparation and cooking observation and the photographs of work and activities will be used for the purposes of research completion only.

Second Phase: In-depth Interview

I would require less than two-hour voluntary commitment of your time to participate in this semi-structured discussion. You will be asked to respond to the questions related to the study objectives. Your ideas, comments and suggestions are extremely important to the findings of this study.

Risks of Participation:

There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits:

There are no personal direct benefits to you for participating in this study. Your valuable input will provide important insight for the study. However, pens bearing the name 'Newcastle University' will be given as thank you and appreciation for their cooperation. A follow up questions and interview will be notified if there is needed for additional information.

Confidentiality:

Your contribution will be recorded in writing and tape recorder. The data collected will be transcribed in electronic format and will be archived in a retrieval system until Jan 2020. Your personal identities will be kept confidential and will only be known to each other in the group and to the investigator. There are no foreseeable risks related to participating in this study. The Newcastle University, United Kingdom has the authority to inspect consent records and data files to ensure compliance with approved procedures. All data collected from participants will be treated with the utmost protection. The data that have been collected will be stored on a password-protected computer and cloud storage; which will be accessible only to the researcher and the supervisors. The participants' confidentiality will be protected as their names will be kept anonymous in the report. The collected data will be stored for a minimum period of five (5) years in accordance with the British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines for storing electronic and physical data. After the period has passed, the data will be disposed.

Compensation: There is no compensation for participating in this interview session.

Contacts: For information about your rights as a subject, please contact Mr. Gerard Corsane and Professor Peter Gregory Stone at International Centre of Cultural Heritage Studies (ICCHS), School of Media, Culture and Heritage, Newcastle University, United Kingdom, contact email: gerard.corsane@newcastle.ac.uk; peter.stone@newcastle.ac.uk. Also please feel

free to contact me with any other questions you might have at: n.a.b.ismail1@ncl.ac.uk , telephone +447 478 749 797.

Participant Rights:

Your participation is totally voluntary and can be discontinued by you at any time without reprisal or penalty. You may take a break at any time during the discussion.

I, the undersigned, confirm that (please tick box as appropriate):

.	I have read and understood the information about the project, as provided in the Information Sheet dated _____.	
.	I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and my participation.	
.	I voluntarily agree to participate in the project.	
.	I understand I can withdraw at any time without giving reasons and that I will not be penalized for withdrawing nor will I be questioned on why I have withdrawn.	
.	The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (e.g. use of names, pseudonyms, anonymization of data, etc.) to me.	
.	I consent for the interviews, audio, images, video or other forms of data collection being shown to other researchers which the researcher has been explained and provided to me.	
.	I consent that this information will be held and processed for the following purposes; use of the data in the final report of the research, thesis, future academic journals, publications and presentations and the researcher has explained to me as well about sharing and archiving for this data.	
.	I understand that other researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the data and if they agree to the terms I have specified in this form.	
.	Select only one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like my name used and understand what I have said or 	

	<p>written as part of this study will be used in reports, publications and other research outputs so that anything I have contributed to this project can be recognised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not want my name used in this project. 	
0.	I, along with the Researcher, agree to sign and date this informed consent form.	

Participant:

Name of Participant Signature Date

Researcher:

Name of Researcher Signature Date



CONSENT FORM
RESEARCHER USE OF WRITTEN INTERVIEW (TOURISTS)

Project Title: A comparison of how two homestays (Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay) safeguard traditional Malay food (TMF) as a means of promoting cultural-based food tourism in Perak, Malaysia

Investigators: Nurul Ashikin Bte Ismail, Phd student in Media, Culture and Heritage

Purpose: I am conducting a research about the culinary practices of the homestay providers in preparing the traditional Malay food at the homestay programme in Kampong Beng, Lenggong and Gopeng in Perak, Malaysia. The goal of the study is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be utilised by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities. The research aim is to analyse tourist interest in, and consumption of, local food and cultural heritage as part of the homestay programme.

Procedures:

Open-ended Interview

I would require less than two-hour voluntary commitment of your time to participate in this discussion. You will be asked to respond to the questions related to the study objectives. Your ideas, comments and suggestions are extremely important to the findings of this study.

Risks of Participation:

There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits:

There are no personal direct benefits to you for participating in this study. Your valuable input will provide important insight for the study. However, a souvenir from United Kingdom will be given as a thank you and appreciation for their cooperation. A follow up questions and interview will be notified if there is needed for additional information.

Confidentiality:

Your contribution will be recorded in writing and tape recorder. The data collected will be transcribed in electronic format and will be archived in a retrieval system until Jan 2020. Your personal identities will be kept confidential and will only be known to each other in the group and to the investigator. There are no foreseeable risks related to participating in this study. The Newcastle University, United Kingdom has the authority to inspect consent records and data files to ensure compliance with approved procedures. All data collected from participants will be treated with the utmost protection. The data that have been collected will be stored on a password-protected computer and cloud storage; which will be accessible only to the researcher and the supervisors. The participants' confidentiality will be protected as their names will be kept anonymous in the report. The collected data will be stored for a minimum period of five (5) years in accordance with the British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines for storing electronic and physical data. After the period has passed, the data will be disposed.

Compensation: There is no compensation for participating in this interview session.

Contacts: For information about your rights as a subject, please contact Mr. Gerard Corsane and Professor Peter Gregory Stone at International Centre of Cultural Heritage Studies (ICCHS), School of Media, Culture and Heritage, Newcastle University, United Kingdom, contact email: gerard.corsane@newcastle.ac.uk; peter.stone@newcastle.ac.uk. Also please feel free to contact me with any other questions you might have at: n.a.b.ismail1@ncl.ac.uk, telephone +447 478 749 797.

Participant Rights:

Your participation is totally voluntary and can be discontinued by you at any time without reprisal or penalty. You may take a break at any time during the discussion.

I, the undersigned, confirm that (please tick box as appropriate):

.	I have read and understood the information about the project, as provided in the Information Sheet dated _____.	
.	I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and my participation.	
.	I voluntarily agree to participate in the project.	
.	I understand I can withdraw at any time without giving reasons and that I will not be penalized for withdrawing nor will I be questioned on why I have withdrawn.	
.	The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (e.g. use of names, pseudonyms, anonymization of data, etc.) to me.	
.	I consent for the interviews, audio, images, video or other forms of data collection being shown to other researchers which the researcher has been explained and provided to me.	
.	I consent that this information will be held and processed for the following purposes; use of the data in the final report of the research, thesis, future academic journals, publications and presentations and the researcher has explained to me as well about sharing and archiving for this data.	
.	I understand that other researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the data and if they agree to the terms I have specified in this form.	
.	Select only one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like my name used and understand what I have said or written as part of this study will be used in reports, publications and other research outputs so that anything I have contributed to this project can be recognised. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not want my name used in this project. 	
0.	I, along with the Researcher, agree to sign and date this informed consent form.	

Participant:

Name of Participant Signature Date

Researcher:

Name of Researcher Signature Date

APPENDICES B (a), B (b) and B (c)

B (a) Interview Guide - Stakeholders

B (b) Interview Guide – Homestay Providers

B (c) Interview Guide - Tourists

B (d) Assessment Form – Tourists

B (a) Interview Guide – Stakeholders

The goal of the study is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be utilised by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities.

The research aim for the stakeholders is:

Aim: To examine how various stakeholder groups in Malaysia have considered culinary heritage as an essential aspect of homestays, including encouraging the use of TMF, as a means of attracting tourists to utilise the Malaysian Homestay Programme.

The research question for the stakeholders is:

RQ: To what extent, and in what ways, do primary stakeholders integrate local food as a strategy in promoting homestay?

Section A – In-depth Interview

The interview was conducted in Malay and translated into English by the researcher. The participants decided to choose the location for the interview and agreed on by the researcher. Before each interview, the researcher made a confirmation via telephone for the dates and time. The interview was done according to the objectives and research questions while probing questions or any issues were raised at the interview by the researcher. The stakeholders were required to describe the current situation of the homestay programme in Malaysia and latest development. They were also asked questions related to the inspiration to promote the traditional Malay food in the homestays in Malaysia and how they perceived about commercialising the traditional Malay cuisine as one of the core elements for the homestay programme activities and events.

Introduction

Greeting and a brief introduction were done between the researcher and the participant. First, the researcher was explained about the objectives of the study and the type of questions that the researcher will ask. The ethics sheet was read, and the researcher will ask for permission from the participant to record the

conversation using a digital tape recorder. Assurance of confidentiality was given to the participants upon any information gained. Some of the questions that asked by the researcher were as follows:

Participant Details

Name:

Occupation:

Years of experience:

Greeting and Sharing

Discuss and probe a few more questions from the participants on the findings that emerged from the data of the first interview.

Section B – Research Questions and Interview Questions

Research Questions	Sub-Research Questions	Probing Questions
To what extent, and in what ways, do stakeholders integrate local food as a strategy in promoting homestay?	1. Background of the homestay programme 2. Current situation of the homestay in Malaysia 3. Promotion and marketing regarding with homestay 4. Cultural and heritage value in the homestay 5. Promoting the traditional Malay food in the homestay 6. Safeguarding the traditional Malay food in the homestay 7. Future recommendations for the homestay programme in Malaysia	1) Do you think that homestay programme in Malaysia are still a success as compared to the past? 2) According to your understanding, what is the focus of the homestay programme in Malaysia? 3) Is the homestay programme promoting the traditional Malay food in their provision? 4) Authenticity and commercial goal. What is more essential for you to present the traditional Malay food in the homestay programme in Malaysia?

		<p>5) What are the practices of the homestay providers at the homestay in sustaining their traditional Malay food?</p> <p>6) How they retain the authenticity of the Malay food besides achieving the commercial tourism and homestay goals?</p> <p>7) Do you feel pressure in promoting the traditional Malay food in the homestay?</p> <p>8) In your opinions, how the homestay can sustain the culinary elements of Malay food from the overall food preparation to the food presentation in preserving the authenticity to showcase it to the tourists?</p> <p>9) What is the element of the Malay traditional cuisine that you always emphasise in the marketing and promotion of homestay?</p> <p>10) What do you think about the potential and future of homestay programme in Malaysia in relations to their sustainability?</p>
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Section C – Conclusion

1. Are there any information that you would like to share about the homestay programme in Malaysia?
2. Do you have any other data that you would love to tell me more about the potential of traditional Malay food being promoted as one of the main activities and events in the homestay programme in Malaysia?
3. Do you have any other comments about this topic or research?
4. May I come back to see you or do a follow up regarding with this research should I need to clarify specific issues?

B (b) Interview Guide – Homestay Providers

The goal of the study is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be utilised by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities.

The research aim for the homestay providers is:

Aim: To investigate the value of TMF and the culinary practices of the homestay providers in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay to be upheld as a strategic culinary appeal and cultural assets to promote their homestay programme to the tourists.

The research question for the homestay providers is:

RQ: How much emphasis is placed on the value of TMF in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay as a means of promoting and publicising their homestays in order to enhance the tourist experience?

Section A – First Interview

The interview was conducted in Malay and translated into English by the researcher. The participants were interviewed at their house. Before each meeting, the researcher came to the participant's home first to make a confirmation verbally to set for the interview time. The first interview was done according to the research questions and probing questions were done after the main subject was asked. The researcher also raised any related issues (if any) at the end of the conversation. The homestay providers were required to describe their food preparation practices to the tourists in their homestay, food preparation skills and techniques in preparing the food to the tourists and another speciality that they make for the tourists during the tourists' stay. Questions about the homestay providers motivation in developing and sustaining the traditional Malay food in the homestay also were asked during the interview. Finally, the last items to them are about how they went about commercialising their traditional Malay cuisine to the homestay tourists.

Introduction

Greeting and a brief introduction were done between the researcher and the participant. First, the researcher was explained about the objectives of the study

and the type of questions that the researcher will ask. The ethics sheet was read, and the researcher will ask for permission from the participant to record the conversation using a digital tape recorder. Assurance of confidentiality was given to the participants upon any information gained. Some of the questions that asked by the researcher were as follows:

Participant Details

Name:

Age:

Occupation:

Years of experience in homestay programme:

Marital Status:

Greeting and Sharing

Discuss and probe a few more questions from the participants on the findings that emerged from the data of the first interview.

Section B – Research Questions and Interview Questions

Research Questions	Sub-Research Questions	Probing Questions
What is the culinary appeal in Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay that can be used to promote and publicise their homestays as well as to enhance the tourist experience?	Practices regarding: a) The traditional Malay food that has been serving for the homestay tourists b) The recipes of their TMF c) The ingredients they used for the TMF	1) Do you think the TMF that you are preparing and cooking for the tourists are authentic and original? 2) May I know, what is the speciality of this homestay programme about their TMF? 3) Is the traditional food that has been serving to the homestay tourists are following the original recipes and cooking methods? 4) Authenticity and commercial goal for the homestay programme. What is your opinion about preparing the

	<p>d) Any cooking methods and techniques for the TMF</p> <p>e) The equipment and technology used for cooking their TMF</p> <p>f) Cooking tips or ‘petua’ that they used to prepare their TMF in the kitchen</p>	<p>authentic food to the tourists for this homestay?</p> <p>5) What are the practices of the homestay providers in this homestay in promoting and sustaining their heritage food?</p> <p>6) Do you feel pressure in preparing the traditional food to the homestay tourists?</p> <p>7) In your opinions, how this homestay can sustain their traditional Malay food from the aspects of food preparation for the food presentation for the tourists?</p> <p>8) What is the element of your TMF that you always emphasize in preparing the food to the tourists at this homestay?</p>
<p>1. What are the beliefs and personal values embedded in the homestay providers in preparing traditional Malay food for the tourists in their homestay provision?</p>	<p>a) Background of the homestay providers</p> <p>b) The cooking and learning process of TMF</p> <p>c) Knowledge sharing among the families, friends, and others in relations to TMF in the</p>	<p>1) When do you start to learn about cooking?</p> <p>2) How do you gather the knowledge to cook traditional Malay food in the homestay?</p> <p>3) What has brought you into the homestay programme and how do you decide to become a homestay provider in this homestay?</p> <p>4) How long have you been involved with cooking for the homestay tourists?</p> <p>5) What is the TMF or your favorite food that you always cook for the</p>

	<p>homestay</p> <p>d) Any specialty in preparing the TMF in the homestay</p>	<p>tourists?</p>
<p>3. What are the homestay providers efforts in promoting and sharing knowledge about traditional Malay food in their homestay provision?</p>	<p>a) Promotion</p> <p>b) Marketing strategy</p> <p>c) Information dissemination about TMF among the homestay providers</p> <p>d) Challenges and opportunities</p>	<p>1) How to market the traditional Malay food of this homestay to the tourists?</p> <p>2) How to create the image and identity for the traditional Malay food of this homestay to the tourists?</p> <p>3) In your opinions, do you think that our government is aggressive enough in promoting the traditional Malay food in the homestay?</p> <p>4) Why is essential to preserve the Malay's food traditions in the homestay for our future generations?</p> <p>5) What are the homestay providers efforts and strategy to market their traditional Malay food to the homestay tourists?</p> <p>6) Do you think that communication and self-presentation are essentials for the homestay in introducing and promoting their Malay cuisine to the local and international tourists?</p>

Section C – Conclusion

5. Is there any information that you would like to share your practices in preparing the traditional Malay food in this homestay?
6. Do you have any other information that you would love to tell me more about the potential of traditional Malay food promoted in your homestay?

7. Do you have any other comments about this topic or research?
8. May I come back to see you or do a follow up regarding with this research should I need to clarify specific issues?

B (c) Interview Guide – Homestay Tourists

The goal of the study is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be utilised by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities.

The research aim for the tourists is:

Aim: To analyse tourist interest in, and consumption of, local food and cultural heritage as part of the homestay programme.

The research question for the tourists is:

RQ: What are the essential elements of TMF that might enhance tourists' homestay experience and that would make TMF a central part of the homestay programme?

Section A – Open-ended Interview

The interview was conducted in Malay and translated into English by the researcher. The participants decided to choose the location for the interview and agreed on by the researcher. Before each interview, the researcher made a confirmation via telephone for the dates and time. The interview was done according to the objectives and research questions while probing questions or any issues were raised in the end of the interview by the researcher. The tourists were required to fill up the consent form followed by the demographic form. After they finished with the form, then they were asked questions about their experience in the homestay programme as well as their experiences in consuming the traditional Malay food in that homestays. A few more questions were asked in relations to their experiences in the homestay followed by their recommendation and revisit intentions to that homestay.

Introduction

Greeting and a brief introduction were done between the researcher and the participant. First, the researcher was explained about the objectives of the study and the type of questions that the researcher will ask. The ethics sheet was read, and the researcher will ask for permission from the participant to record the conversation using a digital tape recorder (for the interview). Assurance of confidentiality was given to the participants upon any information gained.

Greeting and Sharing

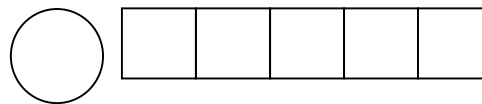
Discuss and probe a few more questions from the participants on the findings that emerged from the data of the first interview.

Section B – Research Questions and Interview Questions

Research Questions	Sub-Research Questions	Probing Questions
To what extent, and in what ways, do you think that the homestay providers integrate local food as a strategy in promoting their homestay?		
Please see attachment for the other interview questions		

Section C – Conclusion

1. Are there any information that you would like to share your opinions about the homestay programme in Malaysia?
2. Do you have any other stories that you would love to tell me more about the potential of traditional Malay food being promoted as one of the main activities and events in the homestay programme in Malaysia?
3. Do you have any other comments about this topic or research?
4. May I come back to see you or do a follow up regarding with this research should I need to clarify specific issues?



A comparison of how two homestays (Kampong Beng Homestay and Gopeng Homestay) safeguard traditional Malay food (TMF) as a means of promoting cultural-based food tourism in Perak, Malaysia (Domestic Tourists).

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this interview about the tourist consumption in traditional Malay food (hereafter, TMF) organised by the providers in the homestay programme in Kampong Beng Homestay, Lenggong, and Gopeng Homestay, Perak, Malaysia. I am a PhD student from Newcastle University, United Kingdom and today will be gaining your thoughts and opinions to find the potential of TMF as one of the main attractions in the homestay to meet the tourists demand.

- The goal of the study is to explore ways in which culinary heritage can be utilised by host communities to strengthen their homestay products and activities.

This interview should only take 20-30 minutes to complete. Be assured that all answers you provide will be kept in the strictest confidentiality. The honesty to answer all the questions is highly appreciated.

A small token of appreciation will be given after the completion of the interview.

We would very much appreciate your kind consideration to get involved in this study and the time spent on this research. Should you require any information regarding the above investigation, please do not hesitate to contact me at n.a.b.ismail1@ncl.ac.uk.

Thank you.

Domestic Tourists

PART A: Demographic Profile – Please answer all the questions below

Gender:

- Male
 Female

Age:

- 10-19
 20 – 29
 30 – 39
 40 – 49
 50 – 59
 60 and above

Nationality of Tourists:

- Malay Chinese Indian
 Others (Please specific): _____

Highest level of education:

- Primary School
 SPM
 A-Level, Certificate/ Diploma
 Degree
 Master
 PhD and above

PART B: Travel Information – Please answer all of the questions

below

1. Have you ever visited homestay before?

No

Yes

2. If yes, please stated how many homestays have you visited before.

1

3

2

4 and above

3. In what type of group are you visiting this homestay?

I am alone.

Family and/or relatives: _____ people

Friend: _____ people

Group/ Club established: _____ people

Partner/ Spouse.

4. What are the main reasons for your visit to this homestay?

(Mark the appropriate answer)

Vacation/ Relaxation

Educational visit (Attending a seminar, school programmes and other forms of _____ educations)

Work/ Business Reasons

Fun

Cultural activities

Food activities

Religious reasons

Health reasons

Sports and recreation

Visiting relatives and friends

Others (Please specify: _____)

5. Where are you coming from?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Perak | <input type="checkbox"/> Pahang |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selangor | <input type="checkbox"/> Johor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Melaka | <input type="checkbox"/> Negeri Sembilan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kedah | <input type="checkbox"/> Perlis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kelantan | <input type="checkbox"/> Terengganu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pulau Pinang | <input type="checkbox"/> Kuala Lumpur |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sabah | <input type="checkbox"/> Sarawak |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Putrajaya | <input type="checkbox"/> Labuan |

6. How many days are you planning to stay here?

- Day Trip
- Overnight
- Two nights
- Three nights
- Four nights or more

7. How did you hear about this homestay?

(Mark the appropriate answer, more answer possible)

- I already knew of it
- The internet / search engine
- Referral from friends and relatives
- Media (*TV, radio*)
- Electronic media (*TV, radio*)
- Travel books and guides (*E.g. Lonely planet*)
- Travel agency
- Fairs and exhibitions
- It was part of the travel package

Printed media (*Magazines, newspapers*)

Others, what:

**PART C: Knowledge about the UNESCO World Heritage Site status
(Only for Kampong Beng Homestay Tourists)**

8. Do you know that this homestay is nearby to UNESCO World Heritage Site?

No

Yes

Not Applicable

9. Do you know what UNESCO World Heritage Site is?

Answer:

**PART D: Attitudes and perceptions towards food served and
prepared by the homestay providers**

10. Following is still the open-ended questions. Please provide the reasons why you would like to try the TMF and your opinion about the food and cultural activities in this homestay that related to this TMF.

a) What kind of Malay food that you have eaten in this homestay? Can you please name a few of TMF that you wish to eat in this homestay?

Answer:

b) What do you think about the TMF that has been served in the homestay? How important is it this Malay food being provided to the tourist? Do you think that the tourist will like it?

Answer:

c) Do you have any idea about their TMF before coming here? Or have been informed about TMF before entering to this homestay?

Answer:

e) Do you have any experience eating this kind of TMF before coming to this homestay? **Answer:**

11. In this part of the question, how did you rate your **overall experiences** with this homestay TMF food and your experiences with the homestay providers throughout your stay?

(Probe questions)

a. Do they serve an exciting menu during your stay? What kind of cuisine that they provided?

- b. Do they serve their cultural food during your stay? Have you ever tasted that kind of Malay food before this? How do you know that food is originally from this village or homestay? Did anyone tell you about the origin or history of this food?
- c. Do you have any bad or good experiences in having and consuming their traditional food?
- d. Do you have any freedom to ask for your favourite menu during your stay? Did they ask you first what kind of food do you like to eat and want to eat?
- e. Do they tell you about how to prepare their traditional food, how to cook and what kind of ingredients that they used when they cook this traditional food? Any exciting story that the host shared with you during your visit?

14. In this part of the question, how did your **overall experiences** with the authenticity of the MHF in this homestay during your stay?

- a. Do you think that their Malay food is original and authentic? Have you seen how they prepared this food in the kitchen? Do you know what kind of cooking methods that they used mostly in making the food?
- b. Have you seen any **traditional** cooking tools and equipment's that they used in their cooking? Or do you see any **modern** types of tools and equipment?
- c. What do you think about their food presentation in serving the traditional food? Any symbolic Malay identity in the food presentation such as using the tudung saji, bekas basuh tangan, traditional labu sayong or anything?
- d. Can you please describe the taste, flavour and texture of the food that you eat in this homestay?

15. In this question, what do you think about the **quality of your experience** with their TMF and other activities?

- a) Do you involve with any of the cooking activities in this homestay?
- b) Is there any food demonstration by the local community here?
- c) Are there any everyday activities by the local people such as a wedding or prayer and feast during your stay? Did they tell you about their practices regarding cooperative food activities?
- d) Do you involve with their food preparation for dinner or bbq? What kind of food preparation that you helped and involved?

- e) Do they bring you to their kitchen garden (in their house compound)? What kind of herbs and vegetables that they plant? Do they tell you about the benefits of herbs, vegetables and plants in cooking, medical and so on?
- f) Do they bring you to their orchard in that village? What kind of farm that you've been to?
- g) Do you have any other experience regarding activities in that village/ homestay?
- h) Are there any other activities organised by this homestay? What do you think about their overall homestay activities? Do you any comments about this?

16. In this question, what do you think about the contribution of the local foods towards this homestay?

Contribution

- a. What do you think about the contribution of the Malay food to the homestay programme in this village?
- b. Do you think that is a good idea to have more activities on food or do you think that food is only part of the event for the homestay programme and it doesn't matter if they have it or not?
- c. Do you see the future of Malay food for this homestay programme?
- d. Do they promote it or not to the tourist?

PART E: Satisfaction and behavioural intentions of the tourists towards the traditional Malay food and dining experiences in this homestay

17. This part of the question refers to your feelings and comprehension of the value of consuming local food in this homestay.

- a) What kind of knowledge that you'd gained in this programme? How about experience regarding food?
- b) Do you think is worth it to come and stay in this homestay?
- c) Do you get any new experiences in this homestay?

18. In this part of the question, we would like to ask you about the **overall satisfaction** with your local food in this homestay that you are delighted.

- a. How do you rate your overall stay and satisfaction in this homestay?

- b. Do you get any souvenir from the host at the end of your stay? What do you think about the hosts' hospitality during your stay?
- c. What do you think about other activities that this homestay can be organised regarding traditional food? And how about other activities besides food? Do you think that this homestay can sustain their homestay programme with this kind of planning and management? Do you have any suggestion for the improvement of this homestay?

19. Do you have any comment about this homestay programme?

- a) Yes. → Please specify:
- b) No. → Please clarify:

20. Finally, do you have any comments about this homestay facility, management, organisation or other?

- a) Yes. → Please specify:
- c) No. → Please clarify:

21. We would like to ask you again whether you would recommend this homestay to your relatives and friends. Why?

Answer:

For the very end, a few questions about you.

22. What is your employment status? (Mark the appropriate answer)

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Employed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Self-employed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Unemployed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Retired/ renter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Student/ Pupil |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Others (Please stated): _____ |

23. Monthly Household Income in Ringgit Malaysia (RM):

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than 1000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1001 to 2000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2001 to 3000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3001 to 4000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | More than 4000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Others (Please stated): _____ |

APPENDIX C

Adet Bojojak Ceremonies at Gopeng Homestay



A child has to wear yellow colour clothes and must apply henna on their hands and feet.



The family members need to prepare seven types of flowers with different colours before the ceremony started.



The significant leaf for this ritual called Cassia Senna. The family required to get this leaf before the ceremony started.



The tray presented the must-have items that will be used for the whole *Adet Bojojak* ceremony. The candles must be in odd numbers together with the ceremonial knife and gold ring. The three limes are for the child to be showered with. The first lime must be used after the ceremony completed, while the rest is for the next two consecutive days. The child must be showered with all of the three limes as an indicator that they have undergone this Rawa old-age tradition.



The ceremony will be conducted by an experienced shaman, who is nominated by the Rawa communities.



During the rituals, the shaman recites the prayers and sacred formulas from the Holy Al-Quran and pray for a spirit's protection.



Shaman started the rituals by cutting the first limes and lighting up the candles.



The child has to be walking back and forth by stepping on the various colour of flowers, and Cassia Senna leaves for seven times.



After completed the seven times of walking back and forth on the flowers and leaves, the child has to step on his/her first sand.



After the rituals, the child has to be shielded with a yellow umbrella under the yellow sky for their limes bath.



The child must be showered with the first limes (one out of three limes) after the rituals.



The food for the child (in a yellow tray) and for the shaman (in a food container).



After the bathing ceremony completed, the child has to eat the symbolic yellow-coloured food (yellow glutinous rice).



Beras rendang, or Brown husked rice, will be given to the guest as a food souvenir and as a token of appreciation for attending this *Adet Bojajak* ceremony.

Glossary

<i>Adet Bojojok</i>	-	A popular traditional Rawa cultural traditions in a form of worship that relates to the dedication and belief of the Rawa people to their ancestors'
<i>Asr prayer</i>	-	A prayer performs before sunset, the third of five formal daily prayers of Muslims
<i>Balairaya</i>	-	Community hall
<i>Bomoh</i>	-	Shaman
<i>Gotong-royong</i>	-	Shared labour or working together activities
<i>Holy Al-Quran</i>	-	The central religious verbal text of Islam
<i>Kampong</i>	-	Rural village
<i>Kampong values</i>	-	Traditional way of lives practiced by the rural villagers
<i>Kenduri</i>	-	Festive gathering or thanksgiving ceremony
<i>Melayan</i>	-	Malay hospitality; literally means friendly and encouraging
<i>Nasi lemak</i>	-	Traditional Malay food; rice cooked with coconut milk belonging to the Malay communities in Malaysia
<i>Penghulu</i>	-	Head of the village, elected by the rural communities
<i>Omei</i>	-	A mixture of coconut residue granules, white sugar, brown sugar, and ground glutinous rice that undergoes a fermentation process for at least two or three nights until the batter has risen
<i>Primary Stakeholder</i>	-	Enablers; respondents from the category of various stakeholders such as federal and local state government, NGO's, and other private agencies in Malaysia
<i>Secondary Stakeholder</i>	-	Providers; respondents from the category of homestay providers or host communities from two homestay programmes in Perak, Malaysia
<i>Tertiary Stakeholder</i>	-	Receivers; respondents from the category of domestic tourists from two homestay programmes in Perak, Malaysia
<i>Kelamai</i>	-	A popular traditional Rawa snack food prepared from ground glutinous rice, coconut residue granules, brown sugar and sugar
<i>Gula hangus</i>	-	A popular traditional Malay cakes that similar to dodol.
<i>Ulam</i>	-	Traditional Malay salads from fresh herbs and vegetables
<i>Sambal belacan</i>	-	Popular spicy Malay chili condiment consisting of chilies, shrimp paste and lime
<i>Tempoyak</i>	-	Popular Malay condiment made from fermented durian
<i>Asom Daging</i>	-	Traditional meat Rawa dishes

<i>Asom Ikan Koli</i>	-	Traditional Rawa dishes made from catfish
<i>Bubur Anak Lebah</i>	-	Traditional Malay dessert made from rice flour jelly drenched in sweet coconut milk and is one of the favourite desserts in Perak
<i>Cincalok</i>	-	Traditional Malay condiments; a pounded chilli with secondary ingredients such as shrimp paste, <i>tempoyak</i> , shallots, and lime juice
<i>Berkat</i>	-	Malay food gift for the guest to take home during the feast
<i>Gulai Nangko</i>	-	Malay food gift for the guest to take home during the feast. <i>Nangko</i> , also known as jackfruit, is the main ingredient of this dish
<i>Talang fish</i>	-	A type of ocean fish used in cooking the traditional Rawa food, <i>Gulai Nangko</i>
<i>Salted Queen Fish</i>	-	A type of salted fish used in cooking the traditional Rawa food, <i>Gulai Nangko</i>
<i>Warung</i>	-	Small family-owned business or local cafés in Indonesia. The preparation of food was done in this place, that built in the outer space of their house.
<i>Padian</i>	-	A women traders who paddled their boats along the Brunei River selling food and household items
<i>Kreu khmai</i>	-	Khmer traditional healers who has a healing powers in treating the people who possess by spirits that inhabit the forest
<i>Dolma</i>	-	Traditional Azerbaijan cuisine; stuffed fillings wrapped in preserved vine leaves (the most popular types).
<i>Batik</i>	-	A method (originally used in Indonesia) of producing coloured designs on textiles by dyeing them, having first applied wax to the parts to be undyed
<i>Kimchi</i>	-	Traditional vegetable dish from Republic of Korea that undergo lactic fermentation
<i>Nsima</i>	-	A culinary tradition of Malawi in a form of thick porridge prepared with maize flour
<i>Keşkek</i>	-	Keşkek is a Turkish dish whereby women and men work together to cook wheat and meat in huge cauldrons, then serve it to guests
<i>Washoku</i>	-	The Japanese traditional foods consist of an entire system comprising the daily household meals that include rice, soup, a main course and two or three side dishes and pickles.

<i>Kimjang</i>	-	Kimjang, is the process of making and sharing kimchi from the Republic of Korea
<i>Lavash</i>	-	Traditional Armenian cuisine; a classic thin bread made from a simple dough of wheat flour and water
<i>Apéritif</i>	-	An element of drinks before the meal in the Gastronomic meal of the French
<i>Tandyr/tanūr</i>	-	An earth or stone oven in the ground for making Lavash
<i>Lavash</i>	-	A metal plate for making Lavash
<i>Sāj</i>	-	A metal plate for making Lavash
<i>Kazan</i>	-	A cauldron for making Lavash
<i>Oshi Palav</i>	-	A traditional meal of Tajikistan
<i>Milpas</i>	-	Rotating swidden fields of corn and other crops for Mexican traditional food chain
<i>Chinampas</i>	-	Man-made farming islets in lake areas in the Mexico
<i>Nasi kerabu</i>	-	Mixed Malay herbs cooked in rice dyed blue
<i>Bedak sejuk</i>	-	Traditional Malay cooling powder; rice-based face powder
<i>Sampans</i>	-	Traditional Chinese flat-bottomed boats
<i>Kerabu umbut bayas</i>	-	Traditional Lenggong dishes; salad made from young palm tree shoots
<i>Bahulu</i>	-	Traditional Malay cakes made from eggs, wheat flour and sugar
<i>Rendang daging masak pedas</i>	-	Traditional Lenggong dishes; spicy beef curry
<i>Ikan bakar with air kerabu</i>	-	Traditional Lenggong dishes; grilled fish with a gravy
<i>Gulai tempoyak</i>	-	Traditional Lenggong dishes; curry made from fermented durian
<i>Sambal serai</i>	-	Traditional Lenggong dishes; chicken cooked with spicy lemongrass
<i>Pekasam</i>	-	Fermented fish made with coarse salt, tamarind pulp and toasted rice grains
<i>Gulai masak lemak</i>	-	Fish cooked in coconut gravy
<i>Belotak</i>	-	Traditional Lenggong dishes; use old freshwater fish, mixed with various types of herbs and vegetables
<i>Medak</i>	-	Old freshwater fish, not fresh and almost spoiled
<i>Budu</i>	-	Traditional Malay condiment; anchovies paste
<i>Pengat</i>	-	Type of Malay dessert made with coconut milk
<i>Malay Kuih</i>	-	A bite-sized Malay snacks or dessert foods
<i>Panjut</i>	-	Traditional Malay oil lamp
<i>Emak or Mak</i>	-	Mother

<i>Ayah</i>	-	Father
<i>Atuk</i>	-	Grandfather
<i>Opah or Nenek</i>	-	Grandmother
<i>Saprah</i>	-	A square tablecloth
<i>Ketor</i>	-	Traditional Malay jug to wash hand before and after eating
<i>Bersimpuh</i>	-	Women fold both their feet on one side
<i>Bersila</i>	-	Men crisscross their feet in front of them
<i>Air tangan</i>	-	A popular phrase among older Malays about water from someone's hand in cooking
<i>Kebebe</i>	-	Traditional Lenggong dishes that use wooden mortar and long pestle to pound all of the ingredients
<i>Buah tangan</i>	-	Giving gifts, by the host families on someone's departure day
<i>Doa selamat</i>	-	Prayer and feast in Malay community
<i>Beras rendang</i>	-	Brown husked rice as a food gift for guest in Adet Bojojok
<i>Kampung Food</i>	-	Prepared traditional Malay dish or home-cooked dishes in the rural village

