

Analysis of sense of places effect on tourist's length of stay in the Khota Baru cultural heritage zone

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Abstract

Heritage and cultural tourism are part of the tourism industry that must be maintained sustainability. Therefore heritage tourism destinations must be able to carry a "sense of place" as its focus. A sense of place is essential in attracting tourists to visit heritage sites for a long time. This article aims to assess the relationship between the Sense of Place between tourists, domestic and international, and the length of stay in the Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone. A total of 445 tourists participated as respondents by filling out a questionnaire survey. At the same time, data analysis was carried out using One way ANOVA. The results showed that the Sense of Place in the Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Area affects tourists' length of stay with eight correlated scales. Those eight scales are authenticity, historical value, distinction, harmony, maintainability, and cleanliness. This study also finds several important implications for local governments and tourism practitioners in maintaining a tourism destination's economic and social attributes. This study is expected to serve as the basis for future studies related to the design of urban areas and other heritage tourism sites.

Keywords: the sense of place, heritage site, tourist length of stay

Abstrak

Wisata warisan dan budaya merupakan bagian dari industri pariwisata yang harus dijaga keberlanjutannya. Untuk memastikan hal tersebut, destinasi wisata warisan harus mampu membawa "sense of place" sebagai fokusnya. *Sense of place* menjadi penting untuk menarik wisatawan mengunjungi situs warisan dalam jangka waktu yang lama. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menilai hubungan antara Sense of Place antara wisatawan, baik domestik maupun internasional, dengan lama tinggal di Zona Cagar Budaya Kota Bharu. Sejumlah 445 wisatawan berpartisipasi sebagai responden dengan mengisi survei kuesioner, sedangkan analisis data dilakukan dengan One way ANOVA. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *sense of place* di Kawasan Cagar Budaya Kota Bharu mempengaruhi lama menginap wisatawan dengan delapan skala yang berkorelasi yaitu keaslian, nilai sejarah, kekhasan, harmonis, keterawatan, dan kebersihan. Studi ini juga menemukan sejumlah implikasi penting bagi pemerintah daerah dan praktisi pariwisata, dalam mempertahankan atribut ekonomi dan sosial suatu destinasi pariwisata. Studi ini diharapkan dapat berperan sebagai dasar kajian di masa yang akan datang terkait disain kawasan perkotaan dan situs pariwisata warisan lainnya.

Kata kunci: sense of place, situs warisan, lama inap wisatawan

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Introduction

The contemporary pattern has seen tourism as one of the main contributors to one nation's development in economy, society, and environment. Tourism has many types, including heritage tourism. In ensuring heritage tourism, the countries with rich culture and physical heritage, including tangible and intangible values, concern the sense of place. A sense of place as a broad concept is vital in ensuring tourists visit the heritage site, thus ensuring heritage tourism in a particular place. The vibrant heritage tourism in terms of social, economy, and environment will lead to sustainable tourism, leading to sustainable development.

A sense of place is a personal emotion of the place derived from our past experienced in the relation of the social, economic, and culture (Hauge, 2007). A sense of place, which comprises place identity, place attachment, and place dependent often linked with the attitude, experience, and perception of people towards a particular place (McCunn & Gifford, 2014). It is also defined by Tan *et al.* (2018) that a sense of place is a bonding that connects individuals and their meaningful places. Bonding and emotion associated with individual perceptions of their identity regarding the physical environment become the central concept of sense of place (McCunn & Gifford, 2014; Pretty *et al.*, 2003). In contrast, the heritage is far from relics and ancient practice from the past. It is all about the community's past and present that considers valuable, which intends to pass it to future generations (Idrus *et al.*, 2010). Heritage also something that cannot be recreated. Heritage site comprises of unique culture or significant physical structure. The relation between sense of place and heritage site happened when the

people have a close personal feeling for the heritage site. They will come again, thus ensuring vibrant and sustainable tourism in that place.

Length of stay signifies the amount of time that the tourist spent at a given destination and one of the essential tourism demand variables (Santos *et al.*, 2014). Researchers agree that length of stay had become the critical element to generate tourism revenue and expenditure due to its crucial importance variable for any tourism destination (Alén *et al.*, 2014; Barros & Machado, 2010; Kazuzuru, 2014; Thrane & Farstad, 2012). Length of stay is essential to sustainable tourism research since it is useful in tourist forecasting, demand, and local resource consumption. Those use highlighted as an essential issue in the context of carrying capacity analysis (de Menezes *et al.*, 2008). Length of stay is critical to the marketing policies design, associated with higher occupancy rates and revenue streams, to understand the impact of tourists' demand on the travel and hospitality industries. Furthermore, studies using the duration or length of stay as tourism variables are rare (Barros & Machado, 2010). To attract tourists in prolonging their stay in the historical site, that particular site must preserve its unique and authentic identity as well as its sense of place.

Since the sense of place related to tourists' length of stay, the research on Kelantan's heritage site associated with a sense of place and tourist's length of stay has been conducted. The number of tourists visits to Kelantan was around 5 million people in 2017, which recorded the lowest percentage among other states in Malaysia (Kelantan Tourism Information Centre, 2017). Few claim that this result due to the lack of sense of place and

authenticity with the Kelantan cultural heritage site. Until recently, a limited study has been conducted to assess and validate a sense of place. Relationship with tourism area, mainly historical-cultural places in Kelantan, whether the tourist intends to prolong their stay is significant with the authenticity of historical places in Kelantan. Therefore, this paper aims to analyze the relationship between sense of place among tourists' intention to prolong their stay in Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone.

Methods

A questionnaire survey approach was chosen for this study conducted in the area of Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone. The questionnaire survey consists of closed-ended questions with ordered choices that require the respondent to examine each possible response independent of the other choices. The choices form a continuum of responses, such as those provided by Likert scales and numerical ranges. The range is from strongly Disagree to Agree strongly. After the survey process, it was followed by the statistical analysis method of One-Way Anova.

The study area is in Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone or '*Zon Warisan Budaya*' that is situated in Kota Bharu district along the Kelantan River. In 1991, The Kota Bharu Municipal Council-Islamic City (MPKB-BRI) inaugurated it as a cultural heritage zone. The consideration is that the zone has various kinds of museums and former iconic and unique royal buildings inherited from centuries ago. The heritage zone covers an area of 12 hectares. The zone itself is based on the original location of the royal palace and government buildings of Kota Bharu in the year 1844. According to Kota Bharu Local Plan 2020, the zone itself is under a particular area plan of cultural heritage.

Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage's buildings can be categorized into the royal palace, museum, monument, square, mosque, hotel, restaurant, shophouses, shopping, and facility. The zone gazette as a cultural heritage zone, it has been a prime tourism destination in Kota Bharu. The respondents are among domestic and international tourists who visited the zone during the data collection period.

The sample size was taken based on Yamane's formula. It can be used to determine the minimal sample size for a given population size and, therefore, be considered suitable for determining an appropriate sample size (Botes, 2009; Mora & Kloet, 2010). In this study, 5,321,957 tourists were visiting Kelantan in 2017. Thus, by using the total number of tourists visiting Kelantan as the population size ($N=5,321,957$) with a 95% confidence level ($P=0.5$), the estimated sample size reached 400. This number is the lowest acceptable number of responses to maintain a 95% confidence level. Therefore, the study prepared 500 units of a questionnaire survey to be distributed. The sampling method used for this study is a simple random sampling that every sampling unit has an equal chance of being chosen (Alvi, 2016; Shalab, 2019). This method avoids choosing a case of element more than once. The randomly selected sample is then called representative for the entire population (Ahmed, 2009; Frerichs, 2008; Mora & Kloet, 2010).

The tourist's sense of place is measured based on Bott's (2000) set of psychometric scales. This study involves ten scales, including the built environment, inherent socio-cultural, transactional socio-cultural, significance, memory, aesthetic, purposive, informational, well-being, and character scale. This set of psychometric scale has

been used by Raadik-Cottrell (2010) and Counted (2019).

The sample population for this research was composed of tourists who visited the Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone in September 2019. The survey was conducted over three months, from 1 September to 31 December 2019, at seven different most visited places in the zone. The survey period's determination takes into account the conditions in September 2019, which have four days off in a week in three consecutive weeks. It continued with the end of year school holiday started from 22 November to 31 December.

Those conditions will cause a peak of tourists to visit the zone, as mentioned by Kelantan's museum official. Respondents were approached and informed about the survey's purpose in advance before they were given the questionnaire. Data were collected at seven different places, including four museums, which are Istana Jahar, Istana Batu, War Museum, and Islamic museum. Two squares, which are Kota Sultan Ismail and Muhammadi square, and Nasi Ulam Cikgu restaurant.

Result and Discussion

The initial sample consisted of 500 questionnaires, with 55 of them did not complete the surveys. Therefore, the data from 445 respondents were analyzed in this study.

Respondents socio-demographic profile

The respondents' age was dominated by the age group 21-30 years (41.8%), and the age group of 61 years and over was the smallest group of respondents (0.4%). Most of the respondent's marital status was single (66.1%). It was followed by married (30.1%), divorced (2.2%), and widowed (1.6%) and regarding occupational professions, dominated by students (44.7%), government servants (31%), and private employees (20%). Most of the respondents, with 90.8%,

reported that they were Malaysian, whereas 9.2% of the respondents were international travelers. In terms of education level, 78.2% of the respondents had a university education level; 42.7% of the respondents had a diploma education, 27.2% had bachelor's degree education, and 8.3% had post-graduate education. 16.8% of the respondents had a secondary school education. No respondent in the research study was at the primary level or below. The result shows the relatively high educational attainment of the respondents (see appendix 1).

Respondents trip profile

In the category of the first-time visit to Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone, 60.2% of respondents have visited the zone in the past. In comparison, 39.8% of the respondents did not have previous experience with the area. Furthermore, respondents' length of stay showed that 53.7% of the respondents had stayed 2 to 4 days. It was followed by respondents who stayed five to seven days (25.2%), respondents who stayed eight days or more (11.0%), and respondents who stayed one day only (10.1%) (see appendix 2).

Tourist perception of the sense of place

The Built Environment Scale indicates two items that significantly different in the length of stay in Kota Bharu. 'Building color scale' ($f(3,441) = 2.886, p < 0.05$) and 'materials which fit the setting' ($f(3,441) = 6.348, p < 0.05$) (see table 1). The other item shows no significant differences to the length of stay of respondents in Kota Bharu and scheduled to visit Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone, 'has attractive buildings' ($f(3,441) = 0.248, p > 0.05$). The sense of place referring to the Built Environment in Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone influences the tourist's decision to stay longer in the zone.

Table 1. One-way ANOVA test on the length of stay

Components	df	F - value	P-value	Significant
Built Environment Scale				
Building color	3, 441	2.886	0.035	yes
Materials which fit the setting	3, 441	6.348	0.000	yes
Has attractive buildings	3, 441	1.381	0.248	no
Character Scale				
	df	F	Sig. value	Significant
Clean	3, 441	2.111	0.098	no
Alive	3, 441	1.308	0.271	no
Peaceful	3, 441	6.797	0.000	yes
Distinctive	3, 441	2.345	0.072	no
Harmonious	3, 441	4.133	0.007	yes
Balanced	3, 441	6.027	0.000	yes
Well-maintained	3, 441	2.512	0.058	no
Simple	3, 441	3.240	0.022	yes
Spacious	3, 441	3.947	0.008	yes
Open	3, 441	5.161	0.002	yes
Inherent Socio-Cultural Scale				
	df	F	Sig. value	Significant
Historic	3, 441	4.239	0.006	yes
Authentic	3, 441	2.831	0.038	yes
Has the spirit of people	3, 441	3.050	0.028	yes
Fits within the broader context Kota Bharu	3, 441	3.160	0.025	yes
Support the function of Kota Bharu	3, 441	3.201	0.023	yes
Feel the sense of history	3, 441	3.378	0.018	yes
Transactional Sociocultural Scale				
	df	F	Sig. value	Significant
Offers a sense of belonging	3, 441	4.180	0.006	yes
Provide opportunities for interaction with others	3, 441	4.009	0.008	yes
Civility	3, 441	4.115	0.007	yes
Generates respects for the individual	2, 442	5.116	0.006	yes
Has a distinct energy	3, 441	3.714	0.012	yes
Feel a part of the community	3, 441	5.316	0.001	yes
Significance Scale				
	df	F	Sig. value	Significant
Meaningful	3, 441	4.567	0.005	yes
Significant	3, 441	4.549	0.004	yes
Interesting	3, 441	3.446	0.017	yes
Valuable	3, 441	3.394	0.018	yes
Memory Scale				
	df	F	Sig. value	Significant
Familiar	3, 441	3.079	0.027	yes
Well-known	3, 441	1.894	0.130	no
Memorable	3, 441	1.433	0.232	no
Feel a sense of connection	3, 441	3.188	0.024	yes
Feel i know it well	3, 441	2.460	0.062	no
Feel a sense of nostalgia	3, 441	3.066	0.028	yes
Aesthetic Scale				
	df	F	Sig. value	Significant
Beautiful	3, 441	4.113	0.007	yes
Aesthetically pleasing	3, 441	4.287	0.005	yes
Pleasing to look at	3, 441	2.011	0.112	No
Generates a positive sensory experience	3, 441	4.723	0.003	Yes
Feel a sense of awe	3, 441	2.665	0.047	Yes
Feel a sense of appreciation	3, 441	4.585	0.004	Yes
Purposive Scale				
	df	F	Sig. value	Significant
Meets my expectations historical site	3, 441	2.227	0.084	No
Support the role at a historical site	3, 441	3.163	0.024	Yes
Informational Scale				
	df	F	Sig. value	Significant
Understandable	3, 441	3.422	0.017	Yes
Provides a sense of direction	3, 441	3.362	0.019	yes
Has a distinct landmark	3, 441	3.395	0.018	yes
Is easy to find the way around in	3, 441	4.932	0.002	yes
Makes way-finding seem intuitive	3, 441	4.548	0.004	yes
Provides info	3, 441	3.560	0.014	yes
Well-being Scale				
	df	F	Sig. value	Significant
Safe	3, 441	2.863	0.036	yes
Comfortable	3, 441	2.977	0.031	yes
Warm	3, 441	4.881	0.002	yes
Serene	3, 441	3.495	0.016	yes
Reassuring	3, 441	2.886	0.022	yes
Revitalizing	3, 441	3.365	0.019	yes
Feel in control	3, 441	5.154	0.002	yes

Source: analysis result (2019)

Character Scale's result indicates six items shown significant differences in relation to length of stay of respondents in Kota Bharu and scheduled to visit Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone, 'peaceful' (f (3,441)=6.797, $p<0.05$), 'harmonious' (f (3,441) =4.133, $p <0.05$), 'balanced' (f (3,441) =6.027, $p<0.05$), 'simple' (f (3,441) =3.240, $p<0.05$), 'spacious' (f (3,441) =3.947, $p<0.05$) and 'open' (f (3,441)=5.161, $p<0.05$). The other four items shown no significant differences in relation to length of stay of respondents in Kota Bharu and scheduled to visit Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone, 'clean' (f (3,441)=2.111, $p>0.05$), 'alive' (f (3,441)=1.308, $p>0.05$), 'distinctive' (f (3,441) =2.345, $p>0.05$) and 'well-maintained' (f (3,441) =2.512, $p>0.05$). The sense of place referring to the Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone character does influence the tourist to stay longer in the zone.

Inherent Socio-cultural Scale's result indicates all six items of the scale items shown significant differences in the length of stay of respondents. 'authentic' (f (3,441) =2.831, $p<0.05$), 'has the spirit of people' (f (3,441) =3.050, $p<0.05$), 'feel a sense of history' (f (3,441) =3.378, $p<0.05$), 'historical' (f (3,441) =4.239, $p<0.05$), 'fits within the larger context of Kota Bharu' (f (3,441) =2.160, $p<0.05$) and 'support the function of Kota Bharu' (f (3,441) =3.201, $p<0.05$). The sense of place referring to inherent socio-cultural in Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone influences the tourist's decision to stay longer in the zone.

Transactional Socio-cultural Scale's result indicates all six items shown significant differences to the length of stay of respondents in Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone. 'feel part of the community' (f (3,441) =5.316, $p<0.05$), 'offers a sense of belonging' (f (3,441) =4.180, $p<0.05$),

provide opportunities for interaction with others' (f (3,441) =4.009, $p<0.05$), 'civility' (f (3,441) =4.115, $p<0.05$), 'generates respect for the individual' (f (2,442) =5.116, $p<0.05$) and 'has a distinct energy' (f (3,441) =5.316, $p<0.05$). The sense of place referring to transactional socio-cultural in Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone influences the tourist's decision to stay longer in the zone.

Significant scale's result indicates all four items shown significant differences to the length of stay in Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone, 'meaningful' (f (3,441) =4.567, $p<0.05$), 'significant' (f (3,441) =4.549, $p<0.05$), 'interesting' (f (3,441) =3.446, $p<0.05$) and 'valuable' (f (3,441) =3.394, $p<0.05$). The sense of place referring to significance in the Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone influences the tourist's decision to stay longer in the zone.

Memory Scale's result indicates three items shown significant differences to the length of stay of respondents in Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone. 'familiar' (f (3,441) =3.079, $p<0.05$), 'feel a sense of connection' (f (3,441) =3.188, $p<0.05$), and 'feel a sense of nostalgia' (f (3,441) =3.066, $p<0.05$). The other three items showed no significant differences to the length of stay of respondents, which is 'well-known' (f (3,441) =1.894, $p>0.05$), 'memorable' (f (3,441) =1.433, $p>0.05$), and 'feel like I know it well' (f (3,441) =2.460, $p>0.05$). The sense of place referring to memory in the Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone does not influence the tourist's decision to stay longer in the zone.

Overall tourist perception on the sense of place

Respondents were also asked about their overall level of sense of place regarding their length of stay in Kota Bharu and scheduled to visit Kota Bharu Cultural

Heritage Zone. The results using One-Way ANOVA is illustrated in table 2.

Table 2. One-way ANOVA analysis on the overall sense of place

Dependent Variables	df	F	sig, value	Sig.
Length of Stay	4, 440	2.877	0.023	yes

Source: analysis result (2019)

The result of ANOVA analysis, which to find respondent's overall sense of place level significant differences to the length of stay of respondents in Kota Bharu and scheduled to visit Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone, shown significant differences, ($F(4,440) = 2.877, p < 0.05$). The sense of place in the Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone influences the tourist's decision to stay longer in the zone.

The results show that the sense of place of Kota Bharu Cultural Heritage Zone does influence tourists to stay longer in the zone. It is parallel with the previous research where the length of stay affects the high value of the sense of place, and length of stay relates to the attachment of tourism product as mentioned by Smaldone (2007). From 10 scales of the length of stay, eight scales influence the tourist decision to stay longer in the heritage zone with a great sense of place.

Conclusion

This study has identified and explored the gap in tourism research in terms of place relationship with tourist behaviors, particularly tourist length of stay in the heritage site. It helps the government and tourism players in planning attractions for tourists hence sustaining the area in terms of social and economic factors. The One-Way ANOVA analysis between the sense of place items with the respondent's length of stay may help the tourism business operators identify a specific area for improving and enhancing. The study also reveals that heritage tourism is significantly connected with the sense of

place. This because the authenticity, historical values, distinctive, harmonious, well-maintained, and clean are part of the sense of place scale. Therefore, to improve the tourism industry, a sense of place is one of the essential components that should not be neglected. Furthermore, this study contributes to the body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence for academic development needs in the future.

Authors statement

With this, the authors state that this study is free from conflicts of interest with any party.

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Authors Contribution

Nik Mohamad Aizat Nik Mohd Adib contributed to conceptualization, data collection, investigation, and original draft writing.

Syakir Amir Ab. Rahman contributed to methodology, formal analysis, validation, writing - review, and editing

Appendix 1. Respondents socio-demographic profile

Variable	Components	Domestic		International		Total	
		Unit	%	Unit	%	Unit	%
Gender	male	171	38.4	20	4.5	191	42.9
	female	233	52.4	21	4.7	254	57.1
Age	15-20	150	33.7	2	0.4	152	34.2
	21-30	160	36.0	26	5.8	186	41.8
	31-40	57	12.8	10	2.2	67	15.1
	41-50	25	5.6	3	0.7	28	6.3
	51-60	10	2.2	0	0.0	10	2.2
	61-70	2	0.4	0	0.0	2	0.4
Marital status	single	272	61.1	22	4.9	294	66.1
	married	121	27.2	13	2.9	134	30.1
	widowed	6	1.3	1	0.2	7	1.6
	divorced	5	1.1	5	1.1	10	2.2
Occupation	student	189	42.5	10	2.2	199	44.7
	government servant	129	29.0	9	2.0	138	31.0
	private	73	16.4	16	3.6	89	20.0
	pensioner	4	0.9	0	0.0	4	0.9
	others / unemployed	9	2.0	6	1.3	15	3.4
Education	SPM/O-level	61	13.7	1	0.2	62	13.9
	STPM/matriculation/ A-level	13	2.9	0	0.0	13	2.9
	certificate	17	3.8	3	0.7	20	4.5
	diploma	182	40.9	8	1.8	190	42.7
	bachelor degree	108	24.3	13	2.9	121	27.2
	master degree	14	3.1	9	2.0	23	5.2
	PhD	8	1.8	6	1.3	14	3.1
	others	1	0.2	1	0.2	2	0.4
Origins		404	90.8	41	9.2	445	100

Appendix 2. Respondents trip profile

Variables	Components	Domestic		International		Total	
		Unit	%	Unit	%	Unit	%
First Visit	yes	143	32.1	34	7.6	177	39.8
	no	261	58.7	7	1.6	268	60.2
Length of stay (LOS)	1 day	45	10.1	0	0.0	45	10.1
	2-4 days	227	51.0	12	2.7	239	53.7
	5-7 days	97	21.8	15	3.4	112	25.2
	8 or more days	35	7.9	14	3.1	49	11.0