ARCHITECTURAL VALUE FOR URBAN TOURISM PLACEMAKING TO REJUVENATE THE CITYSCAPE IN JOHOR BAHRU

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Abstract. This study aims to investigate the social significance of urban placemaking in shaping the architectural values of the cityscapes for sustainable tourism. The Johor Bahru City Centre was developed with explicit intention to have public open spaces that can encourage tourism activities in the urban area. Cultural and natural resources are essential to make the tourism industry grow successfully. Historical and archaeological sites also become a part of tourist attraction such as museums, state landmarks, parks, sculptures, monuments and others. In this respect, the architectural values of the city are the tangible assets that the city has, while the cultural and natural values are the intangible assets that can be captured from places that shape tourist perception. Placemaking supports the concept of generating places that improve the relationship between users and space, by increasing the sense of place. This is where the values of architecture must be preserved in order to maintain the identity of the region. Based on an extensive review of the literature and empirical works, this research examines Johor Bahru by extracting its similarities and differences with cities in Singapore and Australia, to derive at a better understanding of the significance of the architectural value and urban tourism placemaking in rejuvenating the city values attached to physical spaces. The benchmarking study analyses the values of architecture and discusses the advantages resulting from various architectural characters in tourism. These relationships are essential to understanding the role of architectural value for urban tourism placemaking in rejuvenating the city. This study found that there is a complex nature of the generations of architectural elements through placemaking.

Keywords: Architecture in tourism; placemaking in tourism; sustainable city tourism, urban tourism placemaking, cityscape rejuvenation.
1. Introduction

Architecture is a physical form that plays a significant role in urban tourism placemaking. Architectural elements such as buildings, monuments, sculpture, park, landscapes and public spaces contribute to the identities of places. The presence of these elements as part of the urban fabric makes cities as one of the most desired attractions of tourism industry. According to Edwards, Griffin and Hayllar (2008) in Scerri, Edwards and Foley (2016), physical form as defined by architecture refers to space with aesthetic value that can help people to recognize and feel a sense of place. It will also help to “pull” tourists to the area through the various focal points that attract visitors’ attention and offer them a rich experience (Krolikowski and Brown, 2008). In this sense, the values of architecture can be seen to have a direct influence on tourism motivation. Tourism motivation is essentially the “push” and “pull” factors associated with people’s desire to go on a vacation (push factor) and choice of destination (pull factor). Throughout the world, architecture has always had a strong influence in tourism. For instance, as observed in mass tourism, historical buildings, palaces and monuments such as those found in Europe and Asia, have continuously received a high number of tourist arrivals from all over the world. Great architecture can be an instrument to enhance a destination image, or even put a less known destination on the map. According to Scerri, Edwards and Foley (2016), buildings can make places easy to identify. The imagery of the architectural becomes synonymous to the image of the destination. The authors further added that historic buildings can capture celebrations, events and promote renowned people, while museum is a building that holds and displays cultural products and historical artifacts that serves as an educational reference point for the community and tourists. The role of architecture in urban tourism encompasses a wide field, from the architectural infrastructure needed to transport and host tourists, to the physical attractions that tourists visit. Tourism sells a beautiful experience. The tourist experience takes place in a setting that will always be remembered. Architecture is a major component of the city’s setting, and therefore its values are essential in the making of successful urban tourism.

Tourism placemaking is a process that generates destination image and it is very crucial to enhance repeat visitations by visitors (Razali and Ismail, 2014). The importance of the placemaking concept is to make a place have a distinctive identity, life, sustainability, resilience, reflect on life and community involvement in its planning and development. Urban tourism placemaking is a tool to transform the physical forms of the city into places that tourists desire to spend their time and money. In this process, spaces are converted into meaningful places for the local community and the tourists, which eventually becomes part of the tourist motivation. Placemaking supports the concept of generating places that improve the relationship between users and space, by increasing the sense of place. In the placemaking process, emphasis is given to both the local community’s needs and the tourists’ needs. The balanced approach is integral part of a city’s development in ensuring that the place can be sustained for a long time because essentially the caretakers of the city are the locals themselves. This is where architecture plays an important role in maintaining the identity of the cityscape that needs to be preserved. The cityscape is a view or picture of the place that simultaneously describes the characteristic and appearance of a city. The city represents its people, as much as the people represent their city. The cityscape reflects the social space and the overall destination image, and this can influence the time spent by tourists to do activities in the area. Embarking from this notion, this study aims to investigate social significance of urban placemaking in shaping sustainable tourism especially in architectural values of the cityscapes.
2. Architectural value for Urban Tourism Placemaking

Urban Tourism Placemaking Concept

The concept of tourism placemaking is a planning and development approach in constituting an image and sense of destination to enrich the traveler’s experience. Tourism placemaking is a value-added process that enhances destination identities to visitors and tourists through assets of the local communities, such as locality, history, culture and environmental values (Canter 1977; Gunn 1988; Potteiger and Purinton 1998; Bell 1999; Zakariya, Mohyuddin and Yaman, 2007). The concept of tourism placemaking is a destination development that reinforces on the characters, identities and meanings of the attractions displayed and offered by the community as tourism products that offer travelers an interesting experience (Smith 1995; Pratiwi, Soedarmadji and Yanindaputri 2010; Notten 2011). Therefore, in the context of this study, the concept of tourism placemaking is a planning and development approach in establishing identity and sense of place in a destination, to give travelers a unique experience and surroundings (Razali et al., 2017). The presence of physical elements in a place, such as built forms and natural forms, shape the distinctiveness of the place. All places stand on a specific geographical location. Therefore, how the places are built are usually in response to their local climate, local culture and local resources. Lynch (1960) suggests that what sets a place a part from one another defines its identity. This identity can sometimes be visually seen from its built forms such as the buildings, monuments and city spaces. Nonetheless, part of this identity is culturally defined from how the place is inhabited, used, adapted and becomes assimilated in the people’s way of life. This study makes references to the town centre of Singapore and the city of Adelaide in Australia as a starting point to study the similarities and differences with Johor Bahru to deliver better understanding about rejuvenating the city through architecture and urban tourism placemaking attached to physical spaces. Physical space is important in determining the identity of the city, as it is the point of social and cultural discovery and community to interact.

Placemaking Theory

In theory, placemaking is the transformation of a space into place (Razali et al., 2017). The original concept of placemaking is the planning and management of public space through the community (Wykoff, 2014). In the tourism context, space and place create tourist attractions because tourist attraction is important to generate tourist presence, business, economic activity and mobility where the host and organization need to think about how to attract people to come (Hultman 2007; Jensen 2007; Ooi, Hakanson and Lacava et al. 2014; Ertan and Yakup, 2015). In terms of strategic destinations, it is a geographical brand of attraction, culture and environment for marketing strategy (Gunn 1988; Cooper and Michael Hall 2008; Hultman and Hall 2012). The settings of the destination combined with the travel behavior of the tourists shape the tourist experience (Ryan, 1995). Figure 1 shows the placemaking concept between space theory and place theory, thus creating tourism destination.

![Figure 1: Placemaking Concept in Tourism](Source: (Relph 1976; Tuan 1977; Gunn 2002))
Cityscape Rejuvenation That Involve Architectural Value

Transformation of space into place is very important to rejuvenate a place. Humans need a space for them to continue their life as stated by Greenbie (1992) that as a civilized society, people need a shared space uninterrupted and invaded by one another. Place is the result of space that is inhabited or interacted by people, and the place usually has a fixed location and certain characteristics that give its own character and value (Relph, 1976). With reference to the city of Adelaide, located in South Australia, we can see an example of how a space is transformed into a place where the street architecture is combined with placemaking concept to rebrand the town. Adelaide, which is the capital city, started the placemaking activities a few years ago by transforming their parking spaces into a place where the community can meet and do some activities, like food vendors, musicians and street shops. Adelaide uses the placemaking approach as a tool to engage the public in new ways. For example, they maintain the city form and heritage buildings while improving the quality of street environment (Adelaide City Council, 2014). According to the Adelaide’s local area development plans under Development Act 1993, they promote the use of placemaking and shared spaces around the city with several strategies like a building façade fronting street frontages, access way, driveway or public spaces should be composed with an appropriate scale, rhythm and proportion which respond to the use of the building, local character and surrounding building. Besides, building, advertisements, site landscape, street planting and paving should be integrated with coordinated appearance to enhance the cityscape urban environment (Adelaide City Council, 2014). Thus, it shows clearly that architectural value is very important for the rejuvenation of a city to increase the arrival of tourists.

In this respect, architectural value represents the tangible benefit in urban tourism placemaking, while cultural and natural values are the intangible benefit that can be captured from places that shape tourist perception. With reference to the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) website, STB together with various government agencies, precinct associations and private stakeholders, convene in a coordinated effort to spearhead, develop and implement various placemaking initiatives, such as festivals, marketing initiatives and infrastructure improvements, with the aim to improve visitor experience and inject vibrancy to bring the precincts to life. Singapore enhances its architectural value and use the placemaking approach to shape the image and sense of place that influence the tourist experiences. For instance, they create Cultural Precincts like Chinatown and Little India by improving the street market, heritage architecture building and food street. They also propose many festivals to provide a worthwhile experience for travelers. Additionally, they also create Lifestyle Precincts like Orchard Road and Sentosa Harbourfront. Each precinct has unique characteristic through differentiated leisure events that attract visitors and increase spending (Singapore Tourism Board, 2018). These reference studies prove that Singapore and Adelaide emphasize their architectural, cultural and natural values to rejuvenate their city in order to enhance tourist motivation.

3. Architecture Value in Johor Bahru Cityscape

Johor Bahru is capital city of Johor state, located in the southernmost part of the Malaysia Peninsula, adjacent to Singapore with a population of half million people making it second largest city in Malaysia (Statistic Department, Malaysia, 2010). Johor Bahru has its own unique capability to attract domestic and international visitors, according to Tourism Malaysia Statistic 2017 that indicates 7.01 million tourists stayed overnight in Johor with the largest percentage is in Johor Bahru as much as 69%. The tourism length of stay is a variable of key factor for any tourism destination due to its crucial effect on overall tourism expenditure (Economics, Thrane and Science, 2015).
Figure 2 shows the Johor Bahru cityscape that has more elements of architecture, which makes this place so unique and rich in history.

Johor Bahru cityscape has challenges due to some public spaces that do not present a sense of invitation to attract people to sit and rest due to congestion even on the pedestrian walkways, lack of proper sit-outs, pollution and absence of well-landscape open space and street light (Rahely, Najafpour and Lamit, 2013). It can be seen that most of the weakness are caused by lack of architectural values such as street architecture, landscape architecture and others. Johor Bahru’s interesting places and importance of architectural value for urban tourism placemaking have potentials to rejuvenate the cityscape in the town. Johor Bahru’s rejuvenation involves urban regeneration process of remaking the place. In this process, regeneration initiatives are planned to enhance the physical conditions of places, increase economic growth and environmental sustainability in order to facilitate higher quality of people life. Rebranding the city is able to attract local and foreign tourist to come to a place as well as increase tourism activity in Johor Bahru. However, it is difficult to discuss tourism without discussing architecture because architecture is a commodity of tourist consumption and objectified cultural capital (Scerri, Edwards and Foley, 2016). The Johor architecture is formed from a combination of Dutch, Malay, Chinese, Indian, Portuguese, and British during the various eras. Ethnic diversity produces uniqueness for this city. The place rich in cultural and natural resources has the potential to make tourism to grow successfully. Other than that, the historic and archaeological sites also become part of tourist attraction, such as museum, landmark state, parks, sculpture, monuments and others.
4. Johor Bahru Cityscape and Its Architecture

The value of architecture plays an important role in rejuvenating the Johor Bahru cityscape. Based on site observation, Johor Bahru cityscape consists of diversity architecture such as royal architecture, religious architecture, state administrative building architecture, cultural architecture, modern architecture, street architecture, landscape architecture and others. Beautiful and wonderful architecture can be seen in the royal building which symbolizes the superiority status of Johor. For instance, Sultan Abu Bakar Mosque is a Johor’s state mosque as a beautiful example of Victorian fusion architecture and perched atop a hill with sweeping views of the Johor Strait and across to Singapore. Furthermore, royal architecture can be observed closely at Abu Bakar Royal Palace surrounded by several hectares of beautifully manicured grounds was completed in 1866. In 1990, it was reimagined as a public museum with an impressive collection of royal artefacts. The value of Johor architecture is also absorbed in the official building of the state administration like Sultan Ibrahim Building as a monument of western and eastern architecture, a symbol where traditional and modern civilization blended harmoniously together. In addition, the building was the earliest skyscrapers and stood the tallest amongst the buildings in Johor Bahru until the 1970s and as symbol of the King’s visionary plans for Johor (Tourism Johor Website, 2018). Another historic building is Johor Bahru High Court built in 1900 shows the features of Italian Renaissance Architecture because Johor was brought under British control when the court was built. Other than that, Johor Bahru Police Station influenced by architecture from England with blue and white furnishing (Tourism Johor Website, 2018). Near the police station there is a historic building that connecting two neighboring countries Malaysia-Singapore, Johor Bahru Old Railway Station was launched in 1932 and has been intercity railway station that boasts western architecture in a very unique way. Now, the building opening as train museum and provides opportunities for travelers to gain a great architectural experience.

Johor Bahru cityscape formed by strong relationship among multiracial communities. It can be proven by existence of various religious architecture such as Sultan Abu Bakar Mosque for Muslims, Johor Bahru Old Chinese Temple for Chinese community was built in 19th century with combination of different Chinese group as Hokkien, Cantonese, Hainan, Teochew and Hakka which combine all the Chinese identity. Sri Raja Mariamman Temple Johor Bahru Immerse in rich culture of Hindu with over 100 years of history, the impressive Hindu temple was a huge contrast to nearby hotels and shopping malls. Next is the Johor Bahru Gurdwara Sahib Sikh Temple a most unique and exotic heritage of Sikh with witnessed in ancient time, most of the Sikhs were appointed to work as policemen and the bodyguards of royalty. Besides that there is also have India Muslim Mosque Located right at the junction of Jalan Duke and Jalan Dhoby featuring a silver and blue dome with two minarets aside, the mosque comes with white walls with blue-tinted glass, offering a modern ambience and convenient. There are also old buildings that are given a new life by maintaining the original architecture, Tiong Hua Chinese Heritage Museum is a newly-renovated museum that boasts four stories and stands prominently in the middle of the row of shop house. Before converting into a museum, it was previously owned by JB Tiong Hua Association as their base.

Johor Bahru cityscape aim to be a thriving and dynamic tourism destination by 2020 with Family Fun theme by providing world class recreational, tourism circuit and as southern tourism destination city of Malaysia (Iskandar Regional Development Authority, 2013). Hence, the cityscape is undergoing changes to achieve the vision and can be seen with the construction more tourist’s area are built by targeting all segmentation including children, teens, adults and families. For example, JB crown also known as Laman Mahkota become as tourist attraction. The crown arch that complements the palace was actually built as a gift by the Sultan of Johor for the people (The Official Tourism Johor Website, 2018). The cityscape is enlivened with night atmosphere in the middle of the capital city, Johor Bahru Bazar Karat is a good place to buy cheap and rare items such as clothes,
accessories, food, pets, antics and music products. The flea market has a history and many tourists come over to get close to local culture. The most amazing this street architecture is Johor Bahru Bazar Karat is surrounded by old and historic building, it provides travelers with the opportunity to appreciate the architecture at night. Other than that, the important trade history for this city is Segget River located in the heart of city and has a history or urban city development. Now, the segment area is undergoing revolution to become a fascinating place to attract more target segmentation. All the above examples clearly show that the architecture has its own value in forming urban tourism placemaking to rejuvenate the cityscape in Johor Bahru. This is where the importance of architecture must be preserve in order to maintain the identity of the region.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper has discussed the role of architectural value for urban tourism placemaking in adding to the rejuvenation of place. This study demonstrates the complex nature of the generation of architectural elements through placemaking and the importance of sustaining the rich architectural characters of the city. Iconic architecture can make cities easily recognisable, where historic buildings capture the commemoration of famous events and people, and galleries and museums that hold and display cultural values and serve as places of focus and inspiration that bring communities together. In this paper, several placemaking strategies have been identified to rejuvenate the cityscape in Johor Bahru. First, the design of building can support places, for example, “green” building at the ground level, it is dynamically connected to the surrounding neighborhood, fostering street life and creating a strong sense of place. The area around the building can be enhanced by shaded structures and other amenities, making this a comfortable place and an integral part of the community. Architecture is important in urban tourism placemaking to rejuvenate the cityscape especially in Johor Bahru. Secondly, the improvement of streets as places can start with designing the street as comfortable and safe place for everyone. Squares and parks can become multi-use spaces for events, as has been implemented in Johor Bahru city by turning the parking area to popular night market. Third, there is a need to preserve and protect the city’s resources. Protecting the historic landmarks and places, unique qualities, and special traditions are crucial to attract visitors because tourism has an impact on the resources and puts stress and strain on infrastructure such as roads, landscape, water supplies, and public services. Fourth, the city needs to be able to position its uniqueness and branding by highlighting its sense of place and stories, and make the tourism site come alive by providing accurate, authentic information in an engaging and memorable way that makes the site come alive for the visitor. Finally, the tourism agencies and planners need to collaborate with partners and form alliances as an excellent way to leverage scarce financial and human resources is to form partnerships among historic sites, cultural attractions, organizations, governments, and businesses in the city. These collaborations can create multifaceted packages of traditional, cultural, and heritage tourism opportunities, thereby offering an enhanced experience to the traveller.
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