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Association between Landscape Heritage Elements and Place Attachment among Visitors in Taiping Lake Garden

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Abstract

Various researches have been conducted by researchers on landscape heritage and place attachment. The researches were done in isolation according to the differing field of study. It is noticed that there still a gap of knowledge on the association between landscape heritage elements and place attachment. As commonly realized by most of people, the priceless heritage is susceptible to deteriorate or destroyed by either natural phenomenon or human negligence. Henceforth, creating public awareness on this irreplaceable heritage is a necessity to ensure its continuous existence in the future. This paper aims to document the landscape heritage elements and examine their influence on visitors' attachment to Taiping Lake Garden. Taiping Lake Garden was selected as the study site as it is one of the oldest gardens in Malaysia. The method employed in the study is managed through archival study and observation for documenting the heritage elements found in Taiping Lake Garden. Meanwhile, survey method is used to explore the influence of heritage elements on visitors' attachment to Taiping Lake Garden. The results indicate that physical, non-physical and natural landscape as the landscape heritage elements of Taiping Lake Garden. While, the result of the surveys demonstrated that these heritage elements influence the visitors' attachment to the place. From the study, indicates that more effort needs to be done in promoting the landscape heritage of Taiping Lake Garden to sustain its existence in the future.

1. Introduction

When it comes to describing a place, we contingently will associate its existence with mankind. Variety of perspective exists on evaluation of place attachment and its impact on tourism industry, yet, there is a lack of adequate research investigating on relationship between place attachment and the landscape heritage elements. Place attachment according to [30] expresses as the emotional bond experienced by a person toward a place [3]. It is also a symbolic devotion of people to a place where the emotions are highly tied [12]. Meanwhile from the work of [29], they emphasised human relation with place that could be viewed from two components; place identity and place dependence. Place identity is defined as the personal identity which is being reflected by the physical environment by means of belief, preference, feeling, values or goals [27]. Place dependence reflects the functional types of attachment by means of providing or support the needs of people, hence, a person maintain close attachment and having special feeling towards the place [12].

The community or group of people plays an integral part in developing the attachment to the locality by interaction that occurred with both place and residents. This study is focussing on the attachment felt by visitors. Visitors' refers to any person visiting other country than its own residence for any reasons. Discovering the historical attachment for visitor is necessary ever since that it involve the memories held by individual toward the place in a specific time. In this regards, historical attachment is placed under the

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temporal categories [21]. This temporal element includes the time spent at a place and number of visit to the place [31].

Heritage commonly refers as 'something' that has been passing on to the generations of people on the present day. Various dimensions of heritage have been looked and discussed either by local or foreign countries and this includes inheritance, tradition and culture, legacy and beliefs. Basically, three key entities consolidated and was referred to heritage; material culture, natural environment and built environment [15]. This is further strengthened by [20] that defined heritage as "any heritage site, heritage object, underwater cultural heritage or any living person declared as National Heritage". In line with heritage conservation aims in safeguarding the cultural property for future by study, record, retain and restore the culturally significant qualities of an object, whether it is building, monument or site, this study also seeks to respond by exploring the attachment of visitors to these heritage elements. In this paper, emotion and feeling is the central concept. However, this emotional quality does not stand alone, it is accompanied by cognition examples knowledge, thought and belief [22]. Therefore, the researcher would be able to explore the attachment felt by visitors' to the heritage elements of the Taiping Lake Garden.

1.1. Defining heritage and heritage scenario in Malaysia

According to [33], cultural heritage is defined based on the three classifications: Monuments, Groups of Buildings and Sites.

Monuments refer to architectural work, elements or structure of an archaeological nature which are outstanding universal value from the point of view history, art or science. Meanwhile group of buildings is a group of separate or connected buildings caused by architecture or place in landscape which are outstanding from the perspective of history, art or science. In conjunction, sites is a works of man or combined works of nature and man including archaeological sites which are outstanding universal value from historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological points of view [33, 25].

Malaysia is one of the fortunate countries that are rewarded with various historic buildings. An inventory study requests by the government with the cooperation from Heritage Trust of Malaysia and other collaborations such as National Museum, The Housing and Local Government Ministry and Faculty of Built Environment, Malaysia University of Technology (UTM) have discovered that there are nearly 39,000 units of buildings built between 1800 and 1948 throughout the country which are worthy for preservation and conservation.

Though there are many heritage buildings along with historical significance that are worthy to be certified as the Heritage Buildings or National Heritage Buildings according to [20] in Act 625, yet, Malaysian government is undertaking many efforts in getting these buildings listed as it should be [28]. One of the factors that leads towards the preservation of the heritage is due to some of the priceless heritage was destroyed caused by neither natural phenomenon nor human negligence. People museum in Melaka (2001) and Sarawak Club in Kuching (2006) are some cases where these valuable buildings were burnt down by fire [32]. While the other cases such as heritage shophouse in Ipoh, Perak is in threatening situation where according to [34], this building is susceptible to demolition due to its obsolete condition [16]. Henceforth, trigger the authorities to take action with regard to this issue.

Figure 1: Sarawak Club, Kuching was burnt down by fire. Sources: [32]

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Figure 2: Heritage Shophouse in Ipoh, Perak is susceptible to be demolished. Sources: [34]

Other factors that lead to the demolition or deterioration of these valuable buildings are that the present legislation is insufficient or not suitable to protect these buildings from further threat. According to the Antiquities Act 1976, the government is permitted to list or gazette the historic buildings only when the buildings at least 100 years old through the Museum Department to give protection, preservation and conservation [17]. The problem arises when many important buildings have not reached this age, hence, are disclose to be destroyed in the development. Henceforth, alerting many institutions to collaborate in protecting these heritage values. It is important for all institutions to take part in preserving the heritage buildings as their roles in portraying the cultural fabrics used in ancient buildings besides generating income and boosting tourism industry.

7th July 2008 was a remarkable day for Malaysia after a continues effort in preserving the heritage buildings, especially when Malaysia finally received an international recognition from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO) where the famous historic city of Melaka and Georgetown of Penang was entitled as the World Cultural Heritage Site known as 'Historic cities of the Straits of Malacca'. The rational for reviewing the heritage scenario in this study is beneficial mainly for preservation of the historical and cultural significance of heritage in Malaysia.

1.2. Identification of the landscape heritage elements

In the study of heritage, commonly discussed are heritage values rather than heritage elements. Heritage value such as aesthetic value depends on individual's perception on which criteria can be notified. These criteria include the consideration of the texture and material of the fabrics or landscape such as smells, formation or sounds associated with a place [19].

However, the assessment of these heritage elements is very important since the character of a place is typified by the elements embedded in it. The heritage elements can be explained in the forms of artifacts, monuments, landscape, building, human and culture [4]. Heritage element or also called as archaeological heritage is known as part of material heritage ever since it provides primary information on human existence, human activity and objects found regardless it location either on the surface of earth or inside the water [14]. These heritage elements as refers to [26] and [35] mention that anything either locations, uses, cultural association or event which contributes to the historic of a place.

Considering that protection of these heritage often remains incomplete because of the uncertainty resources, thus, called upon the need to identify the existing heritage elements.

The heritage elements examine in this study is deduced from [7, 10, 1]. It is stated that the heritage landscapes should consider several natural and cultural significance such as vegetation patterns, the character of vegetation at present compared to previous time, understanding on natural features such as geology and habitat, grouping of uses, settings, and surrounds of structures that indicate past use, indication of circulation networks or eligibility, tracks, pathways, roads and evidence on activity from ancient time till present. Also considered in heritage landscape are landform, water and built structure of all which may be naturally found or introduced. Henceforth, with regard to these, researcher used these elements as a framework to typify the heritage landscape of Taiping Lake Garden as shows in Figure 3.

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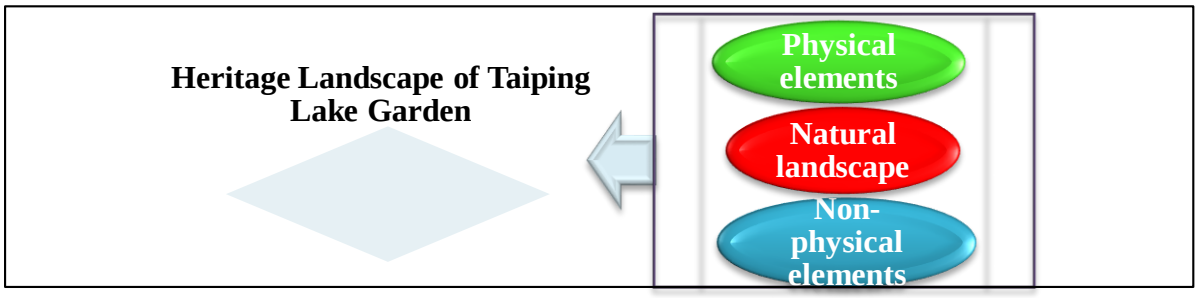

Figure 3: Elements as a framework to typify typify the heritage landscape of Taiping Lake Garden

1.3. Emotional Attachment

Research by [21] mentioned that there are several important aspects that need to be discussed in the study of place attachment and one if it is emotions. 'Emotions, affect or feeling' is commonly illustrated in human-place bonding. Besides, the attitude of an object or the focus of feeling also takes into consideration. The central of feeling can vary according to its size, tangibility, expected experience, or experience recurrent.

In tourism, the bond between tourist and holiday destinations exists either through activities or emotional identification with a place [13, 2]. There are several factors that need to be value in understanding emotional attachment and that are number of visit, the characteristics of a place and overall satisfaction throughout the trip [9].

The recent conceptual models of place attachment have added another attachment dimensions known as place familiarity and belongingness [22]. Place familiarity basically related to acquaintances of a person regard a place and it is moved by memories, cognitions and environmental images. Familiarity is measures through the number of visit and the length time spend by a person to a recreational place [6]. A person elicits greater feelings when encountered similar places [24]. Hence, this study takes into consideration the frequency of visit to Taiping Lake Garden as to explore the emotional attachments to the site and eventually acknowledge the important of this site for them.

2. Methodology

This research chose the Taiping Lake Garden as the study site since it has numerous heritage elements and beautiful scenery of nature. The data was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data involved direct contact to a person to gain information intended to solve problems. Meanwhile the secondary data was acquired through reading materials such as daily papers, journals, article and etc. This study employed a) documentation, b) direct observation as well as c) survey methods.

2.1. Documentation

In order to attract visitors for the heritage elements of Taiping Lake Garden, researcher must first categorise the heritage elements constituents at the site. It is essential to assemble all the source regarding Taiping Lake Garden such as historical evidence; old photographs, old maps, old paintings, old magazines, archival records, report, present maps, plans, thesis, journals and related articles. Additionally, this study also includes official research published by certain organization which include Taiping Municipal Council, Taiping Zoo, Taiping Museum, Taiping library, Taiping Heritage Association and University Putra Malaysia library.

2.2. Direct Observation

Direct observation was conducted by photo recording that enables the researcher to identify the heritage elements existed on Taiping Lake Garden in the current time. Taking photo on the site is crucial as supported by [36] because the pictures act as evident of the existing elements. After the identification of the heritage elements, the researcher will design the questionnaire to gather the respondents' feedback on the subject.

ISSN Number: 2289-3946

2.3. Survey Method

Survey method was conducted to examine the influence of heritage elements on visitors' attachment to Taiping Lake Garden. Through the calculation of sample size by [18], 384 respondents should be participated in the survey to represent 100,000 number of visitors in a year. Visitors' population is determined by data obtained from Taiping Municipal Council and Taiping Zoo. Visitors include both foreign and local individuals who are 18 years old and above.

3. Results and Discussion

The results and discussion answer the objective of this study: 1) to identify the existing heritage elements of Taiping Lake Garden; 2) examines the influence of heritage elements on visitors' place attachment of Taiping Lake Garden.

3.1. Respondents' Profile

The participants of this study have different background with regard to gender, age, working place and the frequency of visit. There are 203 female and 181 males respondents. Majority of the respondents are ranged in age between 18 to 25 years old with the total number is 234. Then, followed by age 26 to 35 years old (67 respondents), 56 years old and above (33 respondents), 46 to 55 years old (29 respondents) and the least is 36 to 45 years old (21 respondents).

The data gathered from the survey shows that most of the respondents are students with 141, followed by those working in private sectors (78 respondents), government sectors (67 respondents), businessman or businesswomen (53 respondents) and other (45 respondents). Other used to represent both the housewife and unemployed respondents. Also included in this research is the frequency of visit the Taiping Lake Garden and the result indicate that the number of visit more than three times is the highest (303 respondents) compared to the first (23 respondents), second (24 respondents) and third times visit (34 respondents). Thus, indicate that most of the respondents have experience the attachment to the Taiping Lake Garden.

3.2. Identification of the existing heritage elements of Taiping Lake Garden

The sources of heritage can be perceived from these five categories; geophysical, historic or cultural, biological, recreational and aesthetic [8]. This study takes into account the heritage elements in the sense of aesthetic and historical meanings. The findings suggest that the heritage elements of Taiping Lake Garden are typified by three components; non-physical elements, physical elements and natural landscape elements. As mentioned, this heritage components were determined through the documentation and other reading materials. It is supported also by certain organizations as named previously. Under the natural landscape category, there are three elements that are the flora and fauna, the lake and topography. In contrast, two elements count in the non-physical categories and they are visual and history.

3.3. Natural Landscape Elements

This natural environment provides the opportunities for leisure, recreation and nature experience which will influence the attachment to the Lake Garden. From the analysis, shows that most of the visitors visit the Lake Garden due to its rich collection in flora and fauna, and the stagnant water of the Lake. Sense of calm and relief from stress are some of the benefits that also contribute to the emotional attachment to the Lake Garden. This is supported by [22] mentioned that Taiping Lake Garden also satisfy the residents as it help them to feel freedom and privacy. Figure 4 to 7 shows the natural landscape elements of Taiping Lake Garden.

Figure 4: Taiping Lake Garden is blessed with tranquilizing atmosphere of ponds and lakes. Sources: Author, 2014.

ISSN Number: 2289-3946

Figure 5: Panoramic landscape view with topographic background. Sources: Author, 2014.

Figure 6: Huge ancient Rain trees or *Samanea saman*, a must view scenery in Taiping. Sources: Author, 2014.

Figure 7: Spread over 64 hectares, the lake is surrounded with birds, insects and wildlife. Sources: Author, 2014

3.4. Non-Physical Elements

Visual and history are the components of the non – physical elements of Taiping Lake Garden. This Lake Garden with Maxwell Hill or also known as 'Bukit Larut' as a backdrop offer lovely sight especially during dawn and twilight. Maxwell hill as a backdrop scenery for Taiping Lake Garden is believed to become one of the factors making Taiping earned the state of Peninsular Malaysia wettest area with average annual rainfall about 4,000mm. While the average rainfall in peninsula's range between 2,000mm-2,500mm. Hence, explain the vast collection of flora in Taiping Lake Garden. Figure 8 and 9 shows the non-physical elements of Taiping Lake Garden.

Figure 8: Branches of rain trees reaching the lake providing more picturesque view. Sources: Author, 2014.

From the study, researcher found that there is still a lack of visitors' awareness on the historical elements of Taiping Lake Garden. Thus, in order to make these historical elements more recognizable, the local authorities need to add the interpretation board within an area of the elements. Interpretation board plays as a medium of communication where the historical of a place can be tell to the visitors and visitors able to visualize the meaning and its significance. Plus, interpretation can enhance the visitor experience [5]. Other ways that could be used to promote the historical elements of the Lake Garden is through writing and publishing.

ISSN Number: 2289-3946

Figure 9: Scenic beauty of the Lake during twilight. Sources: Author, 2014.

This Lake Garden has more than 10 historical elements and the most publicly acknowledged is Taiping Lake Garden was a former tin mining in 1880. It is also the oldest Lake Garden in Malaysia and gets recognition as the most beautiful Public Garden in Malaysia through the cleanliness and beautification programmed in 1996. Other historical elements constituents in Taiping Lake Garden as shows in figure 10 are as follows:

1) Coronation Jetty or Silver Jubilee Jetty was inaugurated on 1936.
2) The Sundial once used to indicate time and it was constructed in 1985.
3) The Playground is presented to the children of Taiping by 2nd Battalion New Zealand Regiment 1961.
4) Golf course was introduced in 1885 by Perak Club.
5) The Cenotaph of Taiping was built by British and it is written 'Our Glorious Dead' in some other language from 1935-1945.
6) The Ng Boo Bee fountain is made of cast-iron.
7) The Chinese cemetery of the Hakka ethnic belongs to Chung lineage in 1869.
8) Casuarina Inn was built in 1884.
9) A district officer resident was built in 1890s.
10) The New Club Taiping or Golf Course was built in 1885.

Figure 10: The historical elements of Taiping Lake Garden Sources: Author, 2014

3.5. Physical Elements

Another elements offered by the site to visitors is it physical features. Taiping Lake Garden possesses some physical structures such as red bridge, gazebo, Taiping Jubilee Memorial Pavilion and others. The equipment and facilities were provided so that visitors could use it for physical activity as well to rest while experiencing the natural environment. Physical facilities were built for users for instance children's playground, reflexology base, camping site, washroom and parking lot requires persist maintenance from the local authorities due to the fact that visitors choose to visit or not to visit a park according to the park condition. Figure 11 shows several physical elements of Taiping Lake Garden.

ISSN Number: 2289-3946

Figure 11: Physical elements in Taiping Lake Garden Sources: Author, 2014. Indicator: 1. Boat house (Pusat Rekreasi Dayung) 2. Zigzag bridge 3. Pagoda bridge and 4. Red bridge 5. Gazebo.

3.6. The influence of heritage elements on visitors' attachment to Taiping Lake Garden

This study intends to discover whether the heritage elements did influence visitors' attachment to Taiping Lake Garden. This study applies multiple regression analysis since the dependent variable is place attachment while natural landscape, non-physical elements and physical elements role as independent variables. Table 1 to 3 shows the result.

Table 1: Model summary of physical, natural landscape and non-physical.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.674[a]	.454	.450	7.34167

a.Predictors: (Constant), physical, naturallandscape, nonphysical

Multiple regression analysis is used to determine the relationship between one or more predictor or independent variable to one dependent variable. Once, there is a relationship between independent variable to dependent variable, researcher will be able to take as much information about all the independent variables and make a predictions on how things actually related [11]. Noted that, all correlations including multiple correlations must be between 0.00 to 1.00. Value 0.00 means that these independent variable has no relationship with the dependent variable, R=0.00. This study apply multiple regression as it fulfill the criterion of this analysis that are dependent variable and independent variable is in interval or ratio form.

Table 2: ANOVA of physical, natural landscape and non-physical.

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17066.852	3	5688.951	105.546	.000[a]
	Residual	20535.938	381	53.900		
	Total	37602.790	384			

a. Predictors: (Constant), physical, naturallandscape, nonphysical and b. Dependent Variable: placeattachment

Table 3: Coefficients of physical, natural landscape and non-physical

Coefficients[a]

Model	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
1(Constant)		2.091	.037
naturallandscape	.393	8.535	.000
nonphysical	.225	4.788	.000
physical	.208	4.730	.000

a. Dependent Variable: placeattachment

Researcher apply the enter method in this study so that the SPSS software will include all the predictors simultaneously. Then, researcher intent to look upon adjusted R2. This adjusted R2 as shows in diagram 2 is used to explain the explanatory power of a model. The adjusted R2 shown is .450 indicated 45% of the variance in place attachment can be explain by all the variables; physical, non-physical and natural landscape. This percentage indicate that these variables can be used to explain the place attachment, however, there are others variables that can be added to improve explaining the criterion. Next, ANOVA analysis in diagram 3 exhibit that the model is significant (.000) with the F-value is 105.546. Hence, strengthen the study that is place attachment has a relationship with physical, non-physical and natural landscape,

Meanwhile, the coefficients analysis in diagram 4 explain which variables contribute to the model, thus, by examining the significant value, shows that all variable (natural landscape, non-physical and physical) contribute in the model with significant value

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(.000)s<p=.005. Further information, the t and sig (p) values provide roughly indication of the impact of each independent variable. The physical, natural landscape and non-physical is useful in predicting the place attachment when the level of significance is below .005. The t-value of natural landscape shows 8.535 indicated natural landscape has a large impact on the place attachment. Henceforth, natural landscapes play a major role in the sense of place attachment after controlling all other variables in the model. Besides, this contribution also portrayed by the Beta value in standardized coefficient showing that natural landscape accounts for .393, the highest among the variables. The higher the Beta values indicate the more influence the variable compared to the others towards the dependent variable; place attachment.

4. Conclusions

To recapitulate, two aims were design for this study; a) to document the existing heritage elements of Taiping Lake Garden and b) to examine the influence of heritage element on visitors' attachment of Taiping Lake Garden. This study indicates that the heritage elements of the site are categorized into natural landscape, physical elements and non-physical elements. While all these elements functioning in attracting visitors to the site according to the analysis, yet, natural landscape present to be the outmost influence factors in drawing in visitors to Taiping Lake Garden. It can concludes that from the perspective of emotional and cognitional, visitors are bound to natural environment compared to the others. This research is limited to investigate the attachment felt by visitors in the sense of emotional and cognition to the heritage elements, thus, it is suggested for future researcher to discover the attachment in social and physical aspect. Besides, various form of tourism typology are offered by our country for instance health tourism, heritage tourism, cultural tourism and etc. Thus, this study hopes to aid the responsible party in enhancing elements that captured visitors' interest so more visitors would come to the site. There is no doubt that this study does not reveal all the attractions offered in Taiping Lake Garden likewise the attachment felt by visitors, but it does offer some important information for future researcher through the recommendations for the continuity of heritage tourism.

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