UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

TOURIST PERCEPTION AND BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS PUBLIC MURAL ART INSTALLATION IN GEORGETOWN HERITAGE DISTRICT, MALAYSIA

ELHAM KARIMIAN MAHMOUND

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By

ELHAM KARIMIAN MAHMOUND

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Science

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October 2016

Chairman : Mohammad Yazah bin Mat Raschid, PhD
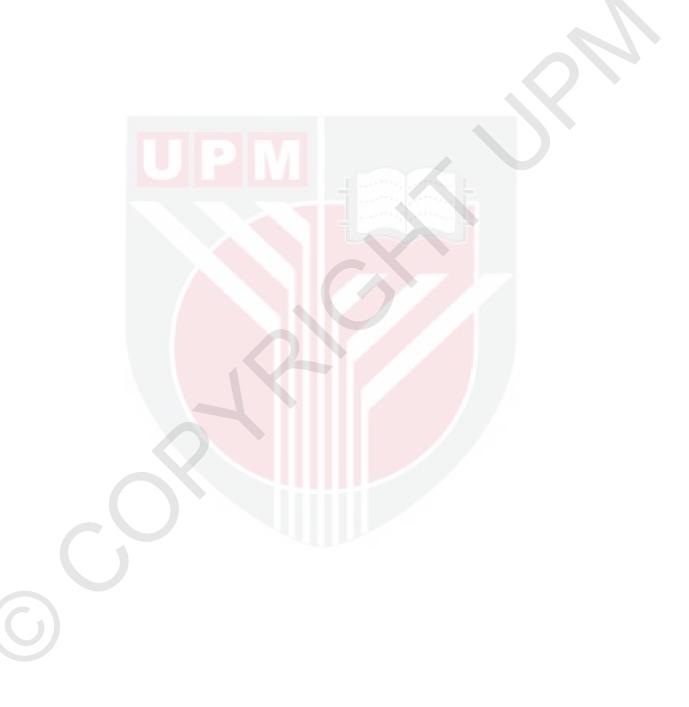Faculty : Design and Architecture

Public Mural Art Installation (PMAI) is normally planned and executed in the urban open space and accessible to the public for tourism activities. In recent years, public mural art installation (PMAI) has increasingly expanded in Penang Georgetown Heritage District (PGHD) which enhance the local identity towards tourists. Despite the expansion, it seems that most tourists have difficulties in understanding the PMAI and this is due to its inefficient planning and design in the heritage district of Georgetown. There is an imperative need to ascertain to what extent has the PMAI facilitates the identity of PGHD by understanding the tourists' perception and behaviours and during their engagement with PMAI in heritage district.

Moreover, applying PMAI as modern design characteristics may not have a positive impact on the manner the PMAI enhance the place identity of PGHD. The mixed methodologies selected are a non-participant observation and distributed random survey questionnaires (SQ) amongst tourists in the PGAD. Subsequently, physical and statistical analysis SPSS were selected to analyse the collected data.

The study demonstrates that the level of perception and satisfaction of PMAI in terms of enhancing the identity of the place amongst tourists in PGHD is satisfactory. As the result of the analysis, it is clear that most tourists believed applying PMAI as a modern installation in the heritage district of Georgetown has managed to increase local identity and its effectiveness can be further enhanced with the addition of the local socio-cultural characteristics. This study contributes to the improvement of current PMAI design qualities in PGHD to enhance the place identity. It will also assist in formulating appropriate policy and guidelines in constructing the PMAI in heritage districts globally.

Keywords: *Public Mural Art Installation (PMAI), Tourism activities, Place identity, Tourists' behaviours and Tourists' Perceptions.*

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Sarjana Sains

PERSEPSI DAN PERLAKUAN PELANCONG TERHADAP PEMASANGAN SENI MURAL AWAM DI DAERAH WARISAN GEORGETOWN, MALAYSIA
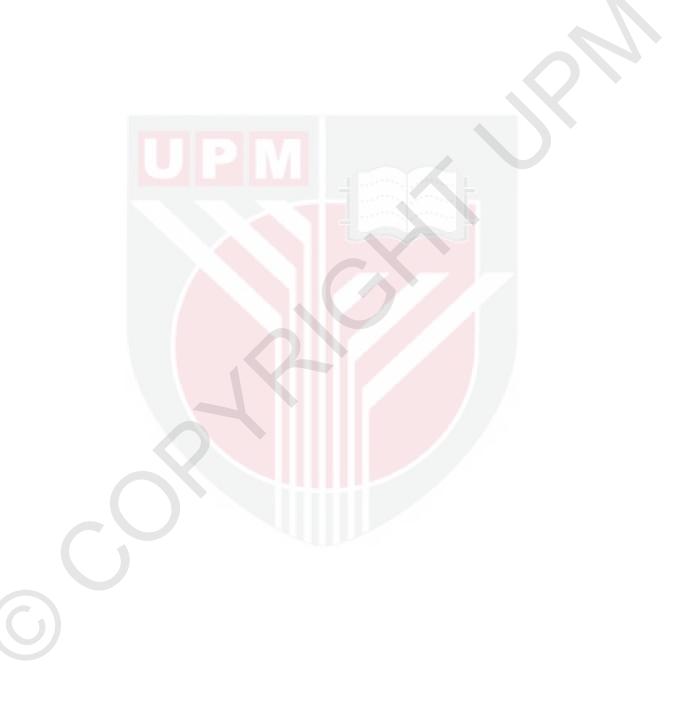
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ELHAM KARIMIAN MAHMOUND

Oktober 2016

Pengerusi   : Mohammad Yazah bin Mat Raschid, PhD
Fakulti   : Rekabentuk dan Senibina

Pemasangan Seni Mural Awam (Public Mural Art Installation) (PMAI) biasanya dirancang dan dilaksanakan di ruang terbuka bandaran dan boleh diakses oleh orang ramai untuk aktiviti pelancongan. Dalam tahun-tahun kebelakangan ini, pemasangan PMAI semakin berkembang di Daerah Warisan Georgetown Pulau Pinang (Penang Georgetown Heritage District) (PGHD) untuk meningkatkan identiti setempat kepada pelancong. Disebalik perkembangan ini, adalah di dapati seolah-olah kebanyakan pelancong mempunyai kesukaran untuk memahami PMAI yang disebabkan oleh perancangan dan rekabentuk yang tidak cekap di kawasan warisan Georgetown. Terdapat keperluan penting untuk menentukan sejauh mana PMAI tersebut menerangkan identiti PGHD dengan memahami persepsi dan tingkah laku pelancong semasa pengamatan mereka dengan PMAI di daerah warisan.

Selain itu, menggunakan ciri-ciri reka bentuk moden di PMAI mungkin tidak mempunyai kesan positif kepada cara PMAI meningkatkan identiti PGHD. Kaedah kajian campuran yang di pilih ialah pemerhatian tanpa penyertaan dan kajian soal selidik secara rawak oleh pelancong di PGAD. Seterusnya, analisis fizikal dan statistik SPSS telah dipilih untuk menganalisis data yang dikumpul. Kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa tahap persepsi dan kepuasan PMAI dari segi meningkatkan identiti tempat di kalangan pelancong di PGHD adalah memuaskan. Hasil daripada analisis, ia adalah jelas bahawa kebanyakan pelancong dipercayai aplikasi PMAI sebagai pemasangan moden di daerah warisan Georgetown telah berjaya meningkatkan identiti tempatan dan boleh dipertingkatkan lagi keberkesanannya dengan penambahan kandungan ciri-ciri sosio-budaya tempatan. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada peningkatan kuality reka bentuk PMAI semasa di dalam PGHD untuk meningkatkan identiti setempat. Ia juga akan membantu dalam merangka dasar dan garis panduan dalam pembinaan PMAI di daerah warisan global.

Kata kunci: *Pemasangan Seni Mural Awam (Public Mural Art Installation), Aktiviti pelancongan, Identiti setempat, Tingkah laku Pelancong dan Persepsi Pelancong*

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Mohammad Yazah bin Mat Raschid, PhD
Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Design and Architecture
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Mohd Johari bin Mohd Yusof,PhD
Lecturer
Faculty of Design and Architecture
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

_____
ROBIAH BINTI YUNUS, PhD
Professor and Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date:

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Signature:
Name of Chairman
of Supervisory
Committee: Dr. Mohammad Yazah bin Mat Raschid

Signature:
Name of Member
of Supervisory
Committee: Dr. Mohd Johari bin Mohd Yusof

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LIST OF ABBREVATIONS

PAI	Public Art Installation
PMA	Public Mural Art
PMAI	Public Mural Art Installation
PIM	Penang Island Malaysia
POS	Public Open Space
WHS	World Heritage Site
SSO	Systematic Social Observation
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
PIM	Penang Island Malaysia
PGT	Penang Global Tourism
GTWI	Georgetown World Heritage Incorporated
OUV	Outstanding Universal Values
GT	Global tourism
GTPI	George Town Penang Island
WPA	Works Progress Administration
GHD	Georgetown Heritage Distric
WTO	World Tourism Organization
SIP	Social Interaction Potential
SET	Social Exchange theorists
GTDG	Global Tourism Department of Georgetown
PGHD	Penang Georgetown Heritage Distric
SQ	Survey Questionnaire
MTCM	Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

This chapter introduces the background, problem statement and aim and objectives of the study. It also highlights the structure of this thesis. This research focuses on the concept of Public Mural Art Installation (PMAI) and its role in enhancing a specific urban identity. It is widely recognized that PMAI has been introduced in Malaysian urban landscape or building interiors as a new approach to contemporary art emerging out of the discipline-blurring, irreverent artistic experimentations of the 1960s and '70s. The PMAI is also closely connected to tourism and the manner in which the PMAI enhances the identity of a particular tourism destination is scrutinized in this study.

1.2   Background to the study

Public open space (POS) plays a vital role in the development of a city or a town. The existence of POS promotes interactions and connection between the tourist and also the locals. It is create an avenue in which tourist get connected to the city and through that, social interactions is being exhibited.

The creation of public space brings people together from a different country, tribes, and ethnic groups. (Lofland, 1998; Fainstein, 2005). A successful city or town always have a remarkable POS to promote the heart of tourism and cultures among visitors with various social backgrounds. POS invention gives a unique standard for having a social gathering or function not only for the citizens but also for the visitors (Barbosa et al. 2007). Lots of tourists are always interested in a place that has POS where they can interact and share ideas with other people, it's a standard activation for a good tourism industry in a particular country. Development of POS helps to improve the city and also create remarkable experiences for both citizen and tourists and it does not have any restriction for people to have a good social interaction among themselves. Tourist frequently visits POS for social enjoyment and interaction which allows them to have a remarkable experience visiting the place which is a good platform for the city or town. POS is not only constructed to improve the city or town but also gives a unique satisfaction to tourist. Whenever tourists visit a POS, they tend to have a good experience, interactions and innovative quality of the space (Peters et al. 2010). Various experiences are important for the tourist, which will have a positive effect in their way of thinking and their perception about the place (Philipp et al. 2000). A POS is a backbone of a city or town in which create an avenue for a composition of a positive image of the place to visitors and allowing them to explore social-cultural activities (Amin, 2008).

In this instance, there are various types of art such as murals, statues, graffiti or combination of them that enhance attraction and generates attention to POS. The most effective method to give art a creative and meaningful part of life is to integrate it into POS and make it accessible to visitors; in this way PMAI circulates among the tourists and create an opportunity and chance for the masses to benefit from the social, cultural, physical and economic features of PMAI. Asserted that to develop a critical ideology, as a critical practice, architecture must be creative and unique so as to give connectivity to the visitors and create boundaries for weakness (Florida, 2005).

Countries with various type of POS have social and economic benefits in which helps their tourism industry creating useful awareness for the creativity and enhancement in multi social cultures among visitors and citizens. PMAI explore tremendous improvement in bringing vibrancy to the city region and bringing together social interaction that fosters a good social image in the city. PMAI is an artistic genre of three-dimensional works that often are site-specific and designed to transform the perception of a space (Bestor, 2003). The concept of placing works of PMAI in POS may seem new to some people, but it has been around the world for centuries (Ahsen and Bayram, 2007).

PMAI involves the collaboration of stakeholders, policy maker, professionals and visual technician to organize and promote an edible sense of a place (Krause 2008). It has been a strong foundation in the development and success of a country with the architecture structure in designing a lucrative open space. (Australian Institute of Landscape Architecture, 2010). In western countries, PMAI is being celebrated to exhibit a remarkable event and elevate a credible culture scheme. Religion has influenced PMAI in some countries like China, Japan and Korea and at the same time protect the country identity (Jasmi and Mohamad, 2016).

Meanwhile, some countries are not aware of the impact of PMAI in the development and socialization in the country. In Malaysia there is a low awareness and interest in PMAI. Installation is mostly found in cities like Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Perak, Selangor and Johor. The installation and placement of PMAI is often misguided and not well expressed. There are many guidelines that stated PMAI should be installed in public accessible area that a lot of display can be exhibited to everyone. Lots of developed countries that installs PMAI displays it in the public and which everyone that passes through has the opportunity to visualize it and compliment the art. PMAI has contributed in improving and upgrading urban life and create a quality life, accessible place and useful POS for the satisfaction of tourists.

Moreover, the importance of PMAI towards tourism can be observed in Penang Island Malaysia (PIM). It is preserved by tangible and intangible factors that consist of multicultural trading, the unique architecture including religious building, festival, food and local lifestyle (Lai et al. 2013). Part of the

success and uniqueness of Penang was the design of Georgetown Heritage District (GHD) alongside Malacca town as UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS) on July 7, 2008. The good reputation and status has given Penang an upper hand, great value and also elevated their status in the international level in terms of cultural heritage tourism and gives a great and well-planned structure to attract more tourists to the area (Omar et al. 2013).

PMAI has tend to improve the quality of the living environment and the appraisal of arts displayed for the satisfaction of the public. Every installation of PMA creates an improvement in the standard quality of the environment (Jasmi and Mohamad, 2016). Therefore, the design of PMAI and its impact on tourists' perception could be a key for enhancing the place identity of GHD and communities' satisfaction. The perfect scenario is to investigate how PMAI is able to enhance the quality of life and tourists' perception.

1.3   Problem Statement

POS has been provided for people to interact and enjoy their free time in the POS and allow them to have a relaxed and comfortable environment to socialize with different people (Liu et al. 1987). Economic claims, social claims and cultural symbolic claims are concerns when inserting PMAI in urban spaces especially places that are well cultured. In some circumstances, PMAI aims to develop the identity of a certain place by improving the places as a pacesetter regardless of the culture background of the place (Sharp et al 2005). Since the 1980s, PMAI has been a major and essential solution to solve series of urban issues and since then it has proved itself as a formidable force that can foster success in urban development (Mitrache, 2012). Turas (2011) explained that PMAI and culture underpin the quality of life for individuals and communities by creating a unique bond to create part of urban value systems. This is to build a standard profile for their reputation and compete in the international arena for investment (Peña, 2004).

PMAI enhances the social interaction of community and can also give a tourist some difficulties in understanding the art if they are not well enlightened about it, therefore they might not be pleased with (Pollock and Paddison, 2010). This can also be related to their different education and cultural background (Fabian et al. 2012) on how they perceive destination images. Tourist encounter more problems when they lack understanding on the arts displayed which gives them different kind of meaning and thoughts. PMAI fosters a well define community exaltation (Pollock and Paddison, 2010). Tourists' participation and comprehension are vital in the development of PMAI (Chai, 2011). Chai further mentions that the design guidelines for PMAI and maintenance could control and enhance the development of POS educating the public on the value of the arts to the future generation that triggers tourism satisfaction in cultural destinations.

With regard to achieving physical aesthetic, tourists satisfaction and enhance place identity, PMAI always raises questions of style and effect. In different researches, the failure of PMAI and especially its location in the cultural POS with no-functional and not-utilitarian called misuse which means the PMAI is not relevant and important in a place and fails to be a pacesetter in the particular area. Thus this can discourage tourist to discover the identity of the place (Ahsen and Bayram, 2007). Some of the PMAI were wrongly applied and are not well installed in some locations. When the PMAI is not accessible to tourists, it creates low public view and appraisal. PMAI that appears in an unpleasant mode do not allow a good access for tourist to visualize (Fabian et al. 2012).

In order to ascertain the position of PMAI and enhance POS quality, vitals steps should be considered such as a provision of methods and models for quality improvement and identify how forms of art can be modified (Pasaogullari and Doratli, 2004). Both asserts that the development of pedestrian traffic, elaboration of activities, personalization, reduction of the disorganization of the urban furnishings, direction and maintenance must be taken into consideration in improvement schemes to foster a productive and unique urban cultural environment.

Meanwhile, the designation of Georgetown, Penang, along with Malacca, as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS) on July 7, 2008, has elevated Penang to international status in terms of cultural heritage tourism and expected to draw more tourists to the area. The local residents are aware of GHD status and think that such status would have a positive impact on local businesses, on the conservation and restoration of heritage buildings, and on the general well-being of Georgetown residents. There is a perception on tourist awareness such as implementing PMAI as a modern design (Omar et al. 2013) could threaten the heritage values of Georgetown where stakeholder involvement in tourism planning and development is rather low (Hall and Piggin, 2002) and study on tourists perception on the impact PMAI has not yet been effective (Byrd et al. 2008). The statement of the problem for this study is concluded as follows:

> There seems to be a perception amongst tourists that the PMAI as a modern design could harm the heritage value of Georgetown Heritage district rather than assisting in enhancing its identity. Furthermore, the manner PMAI influences the visitors on the identity of the GHD based on the message encrypted in them has yet to be ascertained. The PMAI could be inappropriately located or designed to motivate tourists on the identity of the place. Therefore, there is a critical need to understand the manner the PMAI enhances the identity of GHD amongst tourists by investigating tourist's behaviour and perceptions on the PMAI's current level of enhancing the place identity.

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1.4   Research Focus

This research focuses on the level of tourists' perceptions and behaviours towards urban PMAI in Georgetown Heritage District in enhancing the identity of the place. It also touches the role of PMAI in fostering social interactions amongst tourists that also facilitate the place identity making. Tourism destination image is one of the key challenges in contemporary tourism research. It is recognized that images affect the tourist mentality and behaviour, from their destination features and decision-making aspects (Bigné et al. 2001; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Kim & Perdue, 2011; O'Leary & Deegan, 2005; Prayag, 2007; Sirakaya et al. 2001 and Tapachai & Waryszak, 2000).

The study reviewed how PMAI as modern design influences tourists' perception and social interaction, particularly its effect on historical value of the area. The study is limited to Georgetown, Penang, Malaysia were there are different ethnic groups of appreciable populations and the structure of the study area suited the two ethnic groups in urban community. The town chosen consists of two ethnic groups, foreigner and local. Nine existed popular PMAI are selected because there are more demand of tourists due to the installation and materials of PMAI. The selected PMAIs are located in the areas that covers many facilities such as café, restaurants, hotels and super markets. Thus, it is suitable to investigate how PMAI plays an important role on tourists' perception and behaviour in the POS among two multi-ethnic groups in the community (Peters et al. 2010; Chua, 2013).

Hence, these are the reasons why Georgetown is chosen to represent the existence of PMAI in historical POS, which offer opportunities for foreigner and local tourists to engage with the PMAI and enhance the social interaction. Similarly, tourist's reactions also reflect their perception of PMAI and the relevance of the PMAI to them (Zebracki, 2011).

1.5   Research Question

In addressing the aim of this research several important questions were formulated to guide and also to deselect the suitable research methodological approach. The main research question is concluded as follows:

"**How extensive has the public mural art installations enhances the place identity of Georgetown Heritage District amongst the tourists?**"

This is followed by the three (3) sub-research questions:

Sub- Research Question 1:

"What is the level of tourists' perceptions on the manner of the existing PMAI facilitate the tourist destination's identity in Georgetown Heritage District?"

Sub- Research Question 2:

"How do tourists behave during their experience with the PMAI in Georgetown Heritage District?"

Sub- Research Question 3:

What are the general recommendations to improve the PMAI for the purpose of enhancing the identity of Georgetown Heritage District?

The formulated research questions above open the pathways on understanding the theoretical framework of this study.

1.6   Research Aim and Objectives

The study aims to ascertain the manner existing public art (mural) installation in GHD promotes the tourist destination identity". In supporting the aim, the following objectives were identified:

1 To investigate the tourist's perception during engagement with the PMAI in heritage district.
   The perception of the tourist provides the insight on the effectiveness of the PMAI in enhancing the tourists' destination identity. The perception and understanding of tourists create positive and negative mentalities which can be effective on tourists' destination images.

2 To investigate the tourist's behaviour during their engagement with PMAI and how does it enhance the identity of the place.
   The views of tourists, local or international as main stakeholders in tourism provide real insight on the phenomena in its natural setting and it needs to be analysed quantitatively to determine the actual behaviour and their relationship with the PMAI and the place identity.

3 To formulate general recommendations on improving the PMAI construction for the purpose of enhancing the PGHD identity.
   Understanding both the tourists' behaviours and perceptions on the manner the PMAI enhance the identity of the place will open the pathway towards formulating a set of general recommendation on future construction of the PMAI.

1.7   Structure of Thesis

This research consists of five (5) main chapters as summarized in Figure 1.1 below:

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Chapter One
Introduce the history of the study problem statement, aim and objectives

Chapter Two
Looking for the foundation of the study to provide sources to explore the topic to reader, which include the definition of public open spaces, public art installation, and sense of place, place attachment, tourists' behaviour and tourist destination images.

Chapter Three
Discusses the main research questions that guide this research and procedures for developing the survey instrument and in-depth survey questionnaire, data collection procedures and the appropriate data analysis method

Chapter Four
Discussion and finding on non-participant observation to identity the tourist's behaviour and survey method.

Chapter Five
Conclusion and recommendation of the study for future researches

Figure 1.1 : Summary of Thesis Structure (Source Author)

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter introduced the background research; problem statement, aim and objective of this study were discussed in this chapter. It also describes the structure of this thesis.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter constitutes the foundation of the study. It addresses the definition of public open spaces, public art installation, and sense of place, place attachment, tourists' behaviour and tourist destination images. It also provides a description, summary, and critical evaluation of these works in relation to the research problem being investigated. Overall, the literature review is designed to provide an overview of sources that have explored while researching the topic and to demonstrate to the readers how the research fits within a larger field of study.

Chapter Three: Methodology

It describes the method adopted in approaching and organizing the research methodology in this study. It consists of the scope and parameter of the study. It discusses the main research questions that guide this research direction and procedures for developing the survey instrument and in-depth survey questionnaire, data collection procedures and the appropriate data analysis method, which were utilized, will be described in detail. Overall, this chapter describes the rationale for the application of specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, and analyse information applied to understanding the research problem, thereby, allowing the reader to critically evaluate a study's overall validity and reliability.

Chapter four: Discussion and Finding on Non-Participant Observation and Survey Method

This chapter qualitatively explores how non-participant observation was conducting to collect data from tourists' behaviours in the zone (GHD) Penang. The different behaviours of local and international tourist during their engagement with the PMAI was obtained. Aspects of the observation discussed herein include various definitions of participant observation. Moreover, elaborated the relevant statistical analysis conducted on the data collection through a questionnaire survey. This chapter reported the finding of the survey results, where descriptive statistic, correlation, and multiple regressions were applied as the key statistical technique and multiple regression analysis was employed to achieve the research objective.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendation

This chapter finalizes the thesis in presenting the conclusion based on the outcome of the previous chapters. It also shed light on the recommended measures related to barriers and way forward to increase tourist's satisfactions on the role of PMAI. As an extension of this research, further studies are proposed in this chapter to increase the body of knowledge in this field.

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