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Tourist Experience of Heritage Tourism in Malacca, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This study is about tourist experience of heritage tourism in Malacca, Malaysia. Experience is one of the important factors considered by tourists in visiting a destination apart from motivation, attractiveness, image, facility and accessibility. There are three objectives of this research. First, to examine the relationship between tourism product and tourist experience on heritage tourism. Second, to examine the relationship between tourism activities and tourist experience of heritage tourism. Lastly, to investigate the relationship between tourist demand and tourist experience of heritage tourism. The quantitative method used in this research is questionnaires. About 350 respondents which are the local tourists who experienced heritage tourism in Malacca, Malaysia have been chosen in this study. Based on the data analysis, the results show there are significant relationships between tourism product, tourism activities and tourist demand with tourist experience.

Keywords: *Tourist Experience, Heritage Tourism*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the temporary movement of people away from their homes to participate in activities while they are there, which demands the development of facilities to satisfy their needs (Pitana and Gayatri, 2005). Furthermore, with 10% of global GDP, 7% of global commerce employment and one out of every ten jobs, the tourism industry is one of the world's most important providers of economic outcomes and employment (World Tourism Organization, 2018). In 2012, for example, tourism had more than one billion (1.035 billion) foreign tourist arrivals in a single year (World Tourism Organization, 2013). Malaysia is also one of the Asia-Pacific and South-East Asian countries that contributes significantly to the region's and subregion's development. Malaysia is ranked 26th in the world, 8th in Asia and the Pacific, and 2nd in South-East Asia, according to the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index 2017 (World Economic Forum, 2017).

Malaysia government has promoted cultural and heritage tourism as one of the most important components of foreign tourist consumption since 2013 (Malaymail, 2019). Things, objects, artefacts and structural developments that are relevant to Malaysian's history or contemporary way of life are considered cultural heritage. Historical monuments, heritage sites, archaeological reserves, heritage artefacts and intangible heritage components such as performing arts, customs and culture, language and literature and the fine arts are examples of cultural heritage (National Heritage Act, 2005). According to UNESCO, a World Heritage Site on the other hand is a site of exceptional universal importance that should be shared by all countries across the world. Melaka, Georgetown and the archaeological site of Lenggong Valley in Perak have all been declared as cultural world heritage sites by UNESCO. Furthermore, the World Heritage Committee declared Malacca and George Town, Penang as World Heritage Sites in 2008 at its 32nd assembly in Quebec City, Canada.