SOCIAL IMPACT ON URBAN COMMUNITY : A CASE STUDY IN GEORGE TOWN WORLD HERITAGE SITE

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Abstract

Urban growth around the world is growing, especially in developing countries. Now the city serves as a provider of services to rural or urban communities and abroad. These developments have resulted in physical changes and changes in culture and urban lifestyle urban community. However, a world heritage site introduced by UNESCO has opened new avenues for the government to keep up the culture and heritage of a city. In addition, the declaration of world heritage sites will put a city on the world tourism map. It will be helpful to the city to become a tourist town in the future. However, the increase in tourist arrivals from year to year to a city a world heritage site would influence negatively on the urban community. Therefore, this study will look at the social impact that faced by the city community in George Town, Penang. A total of 600 respondents interviewed to get clarification about the negative impact resulting of George Town recognized as a world heritage site. The results of this study generally found that the majority of respondents agreed that an increase in the number of some problems such as criminal event, local cultural change and lifestyle of the local community after gazetted George Town as a world heritage site. Besides that, the study also found that majority respondents agreed that levels of crime has significant relationship with the number of entertainment or club/social premises in George Town as a world heritage site. As a conclusion, the world heritage site bring the economic benefit to the local community, however the local community also will face the social problem especially crime event, local cultural and life style change.

Keyword: Urban study, World Heritage, Local community, Torism

Introduction

Quality of social life and the urbanization process reflects human civilization for development countries. The process will bring the negative social impact to the urban community. The social and cultural impact of tourism will contribute to the changes the value system, individual behavior, family relationships, collective lifestyle, level of security, moral behavior, creative expression, traditional ceremonies and community organizations (Fox 1977). Tourism development exposed the local community to the foreign culture from other places. The interaction between local community and tourist will create the understanding in both cultures. However, the development of tourism industry will bring some negative impact on local community especially in the urban heritage site. Sometimes, the local community didn't know about the world heritage site in their places. Nowadays, Urban Heritage Site is one of the importance issues all over the world. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have the power to gazette any area as a world heritage site. Orbasli (2000) argues that the World Heritage Site may increase and affect the interests of local people in the city. It also led to an increase in the pride of the local people of their culture (Shackley, 1998). In Malaysia there are two cities has been gazetted as World Heritage Site namely City of Malacca in Melaka States and Georgetown in Penang States. Both cities are the historic site for Malaysia. According to Powell (1994) retention of historic buildings and areas used as historical evidence.

All historical materials such as monuments, buildings and grounds are a precious heritage that must be maintained and preserved for the present and future generation. However, community in Malacca and George Town has their own lifestyle and cultures. After both city gazetted as World Heritage Site, their community faced several social issues among them.

According to Durkheim (1951), community will face the social problem, rules, culture and law because of the social transformation and uncontrollable in society. This study chooses the George Town City in Penang to investigate the impact of Urban World Heritage Site tourism on the local community. As mention earlier, urban world heritage site by UNESCO has given various implications to the city and to the community in the city. World Heritage sites are important for social cohesion and to foster a sense of pride.Study Objectives

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identified the perception of the social impact of world heritage site among the Goerge Town community..
2. To examine the difference perception among local community on social problem in George Town.
3. To examine the relationship between the social problem and the local cultural and lifestyle among the George Town community.

Methodology

Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in this study are the residents of George Town, Penang. The respondents covered among local resident and local business player in World Heritage Site area. Total population being studied is 198,298 residents with 300 samples taken for this study.

Questionnaire Administration

The broad aim of the research was to explore the perception of local community in term social impact faced by the after the George Town has awarded as World Heritage Site. The primary research method was the collection of primary data via number of unstructured interviews among key players from local authority agencies. Indeed, once the study had enough information from a number of authorities, it became clear that the general picture about the World Heritage Site. Based on the preliminary findings on impact of World Heritage Site on local community, a set of questionnaires was developed. The survey questionnaires are designed to apply to a heterogeneous population, where targeted respondents come from the low and medium cost household in George Town. The principal investigator met the household leader at their home during working hours and weekend. In order to get the various sub-groups of samples, the population was first stratified based on location. The technique of sampling used in this study was basically convenience sampling, but taking into account housing location and the different types of housing. This will ensure that the various subgroups in the population are represented. Out of 650 answered questionnaires replied and only 600 were usable.

Profile of the Respondents

The majority of the respondents are male with 51 percent males and 49 percent females. With regard to age, most of the respondent's ages are 31 to 50 years old. In term of marital status, 53 percents of the residents were married, 43 percent is single, and four percents were divorced. About 73.7 percent had education below or equal to college diploma level. A total of 314 (49.2%) respondents were from the low cost housing while 324 (50.8%) were from the medium cost housing.Reliability

Reliability test

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency. According to Nunnally (1978) alpha values equal to or greater than 0.70 are considered a sufficient condition. Table1 shows that all seven corresponding alpha values are equal or greater than 0.70. Thus, it can be concluded that these measures possess sufficient reliability.

Table 1: Reliability analysis

Dimension	Reliability	Mean	Standard Deviation
Crime event	0.87	2.68	0.61
Entertainment and social premises	0.86	3.1	0.65
Local social problem	0.81	3.1	0.66
Foriegn cultural	0.82	3.5	0.67
Foriegn lifestyle	0.87	2.9	0.65
Local lifestyle	0.81	3.8	0.62
Local cultural	0.85	3.05	0.61

Test of Difference

This study applied one-way ANOVA to find any difference in term of seven dimensions by type of respondents. The results of the analysis are presented in the Table 2.

Table 2: The one-way ANOVA result between type of respondents and seven dimensions.

Items	Type of Respondents		F Value
	Local residents	Local Business	
Crime event	2.982	2.804	3.16**
Entertainment and social premises	3.192	3.168	13.25**
Local social problem	3.212	3.014	5.11**
Foriegn cultural	3.104	3.001	6.22**
Foriegn lifestyle	3.240	3.151	7.66**
Local lifestyle	2.964	2.944	3.17**
Local cultural	3.078	3.194	7.93**

Note: ***$p<0.001$, **$p<0.05$, *$p<0.1$

The result shows that, respondents from local resident show significantly higher negative impact perception of crime event, number of entertainment and social premises, local social problem, foreign cultural, foreign lifestyle and local lifestyle. Meanwhile respondents from local business show higher negative perception impact on local cultural. It can be concluded that the entire item will contribute to the negative impact on local community after George Town awarded as World Heritage Site.

Result

This study found that more than 37 percent of respondent agreed that there are high levels of social problem in George Town before the World Heritge Awarded. Meanwhile 46 percent of the respondents agreed that there are high-level social problem faces by local community after George Town before the World Heritge Awarded to George Town. In term of crime rate, 29 percent of the respondent agreed that there are high-level of crime rate before the awarded and increased to 53 percent of respondent after awarded. Table 3 also shows that 38 percent of respondents agreed that there are many places open for entertainment and social club/pub before awarded and 53 of the respondents agreed after awarded.

Table 3: The perception of the social impact of World Heritage Site among the local community (%)

Item	Before	After
Social problem	37	46
Program to solve	23	37
Crime rate	29	53
Entertainment and social club/pub	38	53

Table 4 shows the correlation between the crime event, entertainment and social premises, foreign cultural, foreign lifestyle, local lifestyle and local cultural. The result shows that there are positive relationship between crime event and numbers of entertainment and social premises. The same scenario also can be seen on the relationship between crime event and local social problem. Meanwhile, the number of entertainment and social premises has the positive relationship between the local cultural. The study also found that there are relationships between foreign culture and lifestyle with the local cultural and lifestyle.

Table 4: Corelation between the social problem and local cultural and lifestyle.

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Crime event	1						
2. Entertaiment and social premises	0.602^{**}	1					
3.Local social problem	0.629^{**}	0.699^{**}	1				
4. Foriegn cultural	0.101	0.209^{*}	0.264^{**}	1			
5. Foriegn life style	0.132	0.297^{**}	0.331^{**}	0.655^{**}	1		
6. Local life style	0.057	0.163	0.249^{*}	0.607^{**}	0.538^{**}	1	
7. Local cultural	0.006	0.238^{*}	0.255^{*}	0.568^{**}	0.516^{**}	0.749^{**}	1

Conclusion

This study shows that, there are negative impacts on local community cultural and lifestyle after the George Town awarded as World Heritage Site. However, most of them are didn't know about the World Heritage Site. Physical development alone cannot survive if forgotten humanitarian aspects. In pursuit of luxury and richness of life, all the parties cannot be greedy destroy anything owned or inherited. This is because these properties will give a negative impact on the local community. This study has proven that the gazetted George Town as a world heritage site has benefited the local population. However, the negative impact of gazetted will also have impacts on all parties. In addition, the study found that the majority of respondents agreed that there were an increasing number of social problems among urban communities. The study found that there is a relationship between the number of crimes that occur with increasing number of entertainment and social problems among the local community.

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