

6680

MAPPING THE SENSORY VALUES IN THE CORE ZONE AREA OF MELAKA WORLD HERITAGE SITE

Nur Hidayah Abd Rahman

Lecturer

Department of Tourism Planning and Hospitality Management, Kulliyah Languages and Management, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM),
Pagoh, Muar, Johor Darul Takzim, Malaysia
nhidayahabdrahman363@gmail.com

Hairul Nizam Ismail

Senior Lecturer

Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Built Environment, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM),
Skudai, Johor Darul Takzim, Malaysia
b-hairul@utm.my

Zainab Khalifah

Professor

Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Management, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM),
Skudai, Johor Darul Takzim, Malaysia
m-zainab@utm.my

Abstract

The influence of sensory experience in generating positive tourist experience has emerged to be a cutting-edge trend in studies pertaining to geography and marketing in tourism, particularly in terms of tourism sense-making. The literature has projected absence of the fundamental comprehension related to the formation of 'tourist space' via tourist consumption and valuation towards available cultural heritage attractions based on their sensory experience. Critical shift in the objectivism approach from the light of valuing sensory experience has motivated the exploration of survey mapping method in this study. Hence, this study employed the survey mapping method derived from the landscape planning approach, in which a guide map was designed for international tourists to value each attraction during their visit at the Core Zone Area of Melaka World Heritage Site. The data gathered from 268 respondents were classified into five sensory mappings that reflected the concentration of sensory values of visual, gustatory, auditory, olfactory, and tactile perceptions. Visualisation of sensory mapping had been based on the classification of positive, moderate, and negative sensory values. The outcomes from these sensory mappings signify the notion of 'tourist space' or 'honey pot' among tourists based on their sensory experiences in the Core Zone area of Melaka World Heritage Site. This exploration of the survey mapping method has contributed to a critical discussion on the methodological approach, whereby most studies concerning sensory experience are dominated by the qualitative approach. Therefore, the study results could strengthen the management and planning by highlighting the significance of sensory quality in conserving and preserving momentous cultural heritage attractions.

Keywords: Melaka World Heritage Site, Sense-making, Sensory Mapping, Sensory Values, Sensuous Geography

Introduction

The visual, gustatory, auditory, olfactory, and tactile perceptions are vital for tourist experience when they visit a particular destination. Previous studies on tourist experience focused on the relationship between place-making theories (e.g. Williams & Vaske, 2003; Williams, Patterson, & Roggenbuck, 1992). However, for an understanding of the fundamental of sensory experience, the current trend of tourism sensory marketing and sensuous geography studies have been directed since this fundamental's introduction by Urry in 1990. Specifically, Pan and Ryan (2009) introduced the tourism sense-making theory to provide an exposure to the importance of tourist sensory experience in formulating a relationship between tourists and their destinations.

Rahman, Khalifah, and Ismail (2017) have recently addressed the importance of the sensory experience in two fields of studies of tourism from the perspective of the sensuous geography (Everett, 2012; Larsen & Urry, 2011; Urry & Larsen, 2011; Everett, 2009; Gibson & Connell, 2007; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006; Dann & Jacobsen, 2003) and sensory marketing (Agapito, Pinto, & Mendes, 2017; Berg & Sevón, 2015; Xiong, Hazarina, & Murphy, 2015; Dițoiu & Căruntu, 2014; Agapito, Valle, & Mendes, 2014; Lin, Pearson, & Cai, 2011; Pan & Ryan, 2009; Kivela & Crofts, 2006). According to these studies, the important issue is the methodological approach in evaluating the tourist sensory experience during their visit to a particular destination, as well as the understanding of the formulation of the tourism sense-making theory. Previously, the methodological approaches which were conducted in tourism marketing were in the form of questionnaire distribution (Dițoiu & Căruntu, 2014; Kivela & Crofts, 2006), content analysis (Pan & Ryan, 2009), both content analysis and questionnaire distribution (Dițoiu & Căruntu, 2014; Lin, Pearson, & Cai, 2011), and observation and interviews (Berg & Sevón, 2015). Meanwhile, the methodological approach employed in tourism geography was content analysis (Larsen & Urry, 2011; Gibson & Connell, 2007; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006; Dann & Jacobsen, 2003), interview and observation (Everett, 2012, 2008), and observation (Larsen & Urry, 2011).

However, from a different perspective, the place value through the survey mapping technique of place attachment (see Brown, Raymond, & Corcoran, 2015; Brown & Raymond, 2007; Raymond & Brown, 2006; Brown, 2006, 2005) provides another platform of the methodological approach based on the applied geography of the land-use planning. For instance, this study has explored and utilised the survey mapping technique which was developed by Brown (2006) to evaluate the tourist experience based on their sensory value towards the destination. Moreover, this evaluation is done to understand the tourist's attachment of destination from the tourist's sensory experience perspective. The exploration of the survey mapping technique is performed to understand the tourist's consumption of space in terms of sensory experience. This will fill the gap left from the current study, especially in terms of the geographical perspective of cultural and heritage sites.

Literature Review

The critical change performed on the "Tourist Gaze" concept was very influential in tourism geographies. Furthermore, the research on "Tourist Gaze" has set a new paradigm in the theoretical perspective of sensory in a geographical perspective in evaluating the tourist experience. Moreover, the "Tourist Gaze" has set an exploration of the method which should be used in tourism studies to investigate the tourist's sensory experience for an understanding of the fundamental aspects of tourist's consumption for a destination. Franklin and Crang (2001) argued that the contemporary problem in the tourism and travel theory is the insufficient studies which provide a critical insight on the different fields of study for a

comprehension of the social phenomenon of the tourist experience. From the viewpoint of the tourist experience, their perception of tourism products in their destination is based on their corporeal experiences which involve the senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. The senses definitely play an important role in the tourists' knowledge and understanding on the tourism products promoted in their destination (Agapito, Pinto, & Mendes, 2017; Rahman, Khalifah, & Ismail 2017, 2016; Xiong, Hazarina, & Murphy, 2015; Agapito, Valle, & Mendes, 2014).

Waterton and Watson (2010) highlighted the visual heritage of tourist destinations, where the visuality had broadened the topic on lenses and frame through photography to understand the emerging theories of heritage for the "Tourist Gaze" concept. It could be understood that visuality is the key to the development of a destination. There are scholars who have offered a new perspective on the construction of heritage sites through the tourists as the users of a destination's visuality (see Zhang, 2017; Waterton, 2015; Vong and Ung, 2012; Poria, 2010; Poria, Reichel, & Biran, 2006; Rojek & Urry, 1997). Furthermore, Poria, Butler, and Airey (2006) highlighted that the number of studies of tourist's sensory experience in the context of cultural heritage is still limited. Moreover, the context of cultural heritage is not limited to its social construct from the sensation of sight alone (Zhang, 2017; Lynch, Duinker, Sheehan, & Chute, 2010; Poria, 2010; Poria, Butler, & Airey, 2006, 2004). This is due to the fact that tourists will tend to taste the local food of their destination, explore the local daily-lifestyle of the people's religion, their economic activities, and other attractions (Rahman, Khalifah, & Ismail, 2016). Therefore, they are engaged with their destination's cultural attractions through the holistic experiences gained via their five senses.

The Core Zone of Melaka World Heritage Site

Melaka, alongside with George Town, has been awarded as UNESCO World Heritage Site on July 2008. Due to the recognition of these states as the World Heritage Site for a decade, various studies have raised concerns on the overdevelopment occurring around the World Heritage Site due to the urban morphological changes made on the tourism-oriented development of Melaka World Heritage Site. Furthermore, visuality had been important for the Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) in managing the World Heritage Site. The visuality was highlighted by the Melaka Historical Council City (MBMB) to ensure the sustainability of the heritage site and to reduce the degradation of its physical condition. With the boundary of the Core Zone of 45.3-hectare area, there are 1,075 heritage buildings (MBMB, 2011) in total which provide a unique visual experience to tourists.

However, visuality is not the only factor which plays an important role in the conservation efforts of the Melaka World Heritage Site. This is because Melaka is featured with a unique cultural landscape which contributes to the myriad of unique architectural designs of religious buildings (mosques, Chinese temples, Hindu temples, and the churches), the distinct taste of local food, and the unique culture of the Peranakan Baba and Nyonya community. Therefore, Rahman, Khalifah, and Ismail (2016) discussed the relationship between these cultural and physical attractions of cultural heritage sites, especially in the context of Melaka World Heritage Site. This is because the physical attributes as well as the spiritual attributes from the local community will influence the tourists' sensory experience. Therefore, their sensory perception will play a vital role in creating a positive impression of Melaka World Heritage Site, and they will be more appreciative towards its cultural and physical attractions.

Methodological Development

The applied geography in the land-use planning brings significant changes in the positivist paradigm in landscape values through the map-based or participatory mapping approach (see Brown, Raymond, & Corcoran, 2015; Brown and Raymond, 2007; Raymond and Brown, 2006; Brown, 2006, 2005). The survey mapping technique, which is based on the rating from 5 to 50 points through the mnemonic sticker dots,

was introduced in a tourism study conducted by Brown (2006). In Brown’s (2006) study, he explored the values of a tourist destination to understand the place attachment based on the tourists’ perspective. However, since then, there has been no development of this methodological approach in terms of its evaluation of the tourists’ sensory experience based on their perspective. This methodological approach of survey mapping technique is relevant for the understanding of the form of ‘tourist space’ or the ‘honey pot’ of a certain destination via the tourist sensory experience.

Meanwhile, a number of studies in Malaysia (e.g. Rahman, Khalifah, & Ismail, 2017, 2016; Zainol, 2014; Zainol, Ahmad, Nordin, Mohd, & Ching, 2013; Jusoh, Masron, Hamid, & Shahrin, 2013) discussed on tourist multisensory experience. Subsequently, Zainol et al., (2013)’s study was the most significant study which explored the important factors of tourists’ appreciation values towards a destination’s urban sensory elements in the context of Melaka World Heritage Site. However, the influence of the chosen mode of transportation on tourists’ appreciation values towards a destination’s urban sensory elements through the GIS approach was the focus of this study. Furthermore, the measurement rubric, which scale consisting of 0 (Inaccessible – five sensory elements are inaccessible), 1 (Worse – only one of five sensory elements can be appreciated), 2 (Equal – two or three of the five sensory elements can be appreciated), and 3 (Better – All five sensory elements can be appreciated in detail), was provided (Zainol *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, this study has utilized the concept of the survey mapping technique from Brown (2006) and the measurement rubric by Zainol *et al.* (2013) in drawing a guide map on A3-sized questionnaires. These questionnaires were distributed to international tourists to value 75 attractions located in the Core Zone area of Melaka World Heritage Site.

The sensory values based on the tourist’s sensory perception while they are experiencing the Core Zone area of Melaka World Heritage Site were measured using the 5-point Likert scale based on Vagias (2006) and Dițoiu and Căruntu (2014), which ranges from 1 = Very Negative, 2 = Negative, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Positive, to 5 = Very Positive. Moreover, the words ‘see’, ‘taste’, ‘hear’, ‘smell’, and ‘touch’ were used in the guide map instead of the word ‘visual’, ‘gustatory’, ‘auditory’, ‘olfactory’, and ‘tactile’ to facilitate the tourists’ understanding of the questionnaires. In analyzing the attractions’ sensory values, the mean range was calculated, followed by its categorization into Negative (1.00 – 2.33), Moderate (2.34 – 3.67), and Positive (3.68 – 5.00). The interpretation data based on the categorization of sensory values are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The Categorization and Interpretation of Sensory Values based on Tourist Sensory Perception

Mean range	Sensory Values	Interpretation
1.00 - 2.33	Negative	The attraction generates negative appreciation value towards the sensory experience
2.34 - 3.67	Moderate	The attraction generates moderate appreciation value towards the sensory experience
3.68 - 5.00	Positive	The attraction generates positive appreciation value towards the sensory experience

Results and Discussions

The visualization of sensory values is presented in Figure 1 (Visual), Figure 2 (Gustatory), Figure 3 (Auditory), Figure 4 (Olfactory), and Figure 5 (Tactile). Based on the visual perception values map (Figure 1), the concentration of positive values towards the attractions in St. Paul’s Civic Area was presented. Here, the physical built environment of the colonial buildings represented a positive visual perception of international tourists. With this, a ‘tourist space’ or ‘honey pot’ area was developed. Moreover, the

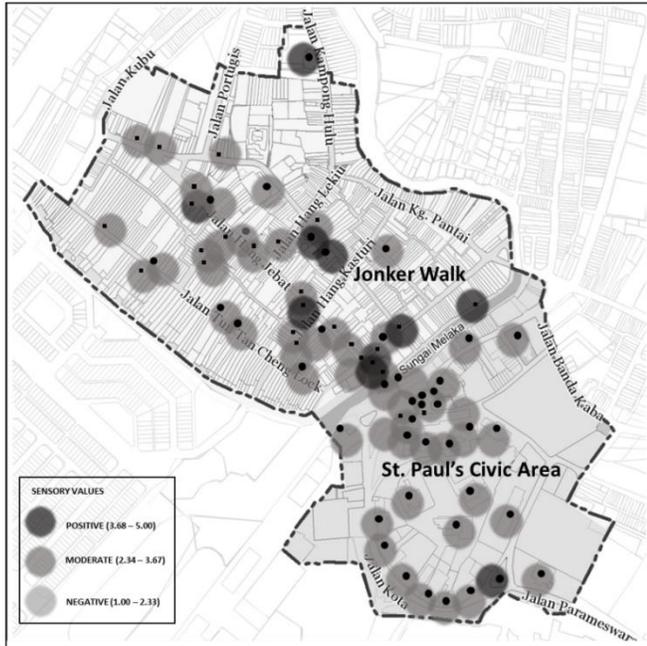


Figure 3: Auditory Perception Values Map

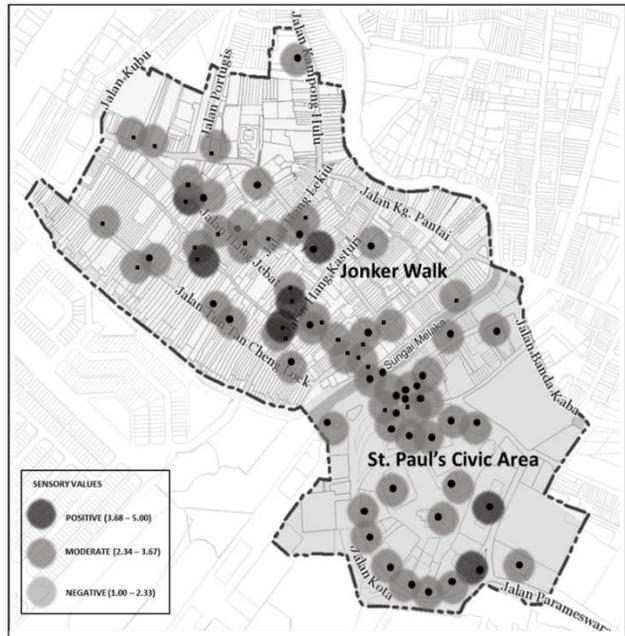


Figure 4: Olfactory Perception Values Map

As for the tactile perception values map (Figure 5), 24 points were plotted as the positive values of tactile perception towards the cultural heritage attractions in the Core Zone area of Melaka World Heritage Site. Additionally, the concentration of the positive values in the Dutch Square, Jalan Kota, and Jalan Hang Jebat areas was shown in the tactile perception map. Subsequently, the visualization of the tactile perception map has provided an important finding for this study, where the tactile perception has contributed more positive values in appreciating the cultural heritage attractions of the investigated destination in comparison to the auditory and olfactory perceptions.

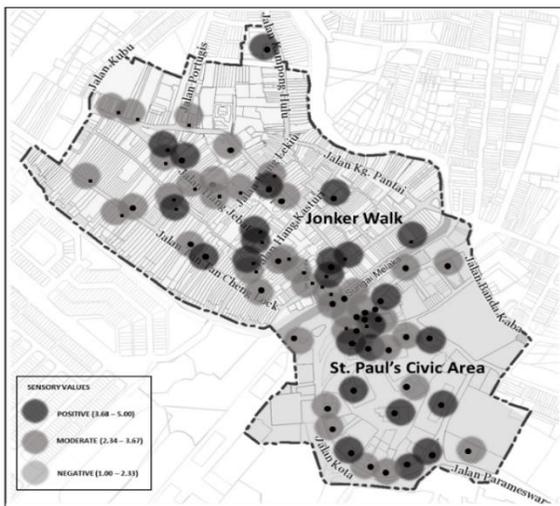


Figure 5: Tactile Perception Values Map

Conclusion

Place-based values in tourist attractions are essential for tourism planners, management, and marketers. In the context of this study, sensory mappings have provided the information related to the consumption of sensory perception, which contributes to the positive, moderate, and negative sensory values. Furthermore, in comparison to the visual perception values map, the conflict created by the presence of many moderate sensory values, which were plotted in the auditory and olfactory perception values map, has formulated a question on the authenticity of the Core Zone area of Melaka World Heritage Site in terms of tourists' appreciation towards the cultural heritage attractions based on their overall sensory aspects.

In terms of the methodological approach to evaluate the destination that has been chosen in this study, findings from the sensory maps have presented that there were no negative values found in the cultural heritage attractions. Therefore, the specific sensory values of cultural heritage attractions which provide the lowest and the highest sensory values will be investigated in future studies, as well as the discussion on the type of attractions which are influenced by the sensory perception. Moreover, with the open-ended questions that incorporated in the questionnaire, the factor of their sensory values which have been captured in the sensory mapping will be discovered in detail. Additionally, future studies could further explore the public participant geographic information system (PPGIS) in terms of tourist sensory experience for a better visualization of 'tourist space' in a certain destination.

Additionally, this study reinforces that the MBMB should not disregard the authenticity of the holistic cultural and heritage attractions, which can be achieved by other sensory aspects of the tourists, such as the auditory, olfactory, and tactile perspectives. Hence, in managing the World Heritage Site, the Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) by the MBMB should not only focus on the visuality aspect of attractions, but also the holistic sensory experience which then could impact a positive tourist experience in Core Zone area of Melaka World Heritage Site.

References

- Agapito, D, Pinto, P, & Mendes, J. (2017). Tourists' Memories, Sensory Impressions and Loyalty: In loco and Post-visit Study in Southwest Portugal. *Tourism Management*, 58, 108–118.
- Agapito, D, Valle, P, & Mendes, J.D.C. (2014). The Sensory Dimension of Tourist Experiences: Capturing Meaningful Sensory-informed Themes in Southwest Portugal. *Tourism Management*, 42, 224–237.
- Agapito, D., Mendes, J., & Valle, P., (2013). Exploring the conceptualization of the sensory dimension of tourist experiences. *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, 2(2), 62–73
- Agapito, D., Valle, P., & Mendes, J., (2012). Sensory marketing and tourist experiences. *Spatial and Organizational Dynamics Discussion Paper*, 10, 7 – 19
- Agapito, D., Valle, P., & Mendes, J., (2014). The sensory dimension of tourist experiences: Capturing meaningful sensory-informed themes in Southwest Portugal. *Tourism Management*, 42, 224–237
- Berg, P.O & Sevón, G., (2015). Food-branding places – A sensory perspective. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 00:0, 1-16
- Brown, G. (2005). Mapping Spatial Attributes in Survey Research for Natural Resources Management: Methods and Applications. *Society and Natural Resources*, 18(1), 17-39.

- Brown, G. (2006). Mapping Landscape Values and Development Preferences: A method for Tourism and Residential Development Planning. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 8(2), 101-113.
- Brown, G., & Raymond, C. (2007). The Relationship between Place Attachment and Landscape Values: Toward Mapping Place Attachment. *Applied Geography*, 27(2), 89–111.
- Brown, G., Raymond, C. M., and Corcoran, J. (2015). Mapping and Measuring Place Attachment. *Applied Geography*, 57, 42-53.
- Dann, G, & Jacobsen, J.K.S. (2010). Tourism Smellscapes. *Tourism Geographies: An International Journal of Tourism Space, Place and Environment*, 5(1), 3–25.
- Dițoiu, M-C & Cărunțu, A-L., (2014). Sensory Experiences Regarding Five-dimensional Brand Destination. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Science*, 109 (2014), 301-306
- Everett, S. (2009). Beyond the Visual Gaze? The Pursuit of an Embodied Experience through Food Tourism. *Tourist Studies*, 8(3), 337–358.
- Everett, S. (2012). Production Places or Consumption Spaces? The Place- making Agency of Food Tourism in Ireland and Scotland. *Tourism Geographies: An International Journal of Tourism Space, Place and Environment*, 14(4), 535–554.
- Franklin, A., & Crang, M. (2001). The Trouble with Tourism and Travel Theory? *Tourist Studies*, 1(1), 5–22.
- Gibson, C., & Connell, J. (2007). Music, Tourism and the Transformation of Memphis. *Tourism Geographies: An International Journal of Tourism Space, Place and Environment*, 9(2), 160–190.
- Hashimoto, A. and Telfer, D.J. (2006). Selling Canadian Culinary Tourism: Branding the Global and the Regional Product. *Tourism Geographies: An International Journal of Tourism Space, Place and Environment*, 8(1), 31–55.
- Jusoh, J., Masron, T., Hamid, N.F.A., & Shahrin, N. (2013). Tourist Expectation and Satisfaction towards Physical Infrastructure and Heritage Elements in Melaka World Heritage Site. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2(8), 733–739.
- Kivela, J., & Crofts, J.C. (2006). Tourism and Gastronomy: Gastronomy's Influence on How Tourists Experience. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 30(3), 354–377
- Larsen, J, and Urry, J (2011). Gazing and Performing. *Environmental and Planning: Society and Space*, 29, 1110–1125.
- Lin, Y., Pearson, T.E., & Cai, L.A. (2011). Food as a Form of Destination Identity: A Tourism Destination Brand Perspective. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 11(1), 30–48
- Lynch, M, Duinker, P, Sheehan, L, & Chute, J. (2010). Sustainable Mi'kmaw Cultural Tourism Development in Nova Scotia, Canada: Examining Cultural Tourist and Mi'kmaw Perspectives. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 18(4), 539–556.
- Melaka Historical City Council (MBMB, 2008). *Conservation Management Plan for Historic City of Melaka*.
- Melaka Historical City Council (MBMB, 2011). *Conservation Management Plan and Special Area Plan: Melaka and George Town, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca*.

- Pan, S, and Ryan, C (2009). Tourism Sense-Making: The Role of the Senses and Travel Journalism. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 26(7), 625–639.
- Poria, Y. (2010). *The Story Behind the Picture: Preferences for the Visual Display at Heritage Sites*. In Waterton, E., & Watson S. (Ed.) *Culture, Heritage and Representation: Perspectives on Visuality and the Past* (pp. 217–228). England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Poria, Y., Butler, R., & Airey, D. (2004). Links between Tourists, Heritage, and Reasons for Visiting Heritage Sites. *Journal of Travel Research*, 43, 19–28.
- Poria, Y., Butler, R., & Airey, D. (2006). Tourist Perceptions of Heritage Exhibits: A Comparative Study from Israel. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 1(1), 51–72.
- Poria, Y., Reichel, A., & Biran, A. (2006). Heritage Site Perception and Motivations to Visit. *Journal of Travel Research*, 44, 318–326.
- Rahman, N.H.A, Khalifah, Z. & Ismail, H.I (2017). Addressing the Importance of the Sensory Aspect in Tourism Studies- A Literature Review. *Advanced Science Letters*, 23 (4), 3167-3169
- Rahman, N.H.A, Khalifah, Z. & Ismail, H.I. (2016). The Role of Sensory Experiences in Appreciating the Cultural Heritage Attractions. *Journal of Tourism, Leisure and Global Change*, 3, 117-128
- Raymond, C., & Brown, G. (2006). A Method for Assessing Protected Area Allocations Using a Typology of Landscape Values. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, 49(6), 797-812
- Rojek, C, & Urry, J (1997). *Transformation of Travel and Theory*. In Rojek, C. and Urry, J. (Ed.) *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory*, (pp. 1-19) New York: Routledge University.
- Urry, J. (1990). *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and travel in Contemporary Societies*. London: Sage
- Urry, J., & Larsen, J. (2011). *Tourist Gaze 3.0*. London: SAGE Publications. Ltd.
- Vagias, W. M. (2006). *Likert-type scale response anchors*. Clemson International Institute for Tourism & Research Development, Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management. Clemson University.
- Williams, D.R., & Vaske, J.J. (2003). The measurement of Place Attachment: Validity and Generalizability of a Psychometric Approach. *Forest Science*, 49(6), 830–840.
- Williams, D.R., Patterson, M.E., & Roggenbuck, J.W. (1992). Beyond the Commodity Metaphor: Examining Emotional and Symbolic Attachment to Place. *Leisure Sciences*, 14, 29–46.
- Xiong, J, Hazarina, N, & Murphy, J (2015). Multisensory Image as a Component of Destination Image. *Tourism Management Perspective*, 14, 34–41.
- Zainol, R, Ahmad, F, Nordin, NA, Mohd@Ahmad, I, & Ching, G.H. (2013), Appreciating Built Heritage Through Urban Sensory. *Journal of Surveying, Construction and Property*, 4(1), 1–12
- Zainol, R. (2014). Appreciating a World Heritage Site Using Multisensory Elements: A Case Study in Kinabalu Park, Sabah, Malaysia. *SHS Web of Conference*, 12(1080), 1–9
- Zhang, J.J (2017). Rethinking ‘Heritage’ in Post-conflict Tourism. (In Press). *Annals of Tourism Research*. Retrieved July 15, 2017 from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160738317300890>