The Potential of Tourism Photography: A Case Study Of Padang Besar, Malaysia

by Ung Ean Na

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Abstract

Travel photography has become an interesting form of tourism nowadays and has become one of the potential market segments as a motivator to travel. Perlis is Malaysia's smallest state, filled with breath-taking landscapes and ever vibrant and growing urban cities, but has done little to provide this experience of travel photography to travellers. The project's aims are to identify the unique photo spots and to develop travel photography as a tourism product to promote Perlis tourism. This project will be focused on Padang Besar township, which consists of Titi Tinggi, Beseri, Chuping, Santan and Mata Ayer as tourist attractions. To accomplish this goal, the project has primarily emphasised tourism product development that can be applied to travel photography as innovative tourism products to maintain tourism destinations' competitiveness. Using an innovative tourism product development approach and quantitative statistical techniques, this project is expected to implement an attractive, affordable, and unforgettable travel photography product that would provide a complete travel photography experience for a group of domestic tourists.

Keyword: Travel photography, Travel experience, Perlis

Introduction

Photography for tourists and photography taken by tourists can be broadly divided into two categories. The first category comprises photographic photographs that are used as promotional materials as well as those that are sold and given away as travel souvenirs (Botterill, 1987; Chalfen, 1979). The term "tourist photography" generally refers to both the tourist-related photographic practises and the associated artefacts (Robinson & Picard, 2009). Both photographic acts and photographic objects are included under the umbrella term of photography. The actions are typically referred to as "photographic practises" and include buying photography equipment, learning and honing photographic techniques, as well as taking, processing, reviewing, sharing, editing, saving, organising, captioning, and discussing images. In this thesis, the terms "photo" and "photograph" are used synonymously to denote photographic objects, or the visual images created by cameras or mobile phones.

In recent years, a new tourist niche has emerged as a result of the growing popularity of photography as a hobby (Palmer & Lester, 2005). In that regard, certain visitors may choose to travel for other purposes besides photography (Baerenholdt, Framke, Haldrup, Larsen, & Urry, 2004). Some studies investigate the ways in which photographic images mediate the travel experience (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009) or aid in generating travel desire (Lin & Huang, 2005). To document the contrasts and preserve their memories of their travels, travellers were thought to need to incorporate photography into their rituals (Graburn, 1989). According to Berger, Denk, Dittenbach, Pesenhofer, and Merkl (2007), photography encourages pleasant recollections of vacation destinations and captures trip experiences in images. A tourism activity that is strongly rooted in the experiences of travellers is taking pictures (Cederholm, 2004). According to Groves and Timothy (2001), photographs can be used to

convey the meaning of a journey and its destination. According to Yin, Cao, Han, Zhai, and Huang (2011), these landscape characteristics are largely constant and highlight the distinctiveness of the destination site by the longitude and latitude dimensions.

The image can be linked to the physical world as a tangible, material proof (Markwick, 2001), documenting the sequence of consumption (Sontag, 1973), and being transformed into a vehicle that allows the everyday consumption of the experience thanks to the photograph (Gal and Donaire, 2005). Photographs "appear to be credible as a direct representation of reality, a 'true' reflection of actual places, people, and events" (Markwick, 2001), and have been utilised to better understand the tourist experience (MacKay & Couldwell, 2004). The mental image a traveller has of a particular place influences their decision to visit and considers their interests, values, and attitudes while also being shaped by the general public's perception of the place (Obenour, Lengfelder, et al., 2005). Travelling outside one's typical surroundings for personal, business, or professional reasons is known as tourism, and it is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon. Visitors—tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents—are these individuals, and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which entail spending money on travel (United Nations World Tourism Organisation, 2008).

The Role of Photography in Tourism

This implies that Urry believes the concepts and practises of tourism and photography are conceptually and practically linked. Urry then goes on to further develop this relationship, basing his arguments on eight congruent claims, including the following: photography is (or at least appears to be) a tool to accurately capture reality; the power of photography is in its ability to pass itself off as a genuine miniature replica of the real thing; photographs allow the photographer to interpret the image captured thereon and to tell stories about it; and photography involves the selection, structuring, and shaping of that is to be acquired, enabling an idealised image of the object of the gaze to be captured. that photography is a common phenomenon and a democratised activity; that photography shapes travel, largely dictating the places we go and the activities we engage in while there; and that travel is a method for taking images; and, it is possible to view photography as a component of the "hermeneutic circle" of tourism reproduction, in which travellers look to take pictures of the places they are visiting in order to demonstrate to others that they have been there. As a result, according to Urry (1990, p. 140), tourism is summed up by visitors to a place "demonstrating that they have really been there by showing their version of the images that they had originally seen before they set off."

Photography as Destination Image

People enjoy travelling, and the majority of tourists snap pictures while they are there as part of their tourism activities (Cederholm, 2004). As a result, it is clear that photography and tourism are interconnected (Lo, McKercher, Lo, Cheung, & Law, 2011). On the other hand, numerous tourist locations also use photography to convey their destination images to their intended tourists (Jenkins, 2003). Therefore, photos and photographs are essential marketing communication tools that many marketers employ to advertise tourism-related events (Cederholm, 2004). Numerous websites now provide more visual content, enabling visitors to explore and view these photographs of the destination (Cao et al., 2010). This is due to the fact that visual elements like the images and colours in a photograph have a direct impact on how easily people can recognise and remember an advertisement (Percy & Rossiter, 1983). Photographs are employed as significant determinants of tourists' choices of vacation destinations, affecting their actions, and revealing their pleasure with tourist destinations (Garrod, 2008).

As a result, many forms of photography can show the tourist destinations from various angles. For instance, images of various tourist places display the stunning architecture and landscapes there (Snavely, Seitz, & Szeliski, 2006). Some images depict landscapes and specific locations (Cao et al., 2012). According to Lynn, Giebelhausen, Garcia, Li, and Patumanon (2013), some photographs may use various components, such as colour, to influence viewers. Most tourists like to spend time travelling to the beach during their summer vacation, making it one of the most alluring locations (Cao et al., 2012)

and well-liked travel destinations (Lobo, 2014). According to Lundberg (1971), more than 80% of tourists who visit beach regions like Hawaii and the Caribbean do so for leisure. Travellers frequently take pictures of stunning beaches, many of which are famous and have distinctive features (Cao et al., 2012). Because they can be depicted utilising photographic theories like composition, the rule of thirds, visual weight balance, colours, and lighting, images of locations are most likely depicting the location artistically (Bhattacharya, Sukthankar, & Shah, 2010).

According to Berger et al. (2007), people utilise images to jog their recollections and first-hand accounts of the places they've visited. Photographs also show the various viewpoints that visitors have of the destination's visuals, which can be thought of as each person's individual visual experience (Lo et al., 2011). Some images also highlight the allure and distinctiveness of the locations. One of the key elements influencing consumer decisions on holiday expenditures, together with tourist resources, is image (Ispas and Saragea, 2011). According to several scholars, the term "tourist destination image" can refer to everything from travel preferences to how possible destinations are seen (Jenkins, 1999; Echtner and Ritchie, 2003). In addition, different sciences investigate images, which leads to the range of perspectives they can take. As Crompton (1979), cited in Jenkins (1999), put it: "The sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that an approach.

Relationship between Tourism Destination Image and Tourist Photography

Academics have long been intrigued by the nature of the connection between tourism and photography (e.g., Albers and James 1988; Chalfen 1979; Cohen, Nir, and Almogor 1992; Crang 1997; Feighey 2003; Garlick 2002; Haldrup and Larsen 2003; Jenkins 2003; Markwell 1997; Teymur 1993). According to Haldrup and Larsen (2003, pp. 23–24), "taking photographs is an emblematic tourist practise; it is almost unthinkable to travel for pleasure without bringing the lightweight camera along and returning home without snapshot memories."

The Tourist Gaze by Urry (1990), which has since become the standard explanation of tourism in modern society, looks at the close connection between tourism as a production system and photography as a tourist activity. The tourist gaze and photography go hand in hand. Photographic images help us organise our fantasising or anticipation of the locations we might look at. We capture photographs of what we have been seeing at while we are away. And when we travel to photograph locations, we do it in part by choice. Our experiences as tourists are organised in part by the acquisition of photographic photographs. And when we display photographs to other people, we often accompany them with mostly verbal language that helps shape our recollections of the places we have been. This makes the visitor gaze unavoidably involves the rapid circulation if photographic images Urry.

In order to explain how tourism is formed and repeated as a socially constructed phenomena, Urry (1990) developed the paradigm of the tourist gaze. The tourist gaze is defined as a specific "way of seeing" the world that is imposed on travellers and is fundamentally shaped by the visuals produced by the tourism industry tourist locations. Therefore, the primary reason for visiting such places is to take in the views of the panoramas, landscapes, buildings, people, and other manifestations of the place that, as a result of exposure to visual representations in travel advertisements, television broadcasts, movies, brochures, travel books, and, crucially for the purposes of this article, picture postcards, they have been led to expect to find there. Urry continues by explaining the connection between tourism and photography. While some authors, like Garlick (2002), contend that Urry just uses photography as an illustration of the tourist gaze's ubiquitous effect, others contend that the conventions of tourist photography are integral to the idea of the tourist gaze. For instance, Cornelissen (2005) emphasises the significance of tourism marketing organisations as agents in the collection and presentation of the place signifiers that attract tourists' attention.

Through the use of images, and notably photography, in its brochures and other marketing materials, the tourism sector conveys these signs. Jenkins (2003) contends that snapping pictures is a key activity

for tourists, in addition to the fact that these visual representations of a place stimulate them to travel there. When travel tales are later retold, personal images also serve as evidence that the tourist has actually visited the area (and possibly engaged in certain activities while there). By reinforcing the tourist gaze that the tourism industry has established, travellers' photos help maintains a favourable perception of the destination. Since photography is a key dynamic element in the cyclical replication of the tourism gaze and is essential to contemporary tourism as we know it, Urry's theory of modern tourism fundamentally implicates photography.

Impact of Photography on the representation of Tourism

The result is a paradoxical fusion of aesthetic and practical photography that affects viewers and draws their attention to the neglected, unnoticed, or devalued elements of a heritage. The researcher also wants to show that reality itself is not as interesting as how it appears in photographs. By utilising this strategy, it is possible to open the eyes of common people to the world of art, causing them to take notice of their surroundings and even fostering a sense of place attachment among locals.

Our world is documented by photographs, which serve as evidence of what is or was there. Photographs provide viewers a glimpse of the genuine truth. First-hand experience seems increasingly trivial in comparison to images. Despite the sense that images serve the purpose of understanding reality, which comes from first-hand experience, photographs seem to have "seized" reality. Therefore, comprehending an image in its entirety is essential to uncovering a lost reality as well as understanding how a photograph develops into a structure that represents its own consensus (Crimp 1979).

In other words, this kind of photographic representation has the power to improve a society's visual culture by fostering an appreciation for the arts and encouraging citizens to devote significant resources to their education. Anything that has been photographed is thought to be significant since it is presumed that the object is valuable enough to warrant being captured on camera, especially if the photo is taken by a renowned or professional photographer, printed in a big format, and displayed. A picture can give anything credit or increase its credit because it is a simulation of reality. Therefore, a photographer's choice of framing has the power to influence and inform the public, whether they are elites or laypeople. According to Sontag, "photographs transform and broaden our conceptions of what is worth looking at and what we have a right to see in teaching us a new visual code. They serve as a grammar and, more significantly, as a visual ethics (1977: 3). He was able to persuade people to visit and see something they had never imagined to be worth seeing through the distinctive portrayal of photography.

Methodology

The methodology will focus on project planning, project development process, process developing innovative and project implementation. Project planning have 3 phase that includes product development, product launching and product improvement. Next is about project development process that refers to the article and make it as a reference on the processes. In product development process have 3 step that involves introduction, design project, evaluation and product development. All this step is the planning to make this project successful. In project planning have product development that explain about planning to identify the photo spot and develop travel photography as a tourism product. For product launching is planning for make collaboration with travel agency and launch the Perlis Travel Photography route tour package to the market and make a test run. Finally, after the test run and it is successfully then tried to make product improvement for the future such as upgrade the currents package and develop the package to the various place.

In phase 1 Product Development, data collection method was made in this project to get the more information. Next step, make a brainstorm and do a site visit to get the information face to face and see the potential of places. In addition, make a survey and interview with a staff, worker or local people and others about the places. Also make an inventory to identify the best spot photo places to put in the package that can be more potential. This is because, this project will develop tourism photography into

a tourism product. After that, come out with suggestion for the product development for this project, which is do a route tour, trial run package, get evaluate that custom feedback and finalize the result. The project will also evaluate tourism photography products as part of tourism packages. In phase 2 Product Launching, this project will collaborate with other agencies to improve this product. For example, make a collaboration with Ummul Travel, photographers and tour guides. This is because, the cooperation will benefit both. For example, Ummul Travel will get more attractions after the launch of this product and this project will also get more benefits such as facilities and transportation. In this phase, this product will develop a photographic journey to promote Perlis to be more attractive. This project will promote Perlis by providing a unique and hidden photo spot. In phase 3 Product Improvement will be the improvement of the final product, this project will improve the existing package. For example, will improve the current packages in Perlis such as leisure, gastronomy and nature and make them more attractive. This is because, not only just build tourism photography packages but also can include various types of tourism such as leisure, gastronomy, and nature. This project also developed packages in various places in Perlis. As we know Perlis is famous for certain places such as Kangar, Arau and Padang Besar. This package is more for various places. For example, we went to Chuping, Mata Ayer, Santan, Beseri and Titi Tinggi which are less places promotion.

Project Development Process

The process of planning and allocating resources to fully develop a project or product from concept to go-live is known as the project development process. Introduction, design, assessment, and development make up its four processes. This procedure is based on an essay by Santos from 2020 in Sustainability that describes the product development process. Because the current model frequently only offer a partial framework for the creation of these goods, it is necessary to create a conceptual model of innovative tourism product development. The models that have been presented up to this point concentrate on either the resources required, the tourism experiences to be offered, or development procedures. The concept of service, which is at the foundation of the model, must continuously keep in mind that the goal is to provide the right framework based on staging that produces the ideal conditions for unforgettable and transformative visitor experiences. These two processes are vital in design because they direct and steer the entire process of service innovation and give it the necessary efficacy and efficiency, according to Scheuing and Johnson (1989), who examine the creation of strategy and objectives. The majority of current models contain this phase for evaluation, regardless of whether they focus on the creation of tangible goods, intangible services, or tourism products; nevertheless, the components included in this phase may vary between models (Johnson, 2002). The "service blueprint" mapping technique, which is still under development, is one useful technique for visualising service systems, according to (Shostack, 1988). A service blueprint is essentially a diagram listing all the elements of the service being examined, and its major purpose is to allow for more unbiased evaluations of the service process.
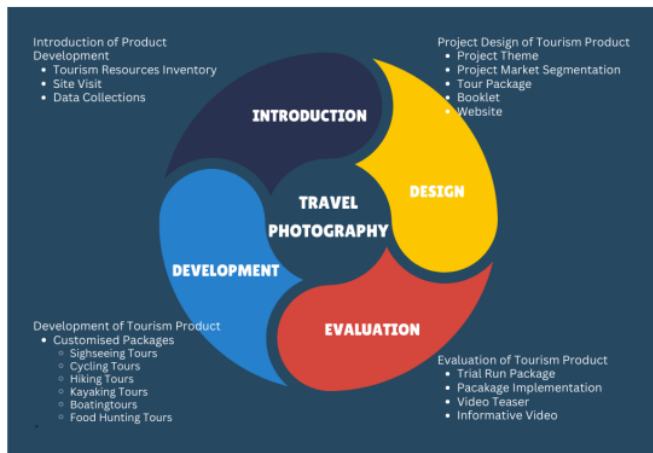
Figure 3.3 Process of Tourism Product Development

In general, this project has developed its product primarily using four processes. The introduction process outlines the steps that must be taken, such as visiting the site, creating an inventory list, and others. The idea that must be used to create the product is displayed during the design phase. Make a pamphlet, a website, a brochure, and other materials, for instance. Additionally, as part of the evaluation process, a product trial is required to test the market and gauge consumer satisfaction. Create a questionnaire, distribute it to visitors, and ask them about their pleasure with the merchandise. Process of development, improved techniques to provide the greatest possible product.

Findings and Discussion

The survey was conducted face-to-face with participants through a travel photography package. Respondents were given 5-10 minutes to fill out the questionnaire that had been given. Only 83% questionnaires were collected according to the number of participants. Data were analyzed and interpreted using Microsoft Excel. The respondent profile shows that male have only 36% and female have 64% respondents. Based on this, the majority have high percent and frequency is female who ages between 18-20 years which is 88%. This is because in this expectations age, they more prefer to take picture of their surrounding and outfit of the day for upload at their social media. Approximately the level of education of the participants is more at university where the percentage is 88% while others are 12%. Based on the survey, the section of tour experience, majority of respondents agree with that they have gain a different type of experience during the tour which is 60%. Based on the analysis of tourist satisfaction, there is 56% which is satisfied with the concept of travel photography. 76% of respondents agreed that the Perlis is suitable for the tourism photography which is surrounded with beautiful scenery photo spots. Majority of the respondents (72%) were shared the photograph into social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok etc. Most of respondent (76%) shared their travel experience through the photograph with family, friends, siblings and others.

Conclusion

Photography is created from the beauty and uniqueness of a place. To encourage tourists to enjoy and strengthen the image of Perlis as a tourist destination is a big challenge. The purpose of this project is to see the potential and satisfaction of tourists towards the natural beauty and uniqueness of photo spots in Perlis. As a result of this research, we can find out what we can achieve for tourist satisfaction to a better level. Tourist satisfaction in overall package and behavior is explored in this study. Photo spots seem to have a direct effect on tourist satisfaction, such as intention to return and positive word of

mouth, according to relationship analysis. Because tourists rely on images, all good marketing methods should strive to further enhance the image of Perlis. Furthermore, word of mouth from own experience is important in making a project successful to introduce Travel Photography to the public. The influence of overall satisfaction on tourists is significant. Therefore, it is important for Perlis to use an effective marketing plan to promote photography spots to improve its good image and tourist satisfaction. In conclusion, attention and cooperation between all those involved in introducing travel photography is important in promoting the image of Perlis as the best tourist destination. This is because it can attract more visitors and tourists from outside who come to Perlis to enjoy its beauty and uniqueness.

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