PERCEIVED IMAGES OF KUALA LUMUR FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF
INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS

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In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

All the praises and thanks be to Allah

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ABSTRACT

Most existing literature on destination image studies focus on measuring tourist perceived image using the perspective of 'before and after' visitation. However, a question arises as to how these efforts represent an accurate image of the tourist experience during their visit in a particular destination. It is crucial since it gives a perspective of the actual image of a destination. Therefore, this study aims to capture the overall image perceived by tourist before, during and after visitation at an urban tourism destination. Kuala Lumpur was selected as a case study due to its aggressive attempt on becoming a world class business destination, where promoting an accurate destination image is crucial for city positioning and only achievable if the image is portrayed from the demand side. Within this context, the technological innovation and trends, for instance, increase the possibility of capturing actual image that is perceived by tourist during visitation. The Volunteer Employed Photographer (VEP) technique was used due to its advantage in capturing affective elements of a destination and the photographs indirectly represent real tourist emotions towards a destination. Capturing affective elements is vital as it contributes towards the overall image of a destination. A total of 384 international tourists participated in two stages of the survey for this study, using the questionnaire and VEP techniques and conducted within the Kuala Lumpur Business District (KLBD). Descriptive and inferential analyses were used to obtain mean, variance and standard deviation from the collected data. One-Way ANOVA, t-test and correlation analyses were further used to investigate significant differences across variables. The findings indicate that international tourists perceived KLBD differently before and during visitation. Before visitation, cognitive and affective images of tourists differed according to their demography, information sources, and travel characteristic. Elements of expenditure and food were dominant in the cognitive images while culture, expenditure, and food were dominant in the affective images perceived by tourists before visiting city. Supplemental photo analysis showed that image during visitation is constantly changing as the tourists experience different locations based on their movement and preferences. Images of places, crowds of people, food and expenditure activities dominated the overall photo content. However, these perceived images are influenced and dictated by tourist's age, country of origin, and travel companion. The overall evaluation of the actual images show that KLBD offers passive activities with physical attributes triggering positive and negative attitudes with active emotions. Acknowledging the image changes perceived by tourist on each stage helps in understanding the image influencing tourist tendency to revisit the destination. Acquiring image perceived by tourist during visitation is critical to assist tourism agencies and authorities in promoting accurate image in order to promote higher tourism satisfaction since different tourists have different preferences.

ABSTRAK

Hampir keseluruhan literatur dalam imej destinasi lebih tertumpu kepada kajian mengukur imej yang dilihat pelancong menggunakan persepsi 'sebelum dan selepas' lawatan. Walau bagaimanapun, timbul persoalan sama ada usaha ini sebenarnya mewakili imej sebenar pengalaman pelancong semasa di destinasi. Ia dilihat penting kerana memberi persepsi terhadap imej sebenar destinasi. Oleh itu, kajian ini bertujuan merakam keseluruhan imej yang dilihat pelancong sama ada sebelum, semasa dan selepas lawatan di destinasi pelancongan bandar. Kuala Lumpur dipilih sebagai kajian kes kerana usaha agresif untuk mempromosikan imejnya, yang merupakan aspek penting bagi kedudukan bandar dan hanya boleh dicapai jika imej digambarkan dari aspek permintaan. Dalam konteks ini, inovasi dan teknologi meningkatkan kebolehan merakam imej sebenar yang dilihat semasa lawatan pelancongan. Teknik *Volunteer-Employed Photography* (VEP) digunakan kerana kelebihannya dalam menguasai elemen afektif destinasi dan juga secara tidak langsung mewakili emosi sebenar pelancong. Merakam elemen afektif penting kerana menyumbang kepada imej keseluruhan destinasi. Seramai 384 pelancong antarabangsa terlibat dalam dua peringkat untuk kajian ini, menggunakan soal selidik dan teknik VEP di pusat perniagaan Kuala Lumpur (KLBD). Analisis deskriptif dan inferensi digunapakai bagi menganalisis data yang dikumpul dalam memperoleh min, varians dan sisihan piawai. Analisis t-test, ANOVA sehala dan korelasi digunapakai bagi ujian lanjut untuk menyiasat perbezaan signifikan terhadap pembolehubah. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan pelancong antarabangsa melihat KLBD berbeza sebelum dan semasa lawatan. Sebelum lawatan, imej kognitif dan afektif pelancong berbeza mengikut demografi, sumber maklumat, dan karakteristik perjalanan. Unsur membeli-belah dan makanan adalah dominan bagi imej kognitif manakala unsur budaya, membeli-belah dan makanan adalah dominan bagi imej afektif oleh pelancong sebelum melawat KLBD. Analisis foto tambahan menunjukkan imej semasa lawatan sentiasa berubah berdasarkan lokasi yang berbeza disebabkan pergerakan dan keutamaan mereka. Imej tempat, orang ramai, aktiviti makanan dan membeli-belah menguasai keseluruhan kandungan foto. Walau bagaimanapun, imej tersebut dipengaruhi oleh umur, negara asal, dan rakan perjalanan. Penilaian terhadap keseluruhan imej sebenar menunjukkan KLBD menawarkan aktiviti pasif dengan atribut fizikal yang mencetuskan sikap positif dan negatif dengan emosi aktif. Pertimbangan terhadap perubahan imej di setiap peringkat membantu mengenalpasti imej yang memberi pengaruh besar kepada potensi pelancong kembali ke destinasi. Perolehan terhadap imej semasa lawatan adalah kritikal bagi membantu pihak berkuasa dan agensi pelancongan untuk mempromosi imej yang tepat bagi memberi kepuasan pelancongan yang tinggi kerana pelancong mempunyai kemahuan yang berbeza dimana menjurus kepada penerimaan imej yang pelbagai.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

An image can be defined as the sum of impressions and views that people hold about places. Images symbolise the huge number of relations and bits of information that interact with a place. Fakeye and Crompton (1991) define this concept as the overall impression that a tourist has towards a tourism destination. Previous literature stated that there are four common concepts when discussing destination images, which are complexity, multidimensionality, relativity, and dynamic nature. Images are abstract and consist of two types of evaluations, which are the cognitive component related to beliefs (Crompton, 1979) and the affective component that covers feelings or emotions (Beerli *et al.*, 2002). Cognitive can be summed up as perceptions that represent the views and opinions that the tourist embraces about the characteristics and attributes of a certain object or place (Pike and Ryan, 2004), while affective evaluations comprise the affected feeling and emotions towards these objects or places (Chen and Uysal, 2002; Kim and Richardson, 2003). Current studies also recognise the presence of a third image component, which is the conative image (Choi *et al.*, 2007). Conative can be defined as the behavioural action that is reflected from cognitive and affective valuations. Beerli *et al.* (2002) highlighted that the combination of cognitive and affective components would eventually form the overall image that reflects a tourist's positive or negative evaluation. It can also be noted that all elements must be acknowledged in their contribution towards better understanding of the overall image of a destination.

Multiple destinations nowadays are becoming more essential than one individual attraction due to the increase in tourism demand for holidays. As a result, when visiting a destination, tourists always seek more diverse experiences. The common things tourist do when travelling is staying at a hotel, going outside to eat and drink, interconnecting with local people, going shopping, and visiting cultural and historic places and attractions. Thus, it can be observed that a trip is not a single product, but consists of different service components, which are often provided by several organisations with multiple objectives (Kozak, 2003). In order to gain overall destination satisfaction, most importantly, the tourists must be satisfied with all the services they receive at the destination (Chen and Kerstetter, 1999). Tourist overall satisfaction is crucial towards determining their future purchase behaviour because tourists with high satisfaction level usually have a higher intention to revisit the destination.

The above information provides an overview of the importance of understanding a destination image when explaining tourist behaviour. This is because destination image not only influences the destination choice during the tourist decision-making process (Crompton and Ankomah, 1993), but also influences the post-decision-making behaviour (Bigne *et al.*, 2001). Post-decision-making behaviour can involve participation (onsite experience), evaluation (satisfaction), and future behavioural intentions (intention to revisit) (Chen and Tsai, 2007). Therefore, in tourism research, images are much more important than tangible resources, where Guthrie and Gale (1991) mentioned that perceptions, rather than reality, are what motivate consumers to act. However, in spite of increasing interest in destination image research, many authors have come to an agreement that up until recently, most studies that have been carried out are insufficiently theory-based. This situation is a result of a lack of framework or solid conceptualization which later result to the issues in measuring an overall destination image.

Many studies often use the term 'destination image', but these studies have not conceptualised this term specifically. Various authors have indicated that although the concept is widely used in the empirical context, it has been lightly defined and lacks a solid conceptual structure (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991). Tourism destination image

formation before the trip is the most important stage in the tourist destination selection processes. As stated by Brokaw in Baloglu and McClearly (1999), the before image is used to influence behaviour, so it is important to acknowledge what actually influences image. Goodall (1990) suggested that the discovered factors that influence destination images would help identify target markets and later decide which image should be promoted and highlighted into which segment of the market.

Although much research has been done in this field over the last two decades, destination image studies have also been condemned as being lacking in conceptual framework (Echtner and Ritchie, 1993). Promoting and marketing a good destination image will provide tourists with an early mental perception of what they will experience if they chose that particular tourism destination. Tourism destinations in urban areas face difficulties in arriving at an accurate promotional image since a city provides diverse activities and attractions, which can portray a different perspective of images. So, identifying the correct image that promotes a high satisfaction for the tourists is vital to distinguishing particular cities from each other. A good image should include an element that satisfies tourist perceived value, their expectation toward the destination, and also their tendency to revisit or recommend the destination to their friends and relatives.

However, mismatched images promoted for the actual destination experience can affect the tourism economies in the area since tourist satisfaction and expectation greatly influence tourism business. Identifying the factor that influences tourist behaviour and their decision-making process would lead to a vast amount of information being funneled to local authorities to help them promote their tourism destination. A destination image can be interpreted according to three dimensions, which are cognitive, affective, and conative. The combination of these dimensions will form an overall image of the tourism destination, since different types of tourists have different kinds of perceptions towards an attraction.

1.2   Current Issues in Destination Image

Defining the exact meaning of `tourist destination image' is challenging. The term has been used in multiple contexts, including those relating to the destination images projected, the publicly held or `stereotype' image of destinations, and also the destination images held by individuals. Echtner and Ritchie (1991) note that previously, the destination image definitions used have been quite ambiguous. Understanding tourist destination images is important because images influence not only the tourist's decision-making behaviour, but also the levels of satisfaction regarding their experience. As Mayo (1975) states in his article, the mere existence of an image in the mind of the person is more important than the true representation of what any given destinations has to offer. This shows that the image tourists hold or perceive about the destination is more important than the real image of the destination.

Decision-making and sales from tourist products and services are the reason marketers are always interested in the concept of tourist destination image because both are interrelated. However, an overly ambitious projected image could lead to much more frustration and lesser loyalty towards the destination. According to MacInnis and Price (1987), imagery involves the full consumption experience. Before purchase, indirect consumption is overwhelmed by imagery. Throughout consumption, imagery can add value and increase satisfaction. After consumption, an individual could reconstruct the imagery through memories and vacation souvenirs used to remember the experience. Understanding the differing images that different types of tourists have towards a destination is invaluable, because it enables the re-evaluated image to be merged into tourism marketing planning (Selby and Morgan, 1996). Marketers can also use imagery to increase the remembered satisfaction as well as to encourage re-purchase of holidays. To promote an accurate destination image, knowledge and information of the overall destination image is needed since these represent the real experience.

Promoting an image that does not represent the actual destination will not satisfy tourist perceived value, expectation, and loyalty towards the tourism destination. This scenario will greatly affect tourist level of satisfaction and

expectation, which will also influence their tendency to revisit the destination. In order to promote a good tourism destination image, tourism planners and local authorities must first determine how tourists consume and perceive a destination. Different types of tourists reflect different types of consumption styles and different consumption styles reflect different perceived images. Understanding how the tourists consume and move within a destination can provide knowledge to the authorities for developing a destination image that can match tourist satisfaction, expectation, and in turn lead to their revisiting the destination.

At the initial research stage of the Tourism Destination Image (TDI), researchers have been more concerned with how the image formation process occurs based on the supply-side, to understand the concept of an image. However, recently, research attention has turned to how the receivers of information perceive the image formation process; in this case, what image do the tourists perceive. Tourists will hold a certain image of the destination before visiting the destination based on the image projected by marketers and authorities. Satisfaction with the destination not only depends on the image that tourists receive before the visit, but the experience while visiting the destination is also crucial since it influences the actual image (Ross, 1993; Tasci and Gartner, 2007; Chen and Funk, 2010). When the image these tourists held before visiting is beyond the image they get and perceive during the visit, this creates a perception that the image projected before is just a marketing strategy and will lead to frustration. It is clear to justify that the issue face by the local authorities and marketers in promoting the tourism destination is to figure out the accurate image that need to be projected since there still has an argument on how to actually measure and capture the ideal image of the given destination.

1.3   Existing Gaps

The increased academic interest in the urban tourism field is related to the growth of tourism in cities (Pearce, 2001). Cities have slowly started to become destinations that tourists want to explore, rather than merely acting as gates or stop-over points to rural and coastal destinations. The growth of tourism demand in the city

has made the authorities and governments realise the economic potential of the city to this industry. Tourism strategies of urban renewal and economic development have become popular in many cities around the world (Law, 1996; Judd, 1999; Russo and Van Der Borg, 2002). Nowadays, urban tourism contributes significantly to the basic economy of a city and also impacts people's activity and city shape (Selby 2004). However this trend has also sparked competitions between the big cities around the world. A destination is considered to be competitive enough only if it can attract and satisfy potential tourists. Enright and Newton (2004) added that these criteria are determined by tourism-specific factors and by a much wider range of factors that influence tourism service providers.

Image plays a fundamental role in the success of tourist destinations, as it is considered critical to the destination choice (Law, 2002). Image provides an identity to the place or destination. The image portrayed by a city could then be perceived by the consumer, for which the tourist can then create a perception towards the destination that will influence their purchase behaviour. The similarity of attractions and activities among the cities around the world makes promoting the most appealing image difficult. Nowadays, strong competitions occur where tourists can freely choose from a wide variety of destinations available, but which often substitutable (Tigu, 2012). So a particular destination needs to identify and differentiate itself from other possibilities in the minds of the target market (Qu *et al.*, 2011). A statement by Echtner and Ritchie (2003) supports this in that each destination requires their own unique image because a destination must be positively positioned or favourably differentiated from its competition in the minds of the consumers. Research on destination images have been discussed and new ones have been discovered for over three decades. However, in the recent years, academic researchers have been more concerned with capturing and measuring the overall destination image components.

Efforts by Pike (2002) in synthesising the destination image themes from 1973 through 2000 reveal that 142 papers were published in this field alone. They also highlighted that destination image studies were lacking and limited in terms of research design and approach, as well as methods to measure destination image constructs. According to Boulding (1957), the three components that take into account destination

image are what we know about an object (cognitive), how we feel about what we know (affective), and how we act on this information (conative). However, most destination image researches frequently focus on obtaining only the cognitive and conative images of a destination. Only six studies have shown explicit interest in affective images from 1973 until 2000, as reviewed by Pike (2002). After that, a work by Stepchenkova and Mills in 2010 who review a destination image research from years 2000 until 2007 discovers that only four studies which focus on developing interest towards affective image.

Although the number of destination images research regarding the affective image get an attention by the researchers in 2008 until 2012 where 15 works focusing in the motivations of the tourist, the number is far to be notable from the total 177 works on destination image research in the same period of time (Nghiem-Phu, 2014). Nevertheless, many researchers agree that most destination image studies emphasise more on the cognitive component rather than the affective component (Ecthner and Ritchie, 1991; Walmsley and Young, 1998). Combining the cognitive, affective, and conative components of a destination image could actually produce a stronger overall evaluation of a destination (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999a, 1999b; Stern and Krakover, 1993). Although acquiring the comprehensive destination image can be achieved by acknowledging these three components, the image must be looked at from the demand-side rather from the supply-side. Researchers often detail the image formation process using the supply-side approach in order to better understand the concept.

However, recent attention has now focused on how the image formation process is perceived by receivers of the information (Tasci and Gartner, 2007). The demand-side or the consumer can be referred to as the tourist in the case of a tourism destination research. Capturing the image from the perspective of the tourist is important since the tourists are the ones who experience the destination. The more positive the image tourists perceive about a destination, the higher the destination satisfaction, destination recommendation, as well as destination loyalty. The perceived tourist image of the destination can be differentiated into three stages, which are before the visit, during the visit, and after the visit.

Numerous studies have attempted to examine and capture the differences in destination-perceived imaged between the before and after trip (Andreu *et al.*, 2000; Chaudhary, 2000), pre-visitors, and post-visitors (Chon, 1991). However, there is a lack of studies that have attempted or have focused on the "during-visit" perceived image. Shaw and Williams (1994) also highlighted this issue where they mention that there is limited effort and literature on tourist activities in urban areas. Page (1995) also stressed that it is particularly important to constantly evaluate whether or not actual experience meets tourist expectation. The tourist actual experience can only be acquired when they actually visit and consume the destination, as (Ross, 1993; Tasci and Gartner, 2007; Chen and Funk, 2010) stated, satisfaction with a visited destination not only depends on the ideal images held before the visitation, but also on experiences while at the destination. So, it is vital for the tourism destination, especially urban destinations, to acknowledge the tourist perceived image that include pre-visit image, during-visit image and post-visit image and add that to the comprehensive destination image components (cognitive, affective, and conative).

Acquiring an accurate image of a destination not only leads to destination satisfaction, destination recommendation, and destination loyalty; it also helps in guiding the government and responsible tourism authorities in investing and developing the tourism industry. This is because destination image research might influence the destination, and because the researchers and the methodologies they use are crucial factors for the destination (Tasci *et al.*, 2007). They also mentioned that if the researchers expose the wrong results due to methodological mistakes or faulty interpretations, the destination might run the risk of spending tourism resources for the wrong purposes.

1.4   Problem Statement

As discussed earlier, Law (2002) mentioned that the image of a destination acts as the key role in determining the success of that particular destination since it is a critical factor for destination choice. A destination becomes competitive enough only when it can attract and satisfy potential tourists. However, Tigu (2012) highlighted

that a strong competitive streak exists nowadays, so the tourist has more freedom of choice to pick from a wide variety of destinations although they are often substitutable. Therefore, it can be justified that a destination needs to be identified and differentiated from the alternative destinations in the minds of their target market (Qu *et al.*, 2011). Capturing the image from the perspective of the tourist is important since the tourists are the ones who experience the destination. However, arriving at an accurate definition of `tourist destination image' is challenging because different types of tourists reflect different types of consumption styles, which in turn reflect different perceived images.

Selby and Morgan (1996) clarified that it is invaluable if a researcher can understand the differing images that different types of tourist have on a destination. This is because this information can contribute towards a re-evaluated image that can be merged into tourism marketing planning. Unfortunately, many researchers agree that previously, most destination image research have emphasised more on the cognitive component rather than the affective component (Ecthner and Ritchie, 1991; Walmsley and Young, 1998). Combining the cognitive, affective, and conative components of a destination image could actually produce a stronger overall evaluation of a destination (Baloglu and McCleary, 1999a, 1999b; Stern and Krakover, 1993). Since the tourist perceived image towards a destination is crucial in identifying an ideal image of the particular destination, it is necessary to differentiate the tourist perceived image into three stages, which are before the visit, during the visit, and after the visit.

Previously, numerous studies have attempted to examine and capture the differences in destination perceived image between the before and after trips (Andreu *et al.*, 2000; Chaudhary, 2000), pre-visitors, and post-visitors (Chon, 1991). However, not much study has attempted or focused on the during-visit perceived image. Shaw and Williams (1994) also highlighted this issue where they mentioned that limited effort and literature has been done regarding tourist activities in urban areas. Page (1995) also stressed that it is particularly important to constantly evaluate whether or not the actual experience meets tourist expectation.

From these arguments, it can be justified that capturing the tourist perceived image during their experience of the destination is essential although often overlooked. How tourists actually experience the destination can only be acquired when they actually visit and consume the destination, as (Ross, 1993; Tasci and Gartner, 2007; Chen and Funk, 2010) who stated that satisfaction with a visited destination depends not only on the ideal images held before visitation, but also on experiences while at the destination. This is due to the fact the image that tourist held before the visit may not equal or more positive when they actually experience the destination. It may lead to frustration and negative perception which later influence the tourist tendency to revisit the destination or promote the destination to their respective family and friends.

1.5   Research Objectives

This study aims to determine an accurate destination image of Kuala Lumpur perceived by the demand-side, which are the tourists themselves. Given that the perceived image of the tourist is important to the decision-making in visiting Kuala Lumpur, this study emphasises the different stages of perceived image, which are before visit, during visit, as well as after the visit. The relationship of the perceived image will be discovered via the factors of tourist socio-demographic profile, sources of information, travel characteristics, and components of destination images. In detail, the objectives of this study are:

i.   To measure tourist perceived image before their visit to Kuala Lumpur in terms of the cognitive and affective elements of a destination.

ii.   To capture tourist perceived image during their visit to Kuala Lumpur in terms of the cognitive and affective elements of a destination.

iii.   To assess tourist feedback on their image of Kuala Lumpur after their visit.

iv.   To explore the actual image and image changes at each stages that perceived by tourists towards Kuala Lumpur as an urban tourism destination.

1.6   Research Questions

To achieve the research objectives, the following research questions were formulated and examined:

  i.   What types of tourists visit Kuala Lumpur in terms of their socio-demographic and travel characteristics?
 ii.   What are the elements represent the cognitive and affective image of a destination before visitation?
iii.   How do we capture tourist perceived image during visitation?
iv.   What elements represent the cognitive and affective image of a destination during visitation?
  v.   What are the feedbacks from the tourist after visiting Kuala Lumpur regarding their overall satisfaction, recommendation, and loyalty?
vi.   Which image represents the actual image of Kuala Lumpur as an urban tourism destination?

1.7   Scope of Study

This study focuses on Kuala Lumpur due to it being the city that is representing Malaysia to be promoted as the nation's tourism image. This is due to Kuala Lumpur is a city that is comparable to other big cities around the globe, and is the commercial capital city of Malaysia. Therefore, this study investigates the tourist perceived image towards Kuala Lumpur. Since the perceived image of the tourist involves three different stages, which are the images before visit, during visit, and after visit, this study explores the changes of perceived image of tourists at each stage. The evaluation of the perceived image will include all the component of overall destination image. The tourist's sources of information and their travel motivation are also considered because these influence the image formation when visiting Kuala Lumpur either they are physically or emotionally attached (Hughes and Morrison-Saunders, 2002). Other related factors that can influence the tourist perceived image such as socio-

demographic profiles and travel characteristics are included in this study to further understand the outline of Kuala Lumpur's image (Detailed discussion in Chapter 4).

1.8 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can be looked at from two perspectives, where the first contribution is to the knowledge of destination image research that has been discussed for over three decades. This study is also seen to contribute to Kuala Lumpur tourism authorities and stakeholders especially for practical implementations. In the context of destination image research, this study helps provide the empirical frameworks for measuring the perceived image of tourists towards Kuala Lumpur. The key factors that influence the tourist decision to visit the destination are identified through extensive literature in order to recognise the significant factors that could influence the way tourists perceive a destination. This study also expands upon the knowledge of the method to capture and measure the overall destination image that represents Kuala Lumpur. Moreover, this study enhances the role played by the perceived image of a destination towards tourist perception, which in turn influences their purchase behaviour.

Since the perceived image of tourists towards a destination involves three stages, it is crucial to acknowledge these stages, so as to identify the accurate image perceived by the tourist, which can promote a better positive attitude. The tourist perceived image towards Kuala Lumpur were evaluated. This is to ensure that the tourists still hold the memory and image of the destination and are able to recall their experience in Kuala Lumpur, which can help towards identifying an accurate image of the city. The findings from this study are also useful for providing knowledge on the key factors that influence tourist perceived image towards a destination. This study also identifies the image that has been perceived with high destination satisfaction, high destination recommendation, and also high destination loyalty. Plus, the study findings can be used as a guideline and reference for policy and decision makers when determining the direction for tourism planning, as well as the promotional and marketing strategies for Kuala Lumpur.

1.9   Organisation of the Thesis

The first chapter provides a background of the research problem, problem statement, and objectives of the study, research gap, research scope, and the significance of this study. Next, the second chapter exhaustively discusses and reviews the relevant literature on the subject of urban tourism, destination image, components that contribute to destination image formation, and previous efforts on capturing and measuring destination images. Terminologies used in destination image research are also introduced and discussed in this chapter. The third chapter presents the historic, social and cultural lifestyle, economic development of Kuala Lumpur. In this chapter, overview information of the Kuala Lumpur tourism industry and its marketing strategy is provided. The fourth chapter discusses the methods, approaches, techniques, and instruments that have been used for this study. The fifth chapter presents the results and discussion of the study based on the analyses done, while the final chapter focuses on the conclusion, contribution towards theory and practice, limitations of this study, and feasible recommendations.

1.10   Chapter Summary

Discussion focused on the current issues in destination image and the existing gaps found by the researcher, which later becomes the main interest to undertake this study. The tourist perceived image towards a destination is crucial information for identifying the ideal image of a particular destination. This study explore tourist perceived images into three different stages, which is pre-visit, during-visit and post-visit, where the second stage is often neglected in other studies. The 'during-visit' perceived image of tourist is essential since it represents the actual image of the destination when the tourist undergoes a live experience of the destination. However, other gap is found in the methodological aspect when the overall destination components, in which the cognitive, affective, and conative images are not captured as a whole and where the second components are often overlooked. The methodology used to capture the destination components in the different stages of perceived image and also clarifies why Kuala Lumpur was chosen for this study.

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