

City edutainment for educational and social justice for early childhood

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Abstract. Increasing demand for education-based facilities has shown high expectation towards better city function and quality of life. The needs for entertaining and being educated by its population lead to the concept of city edutainment. In this context, concept of city edutainment is rapidly growing to fulfil the needs of the early childhood through a medium that both educates and entertains. Edutainment concept is seen as a new image approach to increase profile of these tourism attractions targeting school group as market segment. It can be seen from the establishment of several edutainment attractions in big cities. However, there are still limited discussions as to what extent the edutainment's concept fit into the needs of the educational purposes programs and later influence the city development. Hence, this study attempted to discuss the fundamental concept of edutainment, social justice in education, and the way of edutainment in the city influences the early childhood development through learning. The study shows that edutainment facilities are important elements for both urban planning and education. The understanding provides the opportunity to enhance the learning experience's quality in the city. Thus, encourage the provision of tourism-recreational use settings that are more efficient and contribute to nation growth.

1. Introduction

Malaysia has undergone rapid urbanisation over the past five decades. According to Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) [1], due to the rapid urbanisation process, the proportion of urban population had increased critically from 62% in 2000 to 70% in 2010. Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory is one of the most urbanized areas in Malaysia with more than 5 million people living in the city. From the statistics, it shows that population currently focussing on living in the city as city is equipped with several functions that cater the needs of the population such as commercial, financial and producer services. Since the population is concentrated and live in the city, expansion of population with different age structure occurred include early childhood. Early childhood is a crucial phase in human life. At the early stage, children should be exposed to the sufficient amount of knowledge to create a better society in the future regardless of different background of socio-economy. One of the ways is through education. Education provides the opportunity for students to obtain knowledge beyond classroom through the combination of formal and non-formal learning. Field trips and excursion activities are the examples of non-formal learning encourage by the educational system and usually the activities take place in several attractions in the city. Thus, city plays an important role to provide necessary education-based facilities accessible by all students. Due



to the technological trends, edutainment concept is being reintroduced from different perspective and this study will look into location-based edutainment.

The convergence of education and entertainment can be seen from the increasing demand of leisure experience integrating fun with learning from the knowledge-based society. According to Hussain et al [2], children's edutainment has become extensively popular and commercially successful with parents, teachers and children. Besides that, according to Nemeč and Trna [3], it can be seen that there are interrelationship between education and entertainment where the level of education indicates the expectation of quality of entertainment they perceived. The current society needs a meaningful learning consist of entertainment and is still not considered as a waste of time. However, the importance of the edutainment approach is not recognized from the perspective of teachers and parents. They did not view the experiences as a tool for learning activities although educational researchers and psychologists have written broadly about the benefits of play as essential part of children's learning. Besides that, location-based edutainment is still under-researched. Thus, there is a difficulty in identifying the elements of edutainments to be as a guideline in transforming the city. Thus, this study will focus of the theory and concept of edutainment, social justice in education and the way of edutainment in the city influences the early childhood development through learning.

2. Edutainment

Generally, edutainment is a combination of two major terms, education and entertainment where the concept of obtaining knowledge involved interactive, fun as well as enjoyable environment [4]. The main purpose of edutainment is to support education with entertainment regardless of which purposes come first [5]. This approach already exists since decades ago and it can be seen from the application of edutainment especially in developed and developing countries in line with the technological advancement. The literature review will highlight on the types and trends of edutainment, social justice related to education, the needs of early childhood development and government learning strategies.

2.1 Methodology

This conceptual paper is solely based on the review and data from the literature. There are several steps taken in this study. In the early stage, it involved the process of identification of keywords and years to see the trends. Keywords such as edu-tourism, education, early childhood, edutainment and cities are used to obtain relevant papers and journals related to this study. Next, content analysis is used to analyse all the data obtained and the results were categorized based on the topics and sub-topics. Lastly, all the information obtained is synthesized to create a conceptual study on edutainment, early childhood and education.

2.2 Definition of edutainment

The history of edutainment started since early 1500 where a Czech educator, J.A Komensky includes play as part of the learning pedagogy. Komensky defined play in two perspectives; the first one referred to play as a theatre performance and the second one referred play as an enjoyable method that should help to educate body and mind [3]. However, the definition of edutainment evolved with time and needs. According to Oxford Dictionary, edutainment can be define as a form of learning which is designed to entertain, gain interest and at the same time engage people with the knowledge conveyed. Theoretically, edutainment can be defined as a concept, activities or environment that relies heavily on visual material, and narrative or game-like formats in a more informal and less didactic styles approach [6]. Besides that, edutainment also can be defined as an enjoyable place or environment for children to be able to learn with a combination of diverse mediums such as sound, animation, video, text and images [7]. This is supported by Okan [8] where edutainment provide attractive visual stimuli which creates enjoyable as well as fun way of learning and helps in holding learner's attention.

Edutainment concept also involved the play context [9] and play concept is essential in the early phase of early childhood development to develop their physical, cognitive, language and social skills [10]. This is supported by Jamil et al [9] where edutainment provide opportunity for an amusing learning elements such as playing, exploration, experimentation and personal interpretation. From the definition above, it can be concluded that edutainment is a combination between education and entertainment and the definition can be viewed into two perspectives that are through play-based or technological-based materials or environment. This is supported by Rapeepisarn et al [11] where both of the perspectives; learn through play and edutainment integrate entertainment in the learning activity. However, learn to play focus more on enjoyable activities while edutainment focus on the heavily usage of technology in learning.

2.3 Types of Edutainment

According to White [12] as well as Wallde'n and Saronen [13], edutainment can be classified into three different ways. The first one is location-based edutainment. Generally, location-based edutainment involve attractions and vast amount of activities in one place. It can be divided into two that are interactive and participatory, and non-interactive and spectator. In interactive and participatory, children will have the opportunity to play and participate in a game while in non-interactive and spectator, children can just remain seated and still exploring new things through movie, science show, museums and zoo. Secondly, edutainment can be classified based on purpose and content involving informal education where edutainment is seen as a way to improve learner's life control and skills education where learners will perceive experience, for example through simulation. Lastly, edutainment can be classified based on type of media contains such as edutainment on TV, computer edutainment, edutainment on internet and web-based educational systems. This type of edutainment provides interactivity through software application and connects it with other telecommunication system.

On a different note, Veltman [14] as well as Nemeč and Trna [3] classified edutainment into three types which are serious edutainment, commercial edutainment and memory institution. Serious edutainment is linked to new forms of learning where the programs or activities associated with this type of edutainment must come with a solid content and benefits the learners in terms of intelligence and learning styles. It involves the implementation of various technological-based learning enrichments. Next, commercial edutainment involves information and communication technologies (ICT) as well as mass media through the creation of video games, robotics, entertainment centres and theme parks whilst memory institution can be referred as edutainment in educational institutions such as museums, ecological education centres, and zoos. Based on the perspective from three different authors, it can be seen that there are similarities in terms of understanding the types of edutainment but the difference is only on the terms used to describe edutainment. Thus, it can be concluded that types of edutainment can be categorised into three, which are location-based edutainment, commercial edutainment and serious edutainment.

2.4 General trends of edutainment

Edutainment concept and application exist since decades ago and is increasing rapidly especially in this technological world. It can be seen from the provision of great number of amusement centres, big leisure centres and transformation of traditional informal educational institution by incorporating features of enjoyments and play [3]. Legoland is one of the examples of theme parks integrating edutainments as their featured elements. Initially, the company only focusing on creating a place to exhibit the toys made from lego. However, the idea changed where the company insisted to develop a great entertaining and educational park where the quality of education and entertainment in that place is still meaningful and is not considered as waste of time. Besides Legoland, there are other examples of edutainment approach especially in developed countries. Below are the examples of edutainment approach in Japan, United States and Europe based on study by Veltman [14]. All the countries approached edutainment in three different ways, which are serious edutainment, commercial edutainment and memory institution.

Table 1. Edutainment approach in three countries; Japan, United States and United Kingdom

Country	Edutainment Approach
Japan	Edutainment can be seen in video games, robotic and advancement of intelligent display technologies in memory institution such a museums. They preferred activities related to group experiences rather than individuality.
United States	Edutainment can be seen through soap operas, talk shows, provision of theme park and edutainment centres as well as upgrade on memory institution such as museums. Basically, they are focusing on transform all the experience in the form of simulation.
United Kingdom	Edutainment can be seen in theme parks, museums, mobile entertainment, software application and simulations. Basically, edutainment approach in this country is quite similar with United States as they follow the country's approach.

From the general trends of edutainment, it can be concluded that edutainment concept and application already exist especially in developed countries due to technological advancement. Based on the study, it can be seen that their edutainment approach are more on creating a place or activities where people can perceived experience through simulations. Now, the application of edutainment is rising to cope with the needs of the society to entertain themselves and indirectly gain knowledge from the activities.

2.5 Trends of edutainment in Malaysia

Edutainment concept is not a new trend in Malaysia. The concept already exists in Malaysia since 2003. This concept had been used in several sectors include computer games, software application, location-based destination and education. This is supported by several researchs that had been done on edutainment approach in Malaysia as seen in Table 2.

Based on the study, it can be seen that from 2003 until 2014, the edutainment approach only focuses on computer games and software application involving educational sectors. In edutainment approach, they aim to create a meaningful learning by integrating fun and enjoyable activities to engage students with the knowledge. However, starting from 2016, edutainment concept started to penetrate into tourism industry through location-based destination or Edutainment Park in cities. Their aim is to encourage people from all walks of life to obtain knowledge through technological-based material and play-based learning in a safe environment. Generally, the penetration strategy involving two sectors which are education and tourism. Thus, tourism have the potential to boost the economic development of the nation through the implementation of edutainment and at the same time, encourage lifelong learning among societies in an interactive way. Based on the research done, only these two places in Malaysia are being acknowledged as Edutainment Park. However, there are several provision of other edutainment park especially in big cities such as Kuala Lumpur and Johor Bahru (as potrayed in Figure 1, 2 and 3) but there are no policies or guidelines provided to indicate characteristics of edutainment destination and study on edutainment is still under-researched.

2.6 Social justice in early childhood

According to Van de Bos [15], social justice can be define as fair and equitable distribution of power, resources and obligations in society to all people regardless of race or ethnicity, age, gender, ability status, sexual orientation and religious or spiritual background to enhance the society's well-being. Social justice helps to build a society where everyone has equal access to resources. The resources include education. Education is important to all people from walks of life. In terms of personal development, education plays a huge role in shaping three main aspects in life; physique, mentality and character [16]. It helps people to make a better decision in life based on the knowledge gained throughout the learning process. Besides that, education also makes us as a well-mannered citizen, brings self-confidence to an individual and helps an individual to realize his own potential and skills.

Table 2. Edutainment Approach in Malaysia's Context.

Year	Title	Author	Content
2003	A Conceptualized Framework for Edutainment	Hanafizan Hussain, Zarina Che Embi and Samsuri Hashim	Provide conceptualized framework of edutainment environment from the perspective of video games for educators of preschool children.
2009	Create an Edutainment Learning Environment for Mathematics Learning in Primary Schools	Siew Pei Hwa	Edutainment is seen from the creation of digital game-based learning and interactive multimedia web-based application called E-Maths and being used in the formal learning.
2010	Promoting Socio-Cultural Values Through Storytelling Using Animation and Game-Based Edutainment Software	Nor Azan Mat Zin, Nur Yuhanis Mohd Nasir and Munirah Ghazali	Edutainment is seen from a perspective as a software and using Malay literature as contents. It involved animation, interactive games and puzzles.
2011	Edutainment Game of Recycling for Kids Using 3-D Visualisation	Syafiqah Ali	Edutainment is seen from the perspective of game-based learning where it involved 3D simulation on recycling activities.
2012	EZ-Arabic for Children: A Virtual Learning Resource Tool for Malaysian Primary Schools	Muhammad Sabri Sahrir, Mohd Firdaus Yahaya and Mohd Shahrizal Nasir	Edutainment is seen as a game-based learning prototype to enables teachers to teach Arabic in diverse method by exposing the students to attractive, interesting and interactive virtual learning environment.
2013	Perception on Adapting the Edutainment Technologies in Private Special School: Malaysian Case Study	Anuar Mohd Yusof, Esther Gnanamalar Sarojini Daniel, Wah Yun Low, Kamarulzaman Ab. Aziz and Janchai Yingprayoon	Edutainment is seen as an application to support learning through teaching methods and this study aims to identify the student's attention while using edutainment technologies.
2014	Exploring Digital Comics as an Edutainment Tool: An Overview	Farah Nadia Azman, Syamsul Bahrin Zaibon and Norshuhada Shiratuddin	Edutainment is seen as a software systems to create educational comic development consist of instructional content and commercial initiatives.
2016	The Tourism Experience Offered by Religious Theme Parks: Taman Tamadun Islam (TTI) in Malaysia	Gaelle M. Moal-Ulvoas	Edutainment is seen as a location-based destination or park that integrate family recreational and educational activities based on the Islamic principles. Historical elements presented through interactive digital material, games and photos.
2016	Globalisation, Commercialisation and Learning to Play at Kidzania Kuala Lumpur	Brendon Tagg and Shirley Wang	Edutainment is seen as a location-based destination or park that empower the children by integrating highly structured children's play through role-play activities in a realistic and safe environment.
2017	Introducing Educational Entertainment in the English Language Classroom	Shamimah Haja Mohideen	Edutainment is seen as technological approach to enhance learning in the classroom via stimulated audio and visual learning.
2018	Children's Art Edutainment: The Origami Paper Sculpture as a Creativity Enhancement Devices	Siti Erni Syahira Abdul Jamil, Mohd Khairi Baharom, Nur Hisham Ibrahim and Ismail Samsuddin	Edutainment concept is seen as learning methods that offers diversity forms of experiential learning and the concept is used in sculptural arts project.
2018	An Evaluation of Global Zakat Game (GZG) as Edutainment Board Game in Enhancing Zakat Education in Malaysia	Azman Ab. Rahman, Muhammad Sabri Sahrir, Nurkhamimi Zainuddin and Hasanah Abd. Khafidz	Edutainment is seen as tool for teaching and learning on theories and concept of zakat.

**Figure 1.** Taman Tamadun Islam or The Islamic Civilization Park in Terengganu



Figure 2. Kidzania Kuala Lumpur

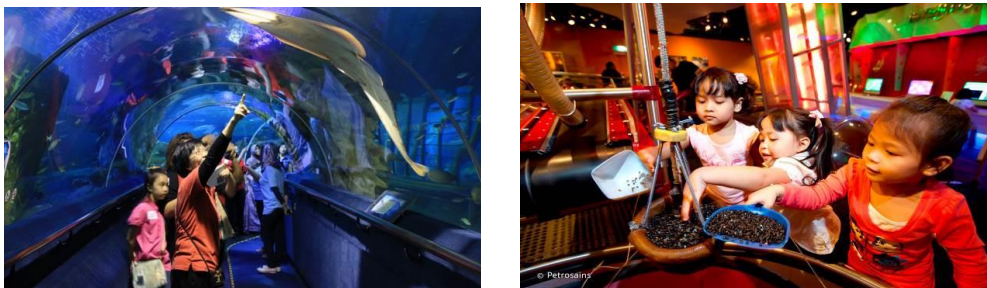


Figure 3. Aquaria KLCC and Petrosains KLCC

According to the National Philosophy of Education, education system in Malaysia is moving towards developing potential individuals in a holistic and integrated manner that are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious. The aim of the education system is to produce Malaysia citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, responsible and capable of achieving high levels of personal well-being and able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, society and the nations at bigger scale. Thus, to ensure that the aim is achieved, the education system had structure the system by starting with the early childhood education or known as preschool. Early childhood education or preschool is the first level of education in Malaysia enrolled by the children from the age of 4 to 6 years old.

Early childhood is a pivotal stage of development that shape the children's future well-being and learning. According to United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) [17], starting from birth until the age of 6, development during this phase is vital in producing a complete and healthy cognitive, emotional and physical growth of children. This statement is supported by a research where it shown that half of a person's intelligence potential is developed since the age of 4 and this intervention can have a lasting effect on intellectual capacity, personality and social behaviour [17]. There are several characteristics that is very important to be developed in early childhood which are cognitive, physical development, language and literacy development and social and emotional development. To ensure a better development of early childhood, National Preschool Curriculum Standard was published as a guide, which encompasses all the early childhood development characteristics.

2.7 Cities and childhood education learning

According to Yamat [18], early childhood education can be divided into three which are formal education, non-formal and informal education. Formal education can be described as education that are supported and operated by the state. Examples of formal education are through the establishment of public and private school. Formal education can be referred as conventional learning where learning only take place in classroom. Non-formal education refers to co-curricular or education activity that take place outside the schools or any educational institution. Non-formal education had been adopted among the preschool students several years ago through the provision of excursion and travel activities that can influence a person's life through experiential learning [19]. Since non-formal

education take place outside the institution, city plays an important role in providing the facilities and attractions that helps them to gain knowledge and encourage active learning. Thus, it is essential for the city to provide sufficient and necessary facilities to fulfil the needs to explore real learning experience beyond the classroom as the city with high number of population offers diverse backgrounds and cultures, buildings and public space that may improve their knowledge and growth. Meanwhile, informal learning can be described as oldest form of learning where learning takes place during everyday life.

Nowadays, the education system had combined formal and non-formal education to cater the needs of the preschool students. According to Som and Furqan [19], by creating equal balance between academic and co-curricular, students will have the opportunity to exercise their rights, meet their needs as well as interest and show their skills. Besides that, it also will help the students to obtain new skills and perspectives in different exposure. The integration of both education and edutainment also highly supported by the parents as they want their children to expose to different way of learning and increase their skills to survive in this life. According to the research done by Klooster et al [20], students who travel are more adaptable to the new environment, independent in their way of thinking and have a better communication with others. Through the integration of formal and non-formal education, preschool students can acquire vast amount of learning experiences and environment, which is highly needed to enhance all the early childhood development characteristics. There are varieties of places and activities that can be provided to support the needs from each of the early childhood development characteristics.

3. Discussion

Rapid urbanization had influenced the need of the people in the city. In order to cope with the trends, education is one of the essentials thing required by people from all walk of life starting from early childhood up until the senior citizen stage. This study focuses on early childhood because in order to create and shape a better human, the process should start from the early stage. Thus, every children from the age of 4 until 6 must have an equal access to resources especially education. In Malaysia, the current educational system aims to achieve six Student Aspirations that had been highlighted in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025. Thus, there are several initiatives had been done to reach the goals set by the educational system. The combination of formal and non-formal learning is a great step taken by the government to enhance learning experience perceived by the students, theoretically and practically. Since non-formal learning take place outside the educational institution through the provision of field trips and excursion activities, thus city plays an important role to provide sufficient educational-based facilities to accommodate the needs of the students. Generally, field trip and excursions activities involved travel to attractions in the city. In line with the technological trends nowadays, the best way to facilitate the needs of the students is by introducing the edutainment concept where this concept combines two major elements, which are education and entertainment.

Edutainment elements had been highlighted in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025. However, it only focused on the classroom learning. Based on study by Rapeepisarn et al [11], edutainment is an effective approach to diverse way of learning especially through the usage of technological-based and play-based materials and activities. Edutainment approach benefits in social behaviour, cognitive, intellectual, emotional and physical development as well as have therapeutic effects [11]. Thus, attractions in the city should implement the concept of edutainment as children engage and pays attention more into something fun and enjoyable to learn. Generally, edutainment approach in Malaysia is not a new thing. There are several edutainment attractions, such as Aquaria KLCC, Petrosains Discovery Centre and Kidzania that are already established in cities. Recently, the provision of edutainment attraction in the city started to increase due to the rising number of field trips and excursion activities either by parents or by educators. However, not every child has the opportunity to join the non-formal learning due to the money constraint. Thus, due to the benefits of edutainment approach, government plays an important role to provide educational-based facilities integrated with edutainment elements to ensure that all children in the cities have a better access to

diverse way of learning as non-formal learning with the integration of edutainment helps in enhancing children's development especially the current generation. Transformation on the traditional informal educational institution also needs to be done to fit the student's need based on the edutainment elements. The impact of the provision of field trips and excursion activities to location-based edutainment attraction is not only giving positive impacts to the children's development but to the physical and economic growth of the nation as well.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, social justice pedagogy is essential in education especially to the urban communities. The ability to have a better access to diverse of learning will helps in encourage and enhance the student's willingness to learn and gain more knowledge. Thus, government should take the initiative to provide educational-based facilities in the city in line with the technological trend to fit the needs of the students. Plus, edutainment elements give a great amount of benefits in terms of student's development. However, there are needs for further study to determine to what extent the city can fit into the educational purpose programs and how it influence physical settings, urban economic and social development to form a better quality of life in the city.

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