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Conservation Potential and Impact of Heritage Buildings in Terengganu, Malaysia

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Abstract

Society in Malaysia is increasingly aware of the importance of preserving heritage buildings. Efforts to preserve historical heritage buildings from the threat of destruction are carried out comprehensively and committed by all parties including the government, NGOs and even the local community. This is because the heritage treasures left behind, especially old buildings, have a high cultural historical value and symbolize the identity of a nation. The impact that arises as a result of the conservation that is carried out also gives many changes, especially to the socio-economics and culture of the local community itself. Therefore, this study aims to discuss the potential of some heritage buildings in Terengganu and also the impact of the conservation of these heritage buildings on the socio-economic and cultural transformation of the surrounding community. Three heritage buildings in Terengganu were chosen as study locations, namely the Tengku Long Palace, the Chinese Village Building, and the Bukit Besi Museum. This study uses qualitative research methodology and the data is analyzed using NVIVO software. A total of 30 respondents consisting of the local community and also experts in the heritage department were interviewed in depth about aspects of the potential of heritage buildings and socio-economic changes which are related to the level of employment, demographics, employment, and the formal and complex organization of the community. While socio-cultural aspects are also taken into account, namely the relationship between society and culture such as ways of life, customs, customs, morals, arts, beliefs and others. Gerth and Mills' Theory of Social Change (1964) was used as a guide in analyzing this study. The results of the study found that heritage buildings have high potential and are able to provide various benefits to the local community, the state and the country. The conservation of heritage buildings has a positive impact on the socio-economic and cultural aspects of the local community in Terengganu as opposed to a negative impact. The changes in the community's economy that can be identified are the improvement of the local community's standard of living, the existence of job opportunities, as well as the increase in community income. While in terms of social change is the ability to develop the community's potential, especially in the context of communicating in a foreign language (English) with tourists, as well as being able to improve the quality of life. From a cultural aspect, it leads to the strengthening of the community's culture and has the opportunity to maintain the identity of the local population.

Keywords: Heritage Building, Conservation, Potential, Conservation Impact, Socio-Economic Change, Culture

Introduction

In Malaysia, the conservation of heritage buildings today is increasingly carried out. This is because the conservation that is done gives many benefits and holistic effects to the community and also the country. Conservation activities are an effective step to continue the existence of historical heritage buildings so that they remain preserved, especially in the State of Terengganu. It should be implemented because cultural heritage buildings in Malaysia are generally increasingly threatened by destruction, not only due to traditional damage, but also due to changes in social and economic conditions (Zaki et al., 2014).

The destruction or loss of culture will result in the extinction of heritage for all nations in the world. Therefore, community management and involvement is very important to prevent the destruction and extinction of historical heritage resources from continuing. The persistent effort to conserve all the heritage that exists today includes the conservation of sites and buildings, cities and villages that are rich in heritage value, monuments, culture, socio-economic aspects of the community as well as other valuable aspects of historical heritage. According to Yuszaidy (2018), strict heritage legislation is able to provide appropriate protection for cultural heritage in Malaysia. The conservation can provide social, economic and political stability and have a good impact on the community to be inherited by the next generation as the strength of the community's identity.

On the East Coast, the State of Terengganu is rich in local cultural heritage products that still survive and are interesting to visit (Ahmad et al., 2011). However, in the many historical heritage tourist attractions to visit, it is seen that there are still many historical heritage places in the State of Terengganu that have not yet been widely introduced to the public to the point that some are abandoned and obsolete. There are products that are given attention and there are products that wait for time to experience extinction. Here, only a handful of products continue to be developed (Ahmad et al., 2011). Therefore, this study focuses on the conservation of historic heritage buildings in several study locations to see the potential and impact of conservation on the socio-economic and cultural transformation of the local community in Terengganu. All changes from the socio-economic and cultural aspects of the community are discussed in detail in this study.

Literature Review

Heritage and Conservation of Heritage Buildings

Heritage is something valuable and can be passed down from one generation to another. It includes customs, culture, areas, buildings, archival materials and prints including the writing of related books and papers. Heritage can also be understood as the remains of history, customs and quality in a society or country and is recognized to play an important role.

Heritage buildings are objects that evoke a sense of awe and curiosity about the community and related culture. A heritage building has architectural, aesthetic, historical, documentary, archeological, economic, social and political, spiritual and symbolic values. However, the most significant impact is emotional because a heritage building has a cultural identity and continuity that forms part of the historical heritage. A heritage building, from its construction

to the present, has its own message that can only be known through the uncovering of authentic historical records.

In the study of Fatimah et al (2011), the result of the study of the inventory of Malaysian heritage buildings carried out by the National Museum in 1992 was estimated to be approximately 35,000 pre-war buildings located in 265 cities that were studied throughout the country and accordingly they need to be restored (Zainol, 1995). According to Ghafar (2009), most of these heritage buildings are not well maintained and most of them are in a dilapidated state due to building damage factors. Even worse, when some of the heritage buildings are threatened with destruction because they were neglected by the original owners and demolished due to the pressure of development and lack of community concern in efforts to conserve heritage buildings (Hamilton & Zuraini, 2002). According to Zainol (1995), conservation is not only focused on the care of specific and specific buildings, but care includes all the qualities that make up the appearance of the city. The urban pattern that exists in cities throughout Malaysia is a very important cultural value and if it disappears it is unlikely to be able to be replaced again and it is important to ensure the continuity of the cultural value and tradition of the city itself.

In the study of Yusof (2018), an example of conservation of significant cultural heritage buildings that received attention from the National Heritage Department is the residence of Penghulu Abdul Ghani bin Abdul Majid located in Merlimau, Melaka. This house was previously managed and cared for by the Melaka Museum Corporation (PERZIM) before being handed over to the National Heritage Department for the purpose of conservation and preservation from severe damage. Penghulu Abdul Ghani's residence has been maintained and repaired many times by PERZIM with the help of expertise from the Department of Museums and Antiquities. This collaboration is to conserve and preserve historic and valuable traditional buildings from damage. Nevertheless, the lack of expertise and finance has affected the supervision and monitoring of traditional houses which began to suffer severe damage until it was completely taken over from the National Heritage Department in 2008.

Conservation is a method of protecting heritage monuments from extinction and further saving their cultural, aesthetic and functional values. Efforts to conserve heritage buildings in Malaysia started relatively late. Awareness of the conservation of heritage buildings only stood out around the 1980s, when the country actively planned economic development under the government of the former Prime Minister, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad. Historic buildings, historic sites are left abandoned without anyone trying to conserve them (Howard, 2003). The development of heritage building conservation in Malaysia started in major cities such as Kuala Lumpur and George Town. For example, the Kuala Lumpur wet market building conservation project in 1986 has sparked a phenomenon in the practice of heritage building conservation in this country. The wet market was built in 1936 and is now known as *Pasar Seni*. Meanwhile in George Town, the Penang Municipal Council Structure Plan Report (1989) has presented Urban Conservation Guidelines to control development in its conservation zone (Ghafar, 2010).

In addition to protection, conservation aims to move quality and value, that is from an abandoned building to a usable space, from almost collapsing to a strong space (Bullen, 2007) and has prospects for various economic activities such as business, recreation and culture

(Wood, 2005). From the aspect of heritage areas, it refers to a more holistic conservation process, because an area includes the community, cultural identity, physical structure and socio-economic activities, including tangible and intangible elements (Shuhana, 2005; Snyder, 2008).

The success and effectiveness of heritage conservation depends on two factors, the first of which is stakeholder awareness, involvement and appreciation of heritage values and economic opportunities. The second is public education for all stakeholders in a focused and continuous manner (Azman et. al., 2009). Innovative public education programs, promotional activities and capacity building initiatives need to be planned to achieve a balance between conservation and heritage tourism.

Local Community Involvement

For environmental anthropologists, discussions began to focus on the involvement of local communities and also historical heritage assets when these heritage destinations were introduced in their area. According to Yazid (2010), the conservation process needs to involve the community and community, especially those who live in or near an area, site and building that will go through the conservation process. Community involvement can provide awareness and education about the need for the conservation process to be implemented. In this context, involvement, training, seminars and so on are the best examples to increase the level of community involvement.

Community involvement is seen as a bottom-up approach in heritage conservation and urban planning (Esther, 2011). This approach means a form of comprehensive involvement of every layer of society either from the aspect of role distribution (Castro, 2010) or channeling accurate input to administrators to make policy decisions (Hart, 2004). The purpose is to ensure that the conservation of local heritage areas can give advantages to the community by increasing the potential of the area involved (Jimura, 2011). This is because, the community is a stakeholder on entities in an area, it refers to the community that creates, owns and uses it (George, 2010).

In heritage issues, although the government has carried out various conservation efforts such as legal pressure, generating allocations or funds, introducing various tax incentives and campaigns. However, without community involvement this effort is difficult to do. Castro (2010) in his study of heritage development on the island of Sicily between 1993 and 2000, found that community involvement is important to detect economic prospects in a heritage area and identify the needs of the local community. Therefore, the planned development should give advantages and profits to the community because the community is a stakeholder in an entity.

According to a study (Jaki, 2014), Ipoh City, having the most historical monuments in the State of Perak (Shah, 2006) should open up opportunities for various economic, socio-cultural and tourism development agendas (Ipoh Local Plan Draft, 2020, 2010). Heritage buildings that are rich in cultural elements are very valuable to the local community in various fields such as art, history, religion, aesthetic value and education (ICCOMOS, 1993). This means that the interests of the community should be a priority in the conservation of heritage areas.

In a study by Shipley (2011), in European countries, potential heritage assets are detected by professional bodies while in North America it is done by local communities. This phenomenon caused that although initially there was neglect due to the modernization of the industrial era, but eventually heritage assets were seen again as having high socio-economic prospects, as long as the conservation of the area was done first and well planned. Conservation

awareness is a bond between individuals and society and also a bond between society and the environment (Hargreaves, 2004). This bond is important to create interdependence with each other and reflect the true identity of the community in an area. While identity is formulated as an entity that is attached to a society until it triggers sensitivity among them (Mansfield, 2008).

Socio Economic and Community Culture Changes

Socioeconomics is the study of the relationship between economic activity and social life. These areas affect consumption patterns, the distribution of income and wealth, the way people behave and make purchasing decisions and the way people choose goods and use their time to improve the overall quality of life (Hassan, 2016).

Socio-economic and cultural change refers to a process that occurs based on a sequence of time against the role and institutions of a social system. According to Mas'ud (1995) social change is defined as a change that occurs in society from one level of life to another level of life. Social change is a phenomenon that always occurs in a society. Social change is the modification or change of social institutions or patterns of social life. Important changes in social behavior. What is certain is that society always changes along with the changes that have occurred in order to respond to social needs.

Based on the thinking above, then social change is everything that changes and is related to society. It includes demographic problems such as changes in population, or migration from one place to another; or economic problems, such as a society experiencing poverty becoming a rich society; or problems in the field of industry, for example, the farming community becomes an industrial society.

Davis (2005) also said that social change is a change that occurs in the structure and function of society. Social change is part of cultural change. For example, when there is labor organizing in a capitalist society, it can cause changes in the relationship between labor and employers where this can cause organizational culture in politics to change (Kencana, 2011).

Therefore, it can be concluded that social change in the sense of the term is all the changes that occur in the structure, function, outlook on life, and human attitudes in society that affect the social system until it changes quantitatively.

Research Methodology

Data Collection Methods

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative research method. Primary data and secondary data are used to obtain information regarding the study title and related issues. The researcher used observational data collection techniques and in-depth interviews. A total of 30 respondents from the local community who are directly or indirectly involved in the conservation of this heritage product were selected to be interviewed. In addition, NGOs, Museum Departments, Tourism Agencies, Heritage Departments and several stakeholders were also selected to be interviewed. These respondents are required to obtain in-depth information about their involvement in conservation and tourism activities in heritage areas and to know the conservation activities of heritage buildings carried out in the area. The conservation program provided for the local community is to help them get job opportunities and generate family income while maintaining the image of the heritage building so that it remains preserved for public viewing. Interview questions focused on issues related to conservation activities carried out on three study locations, namely Tengku Long Palace, Buildings in the Chinese Village in Kuala Terengganu and the Bukit Besi Museum in Dungun,

which consist of different locations. These issues are important to see the impact of conservation carried out on the socio-economic and cultural transformation of the local community.

In order to ensure that this study is more realistic and obtains good results, unstructured interviews with the owners of the research buildings who have experience carrying out conservation work are also carried out. The interview needs to include all the desired aspects, especially regarding the conservation of damage to the study building, the method used to repair it, the cost spent and the management of the building concerned.

This study also used the observation method. The researcher made direct observations on the research objects in three locations, namely the Tengku Long Palace, the Building in the Chinese Village, Kuala Terengganu and the Bukit Besi Museum, Dungun. Through this observation the researcher can see the conservation and reconstruction works of some traditional buildings and can see the tourism and conservation activities carried out by the government and NGOs as well as the involvement of the local community in the area.

Sample Study

The sample was selected based on purposive sampling. Purposive sampling refers to a sampling procedure in which a group of subjects who have certain characteristics and are involved in heritage product conservation activities are selected as study respondents. Therefore, this research uses local communities living in several study areas, namely residents around the Tengku Long Palace, Chinese Village and Bukit Besi Museum who are involved in building conservation activities and heritage tourism as a study sample.

Result

The Potential of Heritage Products in Terengganu

This study found that heritage products at Tengku Long Palace, Buildings in the Chinese Village and Bukit Besi Museum contribute a lot of positive potential to the local community, tourists and even the country. Various benefits that can be obtained through the existence of this heritage product, especially for the residents in the surrounding area.

Among the main potentials of this heritage product is to attract tourists to see the uniqueness of old treasures, become a destination of choice for visitors as a place to do activities with the family, as a destination for heritage history education and also as an area for historical research and R&D of old buildings and houses.

In addition to having great potential for tourists, the results of this study show that this heritage product also provides many benefits to the local community. This is proven when these three heritage products that are preserved also open up space in the employment sector for the community and provide various job opportunities and sources of sustenance for the local population. Local residents also have the opportunity to venture into their side businesses as a result of the existence of heritage products in their place. Among the side jobs that indirectly generate economic resources for the local community are handicraft operators, *keropok lekor* operators, Terengganu traditional clothing operators such as *batik*, *songket* and many more.

In addition to generating a source of income for the local population, this heritage product can also improve the level of infrastructure and public facilities in the area. The community can also indirectly experience the existence of infrastructure and public facilities provided by the government.

As for the potential of this historic heritage product for the country, it can further improve the image of the country in the eyes of tourists, whether from within or outside the country, and it can also increase the source of income for the country.

A summary of the potential of heritage products in these three heritage buildings can be summarized as in the table below:

Table 1

Potential Heritage Products in Terengganu for Tourists, Local Communities and the Nation

	Potential Heritage Products to Tourists
1.	Tourist Attractions (Unique Architecture and Buildings Old house)
2.	History and Heritage Values
3.	Places of Science/ Education/ Historical Materials
4.	Mindset

	Potential Heritage Products to Local Communities
1.	Job Opportunities
2.	Generating Community Income Sources
3.	Improvement of the Standard of Infrastructure and Public Facilities

	Potential Heritage Products to the Nation
1.	Source of National Income
2.	Improvement of National Image

Through the findings of this study, it is clear that this heritage product is a unique heritage product with great potential to be commercialized internationally. In order to continue the existence of the heritage product of this old building, it should be preserved and well cared for by all parties involved without destroying the authenticity of the heritage itself.

The Impact of Heritage Building Conservation on The Socio-Economic and Cultural Transformation of The Local Community

Economic Impact on Local Communities

The conservation of Terengganu's state heritage buildings has an impact on the local community's economy. The results of the study through interviews with informants and experts in the field of heritage are as follows:

i. Provide Employment Opportunities to the Local Community

The improvements and conservation carried out on the three old buildings, namely the Tengku Long Palace, the building in the Chinese Village and the Bukit Besi Museum have brought many benefits, especially in terms of new job opportunities for the local community who live close to the heritage products in question. Among the new jobs as a result of the conservation of heritage products are such as tourist spokesmen, museum curators, restaurant operators, handicraft producers, batik and songket operators, hotel and homestay operators, food vendors who are directly and indirectly involved in this heritage tourism industry.

ii. Increase Family Income

The conservation impact of this heritage product can also increase and generate better family income. With their involvement in the heritage sector this provides them with economic resources and a better quality of life.

iii. Improve the Standard of Living of The Local Population

Next, the conservation impact of this heritage product can also improve the standard of living of the local community. As a result of the job opportunities they enter into and sources of income from the results of their work, indirectly improve their standard of living in a more comfortable and advanced direction.

Financial income from tourism also contributes to social security and stability, the ability to be independent or self-sufficient especially for the community in a tourism destination.

iv. Reducing the income gap of the population

The development of heritage products and conservation carried out can support and ensure that the economic, social and cultural conditions and status of a community that is involved directly and indirectly with tourism activities is at a good level. This can simultaneously reduce the income gap of the population and contribute to the well-being of the local population.

v. The Income Generated can Contribute to Local Development

The development of the heritage tourism industry where heritage products exist can contribute to local development as a result of income from economic activities of heritage tourism. With the existence of the product in the place, it will also indirectly promote the surrounding area to provide comfort to the visitors who come.

i. Promote the local handicraft industry

In addition, this heritage product conservation activity can also indirectly encourage the handicraft industry of the local community. This can be seen around the area of heritage products that sell a variety of their handicrafts to visitors who come from both inside and outside the country.

vii. Promote the Diversification of Economic Activities

In addition, the conservation of these highlighted heritage products can promote the diversity of the community's economic activities. There are various economic activities of the community as a result of the activities of the tourism industry such as selling handicrafts, batik clothes and songket, keropok lekor, chips and many other economic activities that can be worked on.

Social Impact of Local Communities

The conservation of heritage buildings in the state of Terengganu also has a social impact on the local community. The results of the study through interviews with informants and experts in the field of heritage are as follows:

i. Change the Way of Life

The conservation of this heritage product is able to improve the way of life of the surrounding community. Residents are more exposed to the elements of progress and life to achieve a good level of quality. This development needs to continue because it has a positive impact and is able to develop the social community.

ii. Reduce the migration of the young generation to the city

The heritage tourism industry that provides various job opportunities in it will indirectly reduce the migration of the younger generation to the city.

iii. Improve Communication Skills

Through active conservation and tourism of heritage products, can improve the community's ability to communicate in a foreign language (English) with tourists.

iv. Improve area security

With the existence of heritage buildings and heritage product conservation activities, more security workers will be created for visitors and residents in the surrounding area.

v. Psychological and Sentimental Effects

In terms of its social aspect, the conservation of these old buildings can provide psychological and sentimental effects to the public to reminisce about past events, preserve the importance of architecture and can improve tourism institutions in Malaysia.

Cultural Impact of Local Communities

The conservation of Terengganu state heritage buildings also has an impact on the culture of the local community. The results of the study through interviews are as below:

i. The Lifestyle of the Local Community is Maintained

In addition to preserving and disseminating knowledge about the country's historical, cultural and natural heritage through exhibition activities, research, publishing, educational programs and the development of the museum continues to be empowered. This cultural diversity can also be seen in traditional forms such as festivals, food, clothing and architecture. With the existence of such conservation activities on heritage products, the lifestyle of the local community can be maintained.

ii. Creating a Culture-loving Society

In addition, the conservation of this heritage tourism product can create a culture-loving community and contribute and become a platform for the community to change perceptions and attitudes in evaluating and appreciating historical remains in our country.

iii. Preservation of Historic Areas

By applying the concept of conservation of heritage products, an area and heritage products can be well preserved. The building in the Chinese Village, the Bukit Besi Museum, which has been restored, can be preserved for future generations to see. Similarly, the conservation of Tengku Long Palace can also be maintained for visitors to see. Assets and old items that hold many old treasures especially related to the state of Terengganu can be displayed for the gaze of visitors or tourists from abroad and within the country to know the art, culture and heritage of the state of Terengganu in general.

iv. Preserving the Cultural Identity of the Community

Conservation of heritage products can preserve the cultural identity of the local community. Traditional economic and cultural activities continue to give importance to the characteristics of the place including whether through aesthetic, historical, scientific or social value

characteristics without making any emphasis on other aspects so as to change the original nature.

v. Maintain Local Heritage Buildings

The preservation of historic buildings and monuments also has a psychological effect on the public to re-energize the connection to important events of the past. Through memories of past events to some extent can instill the spirit of identity, nationalism and nationhood.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the conservation of heritage products is a study that has the potential to be highlighted as it is able to have an impact on the development of tourism and also on the socio-economic and cultural changes of the local community in Malaysia. Cultural heritage such as historic buildings should be preserved because there is historical value and importance, heritage and potential to generate economic resources for the local community. The heritage tourism industry has proven to be able to contribute various positive impacts, especially to the local population. Seeing its many importance especially to the local community, efforts to conserve heritage products from the threat of extinction must be taken care of and done continuously by all parties including the community itself. Conservation is meaningless without the active involvement of local communities in the heritage industry. Local communities also benefit from the heritage tourism that exists in their area. Researchers hope to provide useful information to the community and institutions that need it. With this research, it is hoped that it can further increase the rate of visitors to historical heritage locations, especially in Terengganu and more known around the world. It is hoped that this study can also be used as a reference for future researchers and can provide new ideas and improvements with the passage of time as well as improve the quality of existing management in order to be more systematic.

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