

PSYCHOGEOGRAPHICAL EXPERIENCE BETWEEN THE SELF AND THE PLACE

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ABSTRACT

Background and Purpose: The absence of psychogeographical awareness is a critical factor contributing to the lackadaisical attitudes towards the place and its environment. As a result, it enables an individual to fully experience a location, both physically and intellectually, while also gaining a feeling of self-discovery and self-realisation.

Methodology: The purpose of this study was to examine the responses of a group of individuals who participated in a field observation. 40 participants from a Malaysian university's foundation level were brought to Malacca to experience the environment's geographical scenery at their own leisure. The survey data was then manually transcribed and analysed in accordance with the study's aim.

Findings: Interactions with individuals and observation of features in the countryside and urban surroundings enabled participants to go on a psychogeographical journey that influenced their way of thinking and behaving. All participants felt that the journey had influenced their experiences and perspectives on their thinking and behaviour, highlighting the critical role of this notion in establishing the connection between place and self.

Contributions: The findings of this study provide a solid foundation for future research in the field of psychogeography. The data may be used as a baseline for future studies to determine whether a

comparable impact exists in other locations, with or without significant features like those found in Malacca.

Keywords: Psychogeography, place attachment, place meaning, self-discovery, Malacca.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Due to the quick pace and continual change of an environment's growth and modernization, individuals usually ignore its importance and reason for being. The aesthetic and physical aesthetic look of place components is of primary importance to researchers, rather than the meanings and goals of these locations in connection to human engagement. Stokols and Shumaker (1981) emphasised the importance of a physical environment that reflects a person's experience, resulting in a deep relationship via time, senses, and sociocultural manifestations. Furthermore, locations are regarded to be components of spaces, as well as apparent boundaries that might exist everywhere. However, from a psychogeographical perspective, a place is a meaningful setting that begins with a spatial condition that develops a strong and substantial feeling of attachment, as evidenced by the process of recognising and naming a place. Given that an individual may develop a connection to a location, can positive values and meanings be generated and accumulated while being in that area?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Psychogeography

Debord (1977) coined the term "psychogeography" to refer to the study of "precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment ... on the emotions and behaviour of individuals" (p. 23). This term has evolved to encompass a variety of academic disciplines, including geography, architecture, anthropology, the built environment, and other fields of study. What distinguishes psychogeography as a flexible and holistic approach is that it focuses on both inner and outer elements, including the individual's psychology and the geographical setting of the place, as well as the relationships that influence how a person thinks and behaves toward their surroundings. Understanding what psychogeography is allows a person to not only conduct meaningful explorations of a location, but also to engage in a form of self-discovery

that distinguishes him or her from other travellers. Thus, a psychogeographic approach enables subsequent mapping of an exploration of a place's spaces, revealing some intriguing and meaningful discoveries within urban and rural settings that are based on chance and spontaneous, yet detailed observations. As Debord (2008) and Coverley (2010) noted, psychogeography affects how an individual's emotions and behaviours within specific environments are caused and influenced directly by their environments.

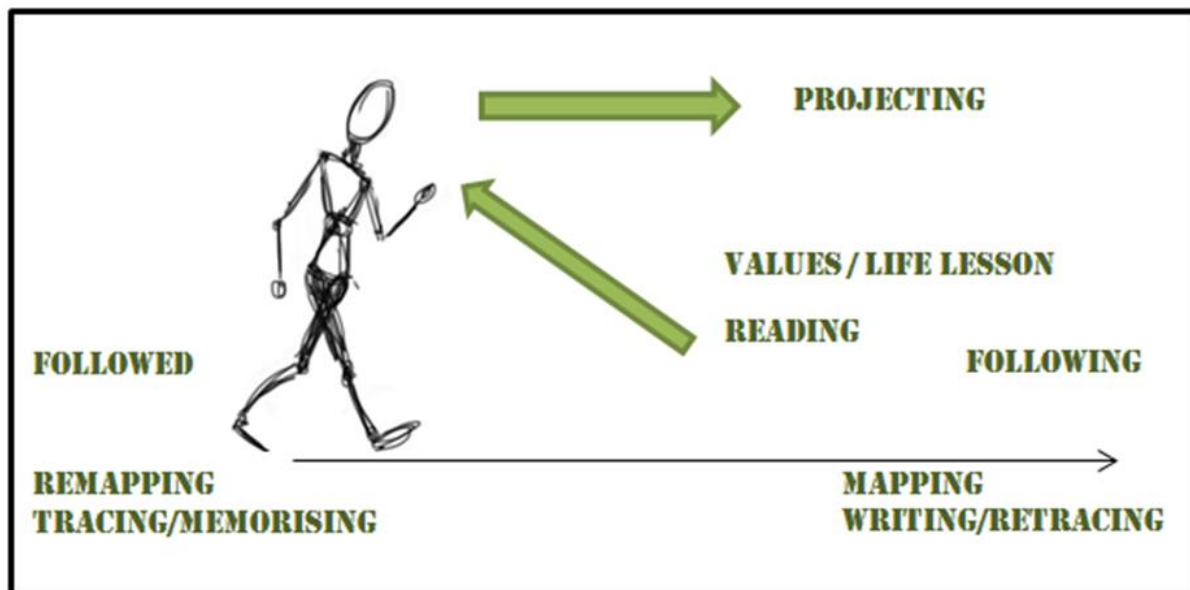


Figure 1: The concept and process of psychogeography

2.1.1 *Flâneur*

The role that an individual plays in deciding how a location influences his or her thinking and behaviour is characterised as the *flâneur*. This word refers to the person who participates in the psychogeographical process. The capacity for analysis and observation distinguishes a *flâneur* from other people. While others may neglect specific scenarios in favour of the general attractiveness of the surroundings, the *flâneur* interprets and deduces meanings from the location, including its intricacies and less desirable features. Thus, he is regarded as a link between the location and the individual's thinking and behaviour, as well as a source of insight into the social, historical, and theoretical background for analysing and understanding the place and the world in the modern day. Using Baudelaire's definition, a *flâneur* is an individual who engages in the casual act of wandering and observing, reporting on street and city life discoveries. Benjamin (2006) concurred, viewing the *flâneur*'s position as a springboard for a more in-depth analysis of the contemporary city's relationship to the human mind. Thus, his

function is that of a documentarian and reporter of the place, as he traverses and navigates the urban environment, modernity's realm, while maintaining a tight hold on his history. Seale (2005) emphasised the flâneur's retreat to his recollection of the city and rejection of the self-enunciative authority of any technically replicated image. Thus, using the concept of flâneurship as a framework or guideline for this study, participants were given a brief explanation on how to effectively use their space and place, as well as the importance of keeping an open mind and attentive observation. As a result, these individuals were free to explore and interpret their own area. It is also worth mentioning that they were not formally presented as flâneurs; rather, they were told they would be observers of the location.

2.1.2 Drifting

Psychogeography is concerned with the act of drifting, which derives from the French word 'dérive,' and refers to a person's ability to roam a city or a specific setting and become immersed in the surroundings while observing, gathering, and interpreting all the information, meanings, and experiences in their entirety. The dérive, or act of drifting, is distinct from normal walking, which is typically directed toward a specific goal and requires individuals to exert effort to accomplish a mission. However, when a person drifts into his surroundings, he absorbs certain aspects of the landscape, which is critical to the concept of psychogeography because it connects the mind and behaviour to the surroundings, and the act of drifting enables the individual to become the means to examining modernity's condition. Additionally, drifting enables a person to not only notice but also acknowledge the effect that a setting has on the individual, which may be overlooked or given less attention than it deserves.

In this study, each respondent will take on the role of a flâneur, who roams with an open mind, observing the details of the surrounding incidents and happenings. Being a flâneur provides a vehicle for further examination of the relationship between the state and impact of the environment and human beings, and the proclivity to observe the details of the environment. From a Situationist perspective, understanding the dérive reveals that the act of wandering and drifting is viewed as a dérive practice, unplanned and influenced by the situation at the time (Debord, 1958). Thus, assigning participants the role of a flâneur and allowing them to 'drift' through Malacca permits them to maintain a sense of purpose while also allowing them the freedom to explore and make meaning of their surroundings at their own pace. What was once considered a form of drifting in the streets of urban cities is now being applied to historical locations in Malacca.

2.2 Concept of Place

Najafi and Mohd Shariff (2011) defined a place as a strong affective bond between a person and a particular setting. While the term "place" is frequently used interchangeably with "space," the term "place" is distinct from "space" in that it contains human values and principles that can be observed, gathered, and interpreted by individuals. A place is a space that bears an understanding of appropriate behaviour, cultural expectations, interactions, and a variety of other elements that contribute to the establishment of a connection between an individual and its surroundings. As a result, places are significantly more valuable than spaces. In short, it is difficult to separate the terms "place" and "space," because most places are discovered to exist within larger spaces.

Additionally, places are viewed as significant, not only in terms of developing and maintaining self and group identity, but also in terms of influencing human behaviour and mental state. As such, there is a need to observe how places are used as a means of integrating individuals with the places they visit; more so in today's world of constant modernization and ever-changing landscapes, where places have lost their meaning and people appear to have lost touch with their physical surroundings. Because our surroundings constitute a spatial setting, the concept of space pervades our daily exploration and wandering. Hence, as one walks through a space, he or she attempts to fit in by discovering and creating meanings, transforming it into a place.

2.3 Sense of Place

Through the lens of environmental psychology, a place serves as a critical platform for facilitating an individual's goals and aspirations. The individual's environment has the potential to influence one's behaviour, mental and physical health. Thus, the experiences gained through interaction with, and exploration of a place are critical in developing a sense of place. This experience includes the sensations of being stimulated, excited, joyful, and expansive (Najafi & Mohd Shariff, 2011). This will also influence their collective value system, beliefs, and actions. Canter (1977) added that even the individual's willingness to participate in social activities has attributed to the strength of sense of place.

Individuals have various levels of sense of places they inhabit. Najafi and Mohd Shariff (2011) identified three levels. Places with high sense quotient encourage people to congregate and connect with one another. Additionally, their sense of fulfilment, identification, and attachment to the community are viewed as contributing to the sense of place. Thus, a setting in which individuals can interpret symbolic meanings, form connections with their

surroundings, and express high levels of satisfaction with their experience may indicate a strong sense of place for that setting.

For a city like Malacca, which is well-known for its appealing tourist attractions and wealth of historical and cultural representation, this provides an infinite number of opportunities for the development of a feeling of place. The city is constantly upgrading its location settings to serve tourists and even locals. Thus, Malacca is an appropriate location to examine individuals' sense of place and their relationship with the area. As Nik Mohammad, Saruwono, Said, and Wan Hariri (2013) described, locations are synthesising of human and cultural landscape components that are centred on one's direct perception of the world. Thus, it is critical to notice and explore the locations in Malacca as everyone embarks on a personal journey that develops a feeling of place.

2.4 Place Meaning and Attachment

The significance of a place is determined by the connection or relationship that an individual has with its setting. According to Stedman (2008), the meaning of a place serves as the foundation for developing attachment to it, which is necessary for comprehending the range of place-related behaviours. This can be seen in the movement of psychogeography and its concept, which examines the relationship between an individual's mind and actions in relation to the physical environment of a place. Thus, by applying this concept to the exploration of locations in and around Malacca, it enables visitors to concentrate on the emotional significance of the location by interpreting and redefining it according to their own perspectives. Stedman (2008) argued that while physical characteristics may not directly contribute to a sense of place, they do influence the symbolic meanings associated with the settings that represent the place's quality and attachments. Thus, by allowing participants to explore the locations, they attempt to redefine and reinterpret their surroundings in ways that transcend their critical and creative minds.

Additionally, by establishing a strong sense of place and attachment between individuals and the place, the identity and functionality of a place are preserved and kept alive for a longer period of time. This is because the form of attachment that connects people to a place enables information about the place to be shared with others through lessons or stories, and more attention will be paid to the place for a variety of purposes, including restoring, upgrading, or well-maintaining its environment. Ujang (2017) supported this view by recognizing and emphasizing the importance of meanings and attachments in individuals, stating that "to secure identity is to ensure continuity in the physical, social, as well as the

meanings and attachments held by the people" (p. 64). Thus, the relationship and attachment between people and place are seen as interdependent, as they contribute to both sides' healthy and continuous progress.

2.5 Malacca as the Historical City

Apart from the educational institution's regulation allowing a certain amount of mileage to transport the study's participants on a field trip, Melaka or Malacca was chosen as the destination for this project due to its rich cultural diversity, historical heritage and, last but not least, its local charms. Thus, the location serves as a platform for meanings, which participants should explore and conclude from their observations and interpretations of their surroundings. According to Lim and Jorge (2006), Malacca, which was designated a UNESCO World Heritage City in 2008, is a place with a unique setting environment – the preservation of historical and cultural attractions while also being well-developed into an urban and business-oriented city filled with both. When considering our place in history and the world, Ellis (2015) reminds us to "remember that you are a part of something very old and yet perpetually renewed; and while you may believe you can forget history, history will most certainly not forget you" (p. 52). This disconnection or detachment from the environment and history enables an individual or a group of people to explore uninhibitedly, allowing for the formation of a new and radically different interpretation of the environment (Debord, 1958).

Additionally, Malacca, like other ancient major cities around the world, has its unique feeling of place and significance. Nik Mohammad et al. (2013) recognised the location's powerful mix of visual, bodily, and spiritual elements as contributing to persons' sense of place. In summary, Malacca has a variety of attractions that reflect its culture and heritage, including monuments and buildings from various colonisers (Portuguese, Dutch, and British), indigenous cultural groups such as Baba Nyonya and Chetti, and modern settings for tourist development features such as shopping malls, markets, events, and celebrations.

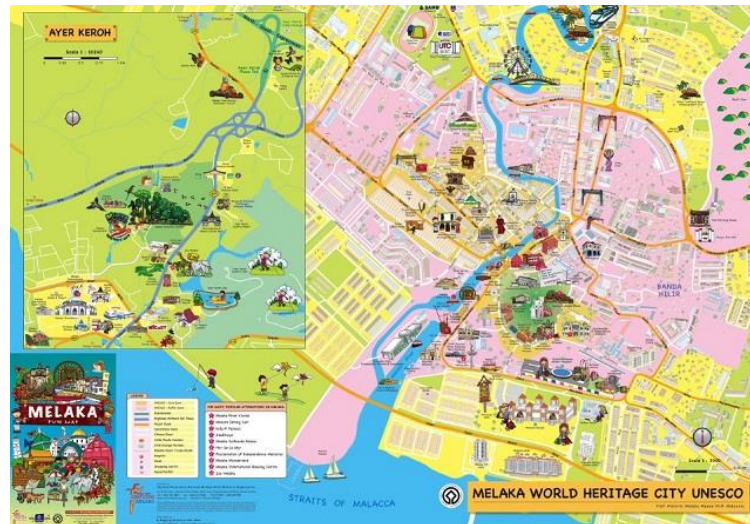


Figure 2: Map of Malacca – World Heritage City UNESCO (Credit: Google Images)

Malacca, with its rich and resonant history, is a story unto itself, influenced by other cultural and identity influences. Initially, Melaka City was declared a Historical City in 1989, which then emerged and established its image as a core historic tourism destination in Malaysia (Ismail & Baum, 2006). Additionally, Malacca has managed to preserve parts of its natural environment, which includes Bukit Beruang, Bukit Batu Lebah, Pantai Puteri (Puteri Beach), Klebang Beach, and Pengkalan Balak Beach. At the same time, Malacca is divided by the modernity and urbanisation of its streets and buildings, making exploration worthwhile for both tourists and locals interested in learning about the history of the city. This is because Malacca's cultural tourism encompasses not only urban areas, museums, and monuments, but also rural areas inhabited by natural cultural communities with their distinct values and lifestyles (Kastenholz, 2002). However, it should be noted that, while Malacca is a well-established important city that is home to many of Malaysia's heritage monuments and locations, there has been no study (up to this point) that employs a psychogeographical approach to comprehending both familiar and unfamiliar surroundings.

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study makes extensive use of field observations and questionnaires to ascertain the effects of the spatial surroundings on the project's participants. This study enrolled 40 participants from a Malaysian university's foundation level. The questionnaires were structured according to the psychogeographical approach, which looks at how a person's environment affects their way of thinking and responding to it. The questions centred on their experiences and lessons learned while walking and wandering through Malacca's neighbourhoods, the social and

cultural significance of the neighbourhoods, and their personal enrichment and discovery. This is to recognise the existence of a psychogeographical process in their perception of and relationship with their environment.

This study surveyed 40 respondents between the ages of 18 and 19, all of whom were enrolled in a tertiary foundation programme. These students enrolled in a variety of courses, including foundations in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), sciences, engineering, and law. The purpose of including various background studies is to demonstrate how psychogeography can be applied to just any individual's mind and compartment in terms of how he interacts with and interprets the environment in a specific place. Besides, these participants, who are the younger generation, are seen as being disconnected from their natural surroundings due to their increased time spent on gadgets and in classrooms.

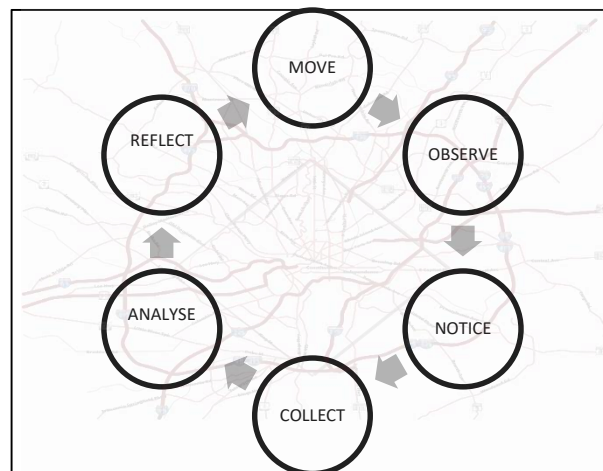


Figure 3: The keywords of the psychogeographical process of visiting the places in Malacca.

The participants were instructed to embark on a journey of discovery through Malacca's landmarks. In addition, they were informed that no specific requirements or assignments would be made during their exploration. The participants were assigned keywords related to the psychogeography process, which would aid them in navigating and comprehending their environment.

The participants were transported to Malacca, one of the historical capitals of Malaysia. In line with the Visit Malaysia Year festival, the state has adopted the tagline "Visit Historic Melaka Means Visit Malaysia" to entice visitors to the state. According to an initial interview session with them, several of the participants were familiar with Malacca, either as their hometown, a place they visited during their childhood, or a place they learned about through their readings. However, for the purpose of this study, we encouraged the participants to "drift"

around Malacca's landmarks, observing and interacting with their surroundings. As part of millennial generation youth, these participants are known to spend most of their time in their comfort zone, as the bulk of it is spent on gadgets and virtual interactions, resulting in less face-to-face interaction with their surroundings. Exploring the spatial environments surrounding Malacca thus fosters interaction and socialization, which can serve as a springboard for embarking on a journey of self-discovery and place discovery. They were transported by bus between locations but were free to roam and explore the surroundings according to their desires and objectives at each stop. They were not required to follow any specific rules, but rather to observe and navigate the spaces in the specified locations at their own pace. Apart from that, these surroundings reflect a variety of spatial elements, including the urban landscape and natural environment, people, flora and fauna, culture and history, and others, to provide a comprehensive account of their discovery and exploration. The following locations are the heart of Malacca: Mini Malaysia & ASEAN Cultural Park, A Famosa Fort, Klebang Beach, Jonker Street, and Morten Village as shown in the following map:

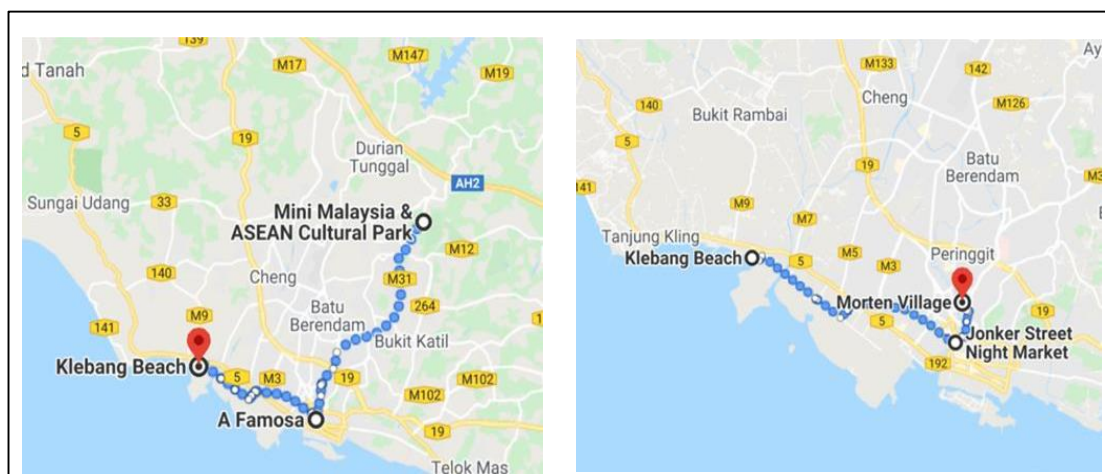


Figure 4: Selected places in Malacca (Credit: Google Map Images)

They were brought to each location as indicated in the above figure and given a maximum of two hours to immerse themselves in their surroundings before being asked to answer a series of questions for additional details on their exploration and experiences throughout the journey. Due to the participants' limited time in Malacca, random locations were chosen to ensure a spontaneous and authentic experience. This act is echoed in the concept of psychogeography, in which the flâneurs (the observers) abandon their mundane routines for movement and action, their relationships, their work and leisure activities, and allow themselves to be drawn in for a period of time by the place's attractions. Thus, their exploration of selected locations throughout

Malacca is viewed as a spontaneous act and a departure from their usual routine of being in classrooms. This enables participants to make authentic and meaningful discoveries as they attempt to comprehend and create memories of their surroundings. Individuals will theoretically observe their surroundings and interpret whatever observations they make using their senses. The observations can take the form of human interactions and communication, physical setting of locations, or natural landscapes; any detail that captures the observers' attention and interest. Among the discoveries are stories, historical contexts, and life lessons that are presented to individuals in a variety of ways that they can capture and record. Following their explorations, the participants were asked to respond to a series of questions to ascertain the outcome of their journey. Their responses were analysed using the psychogeographical approach to ascertain how the experience influenced their way of thinking and behaving in relation to the places visited. The figure below depicts the process of participants exploring Malacca from the lens of psychogeography, focusing on the relationship between their minds and actions and their surroundings.

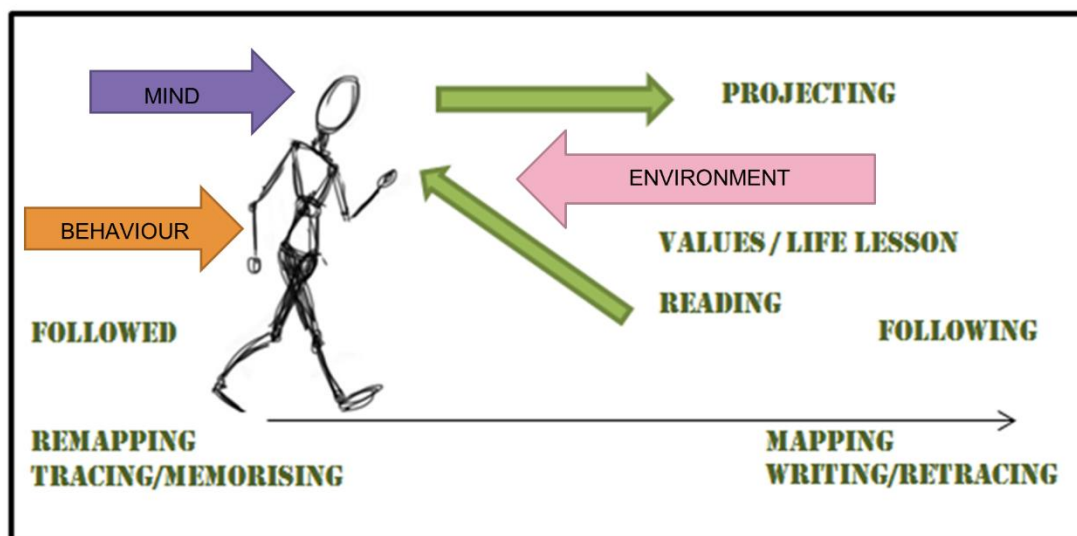


Figure 5: The psychogeographical process of discovering and experiencing Malacca.

4.0 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The participants spent the entire day exploring Malacca's various locations and settings, covering all facets of a place's construction: environment, landscape, people, nature, and architectural cityscape. This is to ensure that participants will have a comparable, complete experience of a location from every angle. The findings were gleaned from the questionnaires given to the participants following the conclusion of their journey and exploration. According

to their responses, three major components emerged from the overall experience of walking around Malacca and becoming immersed in the surroundings. These components were developed and grouped according to the thematic significance of their responses in elucidating their experiences with the location. According to Nik Mohammad et al. (2013), locations have varying degrees of place sense that contribute to social activities based on the relationships between place meanings. Thus, three key components were developed based on their findings: self-discovery, values, and leisure, each of which reflects the process of an individual's mind and conduct in relation to the environment of a place.

4.1 Self-Discovery through Place

Throughout their exploration and discovery of Malacca, all the participants reported a positive change and enhancement of their state of being. This indicates that the act of navigation has altered their perceptions and behaviours toward their surroundings, resulting in them becoming a more developed version of themselves than they were prior to participating in this activity. The participants highlighted how their self-characteristics have improved and, for some, have been discovered as they interacted with and observed their surroundings during their journey around Malacca. Confidence, open-mindedness, and a healthy self-esteem tend to reflect a shift in viewpoint, implying a more refined awareness via travel experience. The following table is a summary of some replies gathered from participants as they walked about the area and interacted with their surroundings:

Table 1: Self-discovery responses

Component	Statements/Answers from Participants
Has this programme changed you as a person? (Self-Discovery)	It taught me to be confident with myself
	It really boosted my self-esteem to present my ideas and socialize in general
	I get to try new things and break my habit of being very shy in front of new people
	I am now an open-minded person
	I am shy and a bit of an introvert, but I managed to get out of my shell and interact with people
	The programme gave me a chance to know the real life as <i>rakyat</i> in Malacca as we went to Kampung Morten
	I have met new people and expanded my horizons
	To appreciate what we have today because it is a gift from our great ancestors
	I have gone out from my comfort zone and realized that I have more abilities
	I am able to understand myself more in terms of my advantages and flaws
I found out more of myself as a person. I am actually a very spontaneous person who likes adventure and appreciate the environment	
I come back feeling motivated, tired but energetic. I am a new and better individual	

4.2 Values of Place

The second critical component associated with the location are values interpreted and acquired during the participants' exploration of their spatial surroundings. The values are positive meanings and messages derived from interactions with the environment and places that participants gathered and comprehended to have a more insightful experience of Malacca. Values and lessons such as the importance of remembering one's roots and identity, the importance of language and communication between people, life lessons, and the importance of appreciating things in life are all examples of what the environment can teach humans if they begin to open up and interpret their surroundings. This demonstrates that there is a connection between the place and the individual, as they are enriched not only by their

knowledge of Malacca's history, but also by the valuable lessons acquired throughout their journey's interpretation. The participants discussed the values linked to the locations they visited, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 2: Values responses

Component	Statements/Answers from Participants
What are the values and messages that you have taken from this programme? (Values)	Remember your background, your culture, appreciate it as best as you can
	To be brave and confident in making new friends and meet new people
	How language is very important for us to communicate and connect to all around us
	There's more to life than just classroom and exams
	Malaysia is a multiracial country that is moving forward but has never neglected its history
	Appreciate every culture of the country
	Take care of your friends, be aware of your surroundings
	Self-confidence, bravery and communication skills
	Life has many things to offer and I have learnt a lot today

By recognising the numerous values acquired throughout their travels, respondents demonstrate their sensitivity to various locales; their range of view produces a meaning unique to them. According to Shah Khaidzir, Hashim, and Md Yusof (2021) on Nor Faridah Abdul Manaf's poetry, the poet's perceptions of her environment resulted in what Baudelaire termed as an "awakening" - specific discoveries during which the poet's past and present collide and impart tangible teachings that endure in the flâneur's life. Even while it may appear trivial in this initial exercise as observers, awareness offers up a world of possibilities in more profound epiphanic moments.

4.3 Place of Leisure

The third critical concept linked to location serves as a leisure platform for participants to utilise during their exploration of Malacca. This concept demonstrates that the location serves as an aesthetic setting in which individuals rely on spending their daily time surrounded by the environment. As psychogeography places a premium on emotions and an individual's attitude

toward the environment, participants express their emotions and reactions to the overall experience. The most frequently given responses concerned their general feelings about the places visited and explored. Thus, the general leisure emotions indicated that the participants had a good time and were excited, based on their responses. The following table illustrates the concept of place as leisure:

Table 3: Responses on leisure

Component	Statements/Answers from Participants
What is the highlight of the programme? (Leisure)	<p>Seeing the historical city in person after a long time</p> <p>The interaction between us and foreigners of the place</p> <p>Made new friends with students from different courses during the trip</p> <p>At <i>Bandar Hilir</i>, when we met random people and interviewed them, I feel so happy to know new people with different backgrounds</p> <p>Meeting new friends and exploring the city</p> <p>When we interviewed the foreigners because it is a new experience for me</p> <p>Walking around Jonker Walk and the photoshoot at <i>Klebang Beach</i></p> <p>All the places that we went and visited</p> <p>Made new friends while visiting to the historical places</p> <p>When we went to the Mini Malaysia and we know more about Malaysia's cultures and there were lots of fun things to do there</p> <p>The view</p> <p>Getting to know the places and the people</p> <p>The new experiences that I discovered</p> <p>The life lessons that we learnt</p>

4.4 Positive Outcome of the Journey

The exploration of locations has indeed yielded positive results, with students providing positive feedback about their journey experiences. The art of walking with an open and uninhibited mind has enabled these individuals to be completely focused on the environment and its meaning, allowing them to interpret values and experiences on an individual level. In an article by Al Jumaili (2017), he analysed the works of Wendell Berry as a nature writer who undergoes a sense of displacement when he moves from the city to an unfamiliar place. However, despite experiencing a feeling of displacement, Berry is able to undergo a spiritual rebirth that is fruitful and productive. This is similar to the outcome of the participant's experience of wandering Malacca. The majority of participants' positive feedback focuses on leisure, values, and, most importantly, self-discovery, as illustrated in the following figures:

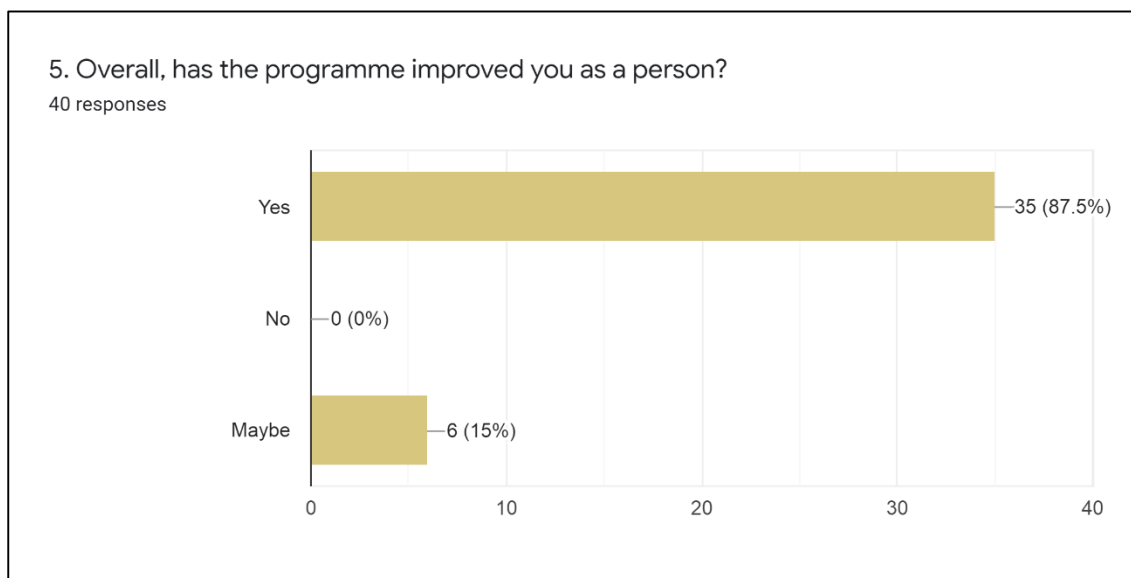


Figure 6: Outcome of responses

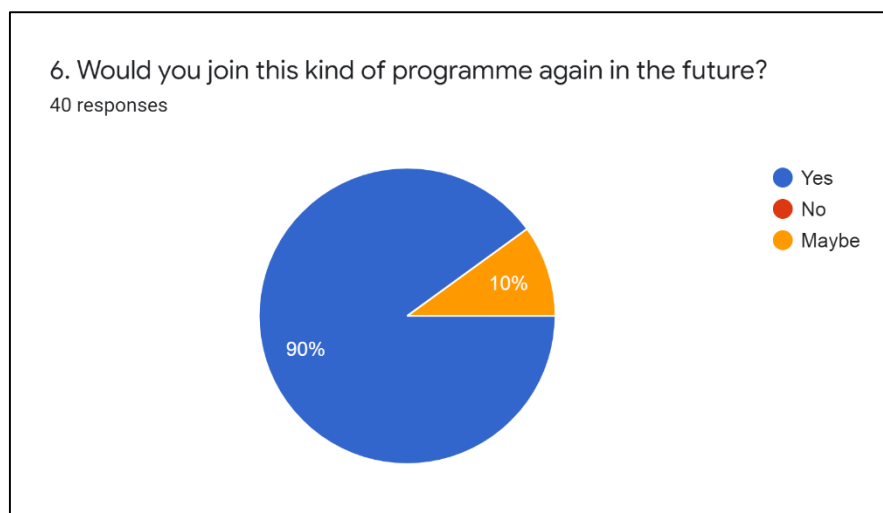


Figure 7: Future participation responses

The preceding illustrations indicate unequivocally that these participants had a favourable opinion of the programme. When asked if the outdoor activity had an effect on them and if they would do it again, just a tiny number of participants answered, 'Maybe.' The majority of participants reported that their wandering experience was positive and that the locations had some kind of significant impact on them. However, it should be noted that the impact of self-discovery varies for each individual, and the fact that no participants answered 'No' to both questions should be interpreted as an indication of the total positive outcome of the experience.

4.5 Discussion

The purpose of this study is to examine the concept of place and its effect on the minds and behaviours of individuals during their exploration of Malacca's historical site. During the post-programme questionnaires with participants, we discovered that all participants gained positive insights and meanings from the places visited in Malacca. These significant meanings can be deduced from three central concepts associated with the location: self-discovery, values, and leisure. These three notions illustrate how a location like Malacca combines the physical environment with meanings, allowing individuals to experience a transformation in their view of themselves and their surroundings. At the same time, the responses provided by the participants demonstrate that there is both enhanced progress and newly discovered experience of the individual's state of mind and actions in relation to the location. Simultaneously, when asked about the experience, participants expressed positive and happy emotions. As Kleiber (1999) proposed, enjoyment and excitement are two of the general emotional characteristics of leisure activities. The spontaneous act of walking freely around Malacca enabled them to

connect further with their internal emotions and perspectives through an authentic experience of the spontaneous occurrences in their surroundings. Hence, the experience appears to have broadened the user's definition and attachment to Malacca as more than a historical setting, as it has always been portrayed as a result of the place's impact on individuals.

These responses revealed not only the participants' feelings and reactions to the location, but also their sentiments, pride, identity, and the affection developed for the areas surrounding Malacca. These students initiated and sparked reflections and a moment of epiphany on the importance of knowing one's culture and its roots in remembering the meaning of the places through their exploration and exposure to the areas surrounding Malacca. Consequently, the experiences produce an emotional bond between the participants and the place, which reflects the place's functional and social construction. This is consistent with Relph's (1976) understanding of how the place contributes to the sense of feelings and perceptions that individuals use experiences of a place and its qualities as presented in the surrounding environment to elevate the specific place above other places. Additionally, their discovery of places stimulates their emotions and interests in their surroundings as they connect the experiences gathered with their own. It is worth noting that the majority of participants gave positive and encouraging responses due to the unique nature of the programme, which was believed to be the first of its kind for the institute and also for other universities in the country. Thus, this could be understood in light of Myers' (2003) findings that programmes garner the most attention because they are a unique element of an individual's experience. Despite the fact that this positive outcome from the participants could occur on any other field trip in an urban setting, the success of this experience should be viewed as a stepping stone or reason for additional wanderings and a focus on how one's surroundings affect one's thinking and behaviour. This one-of-a-kind day-long exploration of Malacca enables participants to interpret their moods and feelings toward the place, resulting in unforgettable and unique experiences.

Additionally, the findings of this study bolster previous research on psychogeography and place meaning. Also, the responses of the participants in the exploration and interaction with Malacca's places serve as an authentic interpretation of the existence of an understanding of the role of place in influencing a person's way of thinking and behaving in a particular way. In this case, the locations surrounding Malacca were able to provide participants with not only breathtaking and historical scenery and aesthetic experiences, but also with meanings to interpret, values to learn, aspects of self to discover, but also as a form of leisure away from their mundane daily lives. Thus, the three major ideas that influence the overall experiences of

persons visiting Malacca as a destination complement Altman and Low's (1992) definition of place attachment as a phrase that emphasises emotions and the environment as mediated by the individual's emotions and culture. Thus, places contain values and information that individuals discover and explore in order to develop an awareness of their surroundings, which Altman and Low (1992) referred to as the attachment between the place and the affective dimensions of environmental meaning. To put this reference in context for this study, the individuals developed a strong attachment to their surroundings in Malacca, which enabled them to connect with their emotions and discover a more complete version of themselves through learning the place's definition.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article is to demonstrate the role of place in providing not only a recreational platform, but also the capability of revealing a meaningful and informative experience to individuals who explore and navigate their surroundings' space. The historical context and rapid urban development of Malacca's areas served as a reminder to individuals of their identity and cultural heritage, as well as a rediscovery of a more positive side of themselves, while breaking free from their daily routines. While being surrounded by the environment on a daily basis is the norm, there is an urgent need for individuals to develop a greater appreciation and understanding of the environment from a psychological standpoint in order to re-evaluate themselves and their surroundings. Armed with navigators such as Papago, Waze, Google Map, we often forget to enjoy the places as we whizz through them. We have become oblivious to the details of the things around us. For the young and not-so-young, this exercise can awaken some of those emotions that have been dulled by our dependence on gadgets. As a result, this research is critical to demonstrating the significance of the outcome of self-discovery and navigation in both familiar and unfamiliar environments. The framework employed in this study has indeed established a link between the study of the mind and the behaviour of an individual in relation to the environment. Additionally, it is recommended that future research be conducted on various categories of individuals and the possibility of developing a self-discovery module that utilises the psychogeography concept to assist individuals to benefit to the maximum in their exploration of places.

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