EMERGING TRENDS AND CHALLENGES IN MANAGEMENT:
Strategy, Practices and Performance Measurements

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Publisher
Kaizentrenovation Sdn Bhd
Tanjung Malim
2019
THE MALAYSIAN HERITAGE GARDEN: DOES IT EXIST?

Ahmad Zamil Zakaria, Melasutra Md Dali, and Hazreena Hussein

Abstract
Currently, there are abundant of open parks operated for relaxation and entertainment in Malaysia. In this study, Putrajaya was chosen as a case study due to the city’s number of public parks. The aim of this study was to determine the implementation of the Malaysian Heritage Garden concept in the development of public parks. The main objective is to distinguish the factors that caused the implementation difficulties, and the initiatives that have been made to introduce this concept. Site observation methods is used for collecting data. The results revealed that the entire park design does not highlight the elements of the Malaysian Garden concept (the Malay Garden criteria’s). From the information gathered can be presumed that Putrajaya is yet not prepared to highlight the traditional elements in landscape design. Although, Putrajaya is the federal administrative center of the country, but still not able to accentuate the national identity.

Keywords: Malaysia Heritage, Malaysian Garden, Malay Garden, National Identity, Putrajaya

Introduction
The development of public parks is not concerned with the local culture, especially the Malays. Landscape design that sees modern-style and adapts the concepts of famous all over the world cannot help the development of the local landscape design. Currently, there are various design concepts in the field of landscape architecture. Among the favourite landscaping concepts are Japanese, Balinese and English Garden. Through these concepts, the culture of its community been promoted to the outside world (Zakaria et al., 2013a). In Malaysia, the current scenario of landscape focuses on contemporary designs, which means that the Malaysian community does not have the one landscape identity to be proud of. In the opinion of the researchers, Putrajaya is a planned and smart city that developed by political agenda in Malaysia. Social components give off an impression of being heading to the arrangement of Putrajaya is to make a "livable" city and charming (Perbadanan Putrajaya, 2018).

National Identity
Referring to Dahbour (2002), two concepts of national identity are prevalent in contemporary political philosophy; (i) a strict one that regards nationality as based on a belief in common ancestry or ethnicity and, (ii) a loose one that views nationality as a malleable term without fixed properties. National identity is a sense of a nation as a cohesive whole, as represented by distinctive traditions, culture, and language (Oxford Dictionaries, 2018). The set of qualities and beliefs that make individual or group different from others is another identity definition (Merriam-Webster, 2015). Kuean (1999) stated the national identity are tied to a specific social conception of space, built from selected landscape types and individual spatial components.

Cultural Landscape
The cultural landscape is regarded as being of the most complex designs which involve interactions between man, nature, cultural values and the associated built environment (Harun et al., 2017). The cultural identity that relates to a person’s heritage helps them to identify with others who have the same traditions and primary belief system — the "community identity" concerning the acknowledgement that cultural landscapes form part of the living memory of past generations and can provide connections to future generations (ICOMOS, 2014). Referring to Lowenthal (1997), a landscape is considered as a common heritage and a collective identity.

The Malay Traditional Garden in Malaysia
The designs of Malay Garden concern for good space layout to create a surrounding of high functionality and benefits towards users. Ismail et al. (2015) said the Malay Garden plays a significant function of sustaining the residents. The planting compositions in the garden indicate not only intrinsic cultural values, such as food, medicine, cosmetic, belief but also decoration and provision of shade. Abu Bakar (2012)
agreed that the Malay landscape could be regarded as a complete life, which includes aspects of the divine, natural and human.

**The Malaysian Garden Concept**
Among the interests of the Malaysian Garden establishment is; ‘Conservation of historical and cultural value, it is to be inherited and cherished by future generations. Besides, it is also an effort to maintain the cultural landscapes’ (National Landscape Department, 2009). According to Abu Bakar (2012), a consensus has been reached, where the Malaysian Landscape characteristics must be based on the Malay Landscape concept criteria’s, and the National Landscape Department agreed on it in 2007.

**Materials and Methods**
The methodology for this research includes the formation of objectives, data collection, summary and findings, and last suggestion and conclusion. In this research, researchers did not just use the qualitative method, but quantitative as well, by using questionnaires. The “observation” method using to watch something carefully and accurately record in some way the activities or situation to capture data relevant to the research issues (Gray & Malins, 2004).

**Sample Criteria**
For this study, Putrajaya (administration city of Malaysia) was selected as it is a place of interest to be visited by locals and tourists from abroad. A total of eight (8) public parks around Putrajaya has become a case study. The public parks are:

**Assessing the Cultural Landscape**
This study has used the Melnick's method, which states the importance to identify the characteristics and elements of nature, culture, and visual interest at a selected place (Melnick 2009). This process and guidelines facilitate the researchers for more focus on the subject matter to increase the validity and reliability of the study.

**Results**
The researchers have conducted on-site observation before any selected public park. The researchers have made the ranking, according to the perceptual after a site visit conducted (Refer to Table 1). Researchers are beginning the study through observation methods; the researchers have chosen Putrajaya Botanical Garden and Putra Perdana Park as a public park that has the potential to be highlighted cultural ethnic landscape design (first and second ranks: results from the observation studies have been conducted).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Putrajaya Challenge Park</th>
<th>Putrajaya Equestrian Park</th>
<th>Putra Perdana Park</th>
<th>Agriculture Heritage Park</th>
<th>Wawasan Park</th>
<th>Wetland Park</th>
<th>Putrajaya Botanical Garden</th>
<th>Rimba Alam Park</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Park Design</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Users</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Comfort</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Adapting the Concept of Popular Landscape Design</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modern Elements</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>The Potential to Absorb</td>
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The Importance of Introducing Traditional Elements for the Survival of the Malays Culture

The researchers thought, let's culture retained in place, for example, in the Malay villages. Believed that culture is for a civilised nation and it can be used to benefit the tourism sector. Also, proud of the nation’s history is one of the characteristics of people with first-class brains. In the next part of the discussion, the researchers deliberate on how to incorporate the Malay Garden Design Concept to an existing public park. People prefer to implement something trendy and modern. The way of life is seen as the factors influencing their behaviour today. People desire to live in cities than in villages and children nowadays are less exposed to the culture of their parents.

Discussion

In this section, the researchers will touch on some of the relationships between a public park in Malaysia and the Malay Garden Design Concept. This article will also explain to the reader, about the importance of the Malay Garden Design Concept to the field of landscape architecture in Malaysia.

What is the Malay Garden?

Zakaria et al. (2017) argued the basis of culture could be divided into four parts, artistic, social, economic and political. All four sections are relevant in creating the landscape concept for the Malay community in Malaysia. According to him, three essential things that need to be studied before knowing the identity of the Malay landscape is; product potential, the challenges before it recognised, and methods of globalization (Refer to Figure 1).

![Figure 1. The Malay Garden Concept that Has Been Made Exhibition Abroad by Malaysian Landscape Consultant](Source: Morphosis Design Sdn Bhd Project Collection, 2015)

The most significant potential is the idea become a legacy for generations and need to be passed down to future generations. The constraints that not able to be handled by the Malay community now is the lack of understanding of this concept. It has made the community less appreciate and prefer another landscape concept. Data has shown, due to the lack of understanding of this concept, it has caused public parks in Putrajaya not convince to implement it. They fear of their own shadow and belittled.
How to Incorporate the Concept of the Malay Garden into Existing Public Parks?
It is where the creativity of a designer to create a design to be an exciting, unique and uses the basic idea of "Tropical Gardens". From the data obtained, there is an option if this concept is to be implemented. Some visitors suggest that only small spaces need to be allocated to the Malay Garden design, but it is necessary to generate a psychological and understanding impact on visitors.

The Strength of the Concept of "Malay Garden" Compared to Other Landscape Concept
The strength of the concept of "Malay Garden" can be seen from the philosophy, culture, and lifestyle of the "Malays as a whole". The Malay landscape concept should stress those things because the practice of philosophy and culture will highlight the way of life of the Malay community (Zakaria et al., 2016a). Lots of Malays long-standing theory is still used until today. Undoubtedly another landscape concept also has a variety of philosophies, but the difference is in the religious sense. The Malays in Malaysia are Muslims. Indirectly the philosophies more directed on the teachings of Islam. Malay culture is not the same as other races. They argue that our country needs something that can represent the philosophy, identity and dignity of the nation. If referring to the results of previous studies (as described above), then we can feel that this concept has been around, but unfortunately not taken it seriously.

Is the Concept of the “Malaysian Garden” Has Existed?
The director of the National Landscape Department (NLP) had expressed a desire to produce a concept “Malaysian Garden” (Ismail, 1997). The concept uses the idea of "tropical rainforest" as the subject matter. It was reported 20 yr. ago, and maybe some of us are already forgotten the matter. That means the study of “Malaysian Garden” concept does not take a short and quick to produce. It is complicated to be realised on factors such as Malaysia's multiracial society (3 main races are the Malays, Chinese and Indians). From the observation, it is not easy to claim that the design is “Malaysian Garden”. Due to a lack of understanding and awareness among Malaysians especially the parties responsible for developing the landscape industry. The formation of the Malaysian Garden concept was triggered by the former Prime Minister of Malaysia who desired a garden concept that could be proud of Malaysians (Refer to figure 2).

Figure 2. The Malaysian Garden Concept
(Source: National Landscape Department, 2009)

Conclusion
People are always fascinating to see gardens from around the world. Some have asked researchers why not trying to highlight the concept of “Malaysian Garden”, whereas it represents all Malaysians. The correct answer is the concept of Malaysia Garden is not suitable realised at present. Although the concept of Malay garden is not an option at this point, as Malaysians, researchers would like to suggest that the research and production of appropriate guidelines should be accelerated. The role of every member of society is crucial to make it comparable to popular concepts that have become a trend today. Without the cooperation of all parties, any program organised either from the ministry, government departments, local
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authorities or otherwise will not be welcome. Malaysians need to enjoy it because they already have a landscape design concept that can be proud of the nation.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our gratitude to the Center for Sustainable Urban Planning & Real Estate, Faculty of Built Environment, University of Malaya (SUPRE), the Centre for Knowledge and Understanding of Tropical Architecture and Interior (KUTAI) and Taman Alam Melayu Nusantara (T.A.M.A.N) UiTM Perak Branch for the precious support during the research period.

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