

**HERITAGE TOURISM ECOSYSTEM FOR
INTANGIBLE LIVING HERITAGE OF
TRADITIONAL PERFORMING ARTS AT
GEORGE TOWN WORLD HERITAGE SITE**

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by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|--|
| Arts-ED | Arts-ED |
| CENDANA | Cultural Economy Development Agency |
| DCS | Department of Community Services, Penang Island City Council |
| DHC | Department of Heritage Conservation, Penang Island City Council |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GTGP | George Town Grants Programme |
| GTWHS | George Town World Heritage Site |
| ICOMOS | International Council on Monuments and Sites |
| LHA | Living Heritage Award |
| LHN | Lestari Heritage Network |
| MATTA | Malaysian Association of Tour & Travel Agents |
| MCMM | Ministry of Communication and Multimedia Malaysia |
| MDEC | Multimedia Development Corporation |
| MOE | Ministry of Education |
| MOTAC | Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture |
| MYSM | Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia |
| MICE | Meeting, Incentive, Convention & Exhibition |
| NCP | National Culture Policy |
| NCIP | National Creative Industry Policy |
| NDCAM | National Department of Culture and Arts Malaysia |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OUV | Outstanding Universal Value |
| PETACH | Penang Executive Counsellor Office for Tourism, Arts, Culture and Heritage |
| PGT | Penang Global Tourism |
| PHT | Penang Heritage Trust |
| PJPHS | Penang Jawi Peranakan Heritage Society |
| PMHTO | Penang Malay Heritage Trust Organization |
| PTCAA | Penang Tamil Cultural Arts Association |
| PTGA | Penang Tourists Guide Association |
| QDA | Qualitative Data Analysis |
| SCPA | Strait Chinese Penang Association |
| TCSB | Think City Sdn Bhd |
| TPAP | Traditional Performing Arts Practitioners |
| UNCTAD | United Nations Conference on Trade and Development |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNWTO | United Nation World Tourism Organization |
| USD | United State Dollar |
| WTO | World Tourism Organization |
| WTTC | World Travel and Tourism Council |

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**EKOSISTEM PELANCONGAN WARISAN BUDAYA TIDAK KETARA
SENI PERSEMBAHAN TRADISIONAL DI TAPAK WARISAN DUNIA
GEORGE TOWN**

ABSTRAK

Cabaran untuk menyebarkan dan mengekalkan kepentingan budaya seni persembahan tradisional yang bernilai cemerlang sejagat untuk pelancongan warisan adalah tugas yang mencabar kerana halangan sosial-budaya dan ekonomi, cabaran kepupusan warisan budaya, kewujudan pelbagai domain warisan budaya tidak ketara, mengekalkan status inskripsi tapak warisan dunia George Town, bidang pengajian yang terabai serta potensi budaya seni persembahan tradisional dalam ekonomi kreatif. Objektif utama penyelidikan adalah untuk membangun kerangka ekosistem yang terdiri dari komponen, fungsi dan kriteria yang dapat mempertahankan amalan seni persembahan tradisional berserta dengan peranan dan pengurusan kerjasama pihak pemegang taruh dalam mempertahankan warisan budaya tidak ketara seni persembahan tradisional; suatu kluster budaya ekonomi kreatif serta tarikan pelancongan warisan menggunakan pendekatan penyelidikan kualitatif dengan teknik persampelan bertujuan serta analisa kerangka. Kerangka kerjasama dan peranan pemegang taruh yang dibentuk bagi melestarikan seni persembahan tradisional yang bernilai sejagat cemerlang dibahagikan kepada *primary*, *secondary*, *experts* dan *suppliers* bagi membentuk ekosistem yang saling bergantung dan menyokong antara satu sama lain. Pemegang taruh dengan fungsi dan peranan khusus dikaitkan dengan pelbagai kategori pengaruh tahap kuasa dan grid kepentingan sama ada sebagai *latents*, *promoters*, *apathetics* atau *defenders* untuk menentukan bentuk penglibatan pemegang taruh, sama ada melalui pendekatan *partnership*, *participation*, *consultation*, *push and pull communication* dikalangan pemegang taruh menerusi strategi penglibatan berperingkat. Fungsi dan peranan pemegang taruh yang dikaitkan dengan kuasa dan pengaruh harus dipadankan dengan elemen tanggungjawab seperti *responsible*, *accountable*, *consulted or informed* bagi mengekalkan amalan seni persembahan tradisional dan pelancongan warisan menerusi aktiviti kerjasama. Kerangka kerjasama dan peranan pemegang taruh dalam melestarikan seni persembahan tradisional bernilai cemerlang sejagat dan mengekalkan pelancongan warisan di GTWHS harus berdasarkan kepada pengurusan hubungan yang efektif serta disokong oleh kriteria sosial, ekonomi dan persekitaran bagi mewujudkan ekosistem ekonomi kreatif.

**HERITAGE TOURISM ECOSYSTEM FOR INTANGIBLE LIVING
HERITAGE OF TRADITIONAL PERFORMING ARTS AT GEORGE
TOWN WORLD HERITAGE SITE**

ABSTRACT

The challenges of transmitting and sustaining cultural significance of traditional performing arts with OUV for heritage tourism is daunting task due to social-cultural and economic obstacles, ease of vanishing of cultural legacy, multiple domains of intangible cultural heritage, retaining inscription of GTWHS, a neglected field of studies as well as promising and unique offering in creative economy. The prime objective of this research is to establishment of a framework of an ecosystem comprising of component, functions and criteria that sustain the practices of traditional performing arts with stakeholders' role and collaboration management in sustaining the intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts; an art cluster of creative economy and attraction of heritage tourism through qualitative research employing purposive sampling and framework technique. The established framework of stakeholder collaboration and roles in preserving traditional performing arts with OUV are segregated into stakeholders of *primary, secondary, experts and suppliers* to make the ecosystem supportive and dependent on each other. Stakeholders with specific functions and roles are associated with different categories of power-level influences and interest grid known as *latents, promoters, apathetics and defenders* which determines the forms of engagement, either through *partnership, participation, consultation, push and pull communication* among stakeholders using five stages of engagement strategy. As the interaction of functions and roles of stakeholders are often associated with power and influence, stakeholders are further assigned with human elements of *responsible, accountable, consulted or informed* (RACI) roles to sustains practices of traditional performing arts and heritage tourism through collaboration activities. The established framework of stakeholder collaboration and roles in preserving the traditional performing arts with OUV and sustaining heritage tourism at GTWHS should be based on effective relationship management supported by social, economic and environment criteria in establishing a creative economy ecosystem.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This thesis through critical review of literature on intangible living heritage of performing arts, stakeholders and sustainable heritage tourism development, seeks to establish framework of ecosystem comprising of component, functions and criteria that sustain the traditional performing arts of the Malay, Chinese and Indian that has Outstanding Universal Values (OUV) with stakeholders' role and collaboration management in sustaining the intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts at George Town United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] World Heritage Site (GTWHS) for heritage tourism.

The first chapter provides a general introduction to this study. First, the chapter provides an overview of past studies in preservation of intangible living heritage, research gaps, compelling reasons and urgency in undertaking this research and specific theories used in forming the theoretical framework, research location and background, growth of heritage tourism and need for preservation of intangible living heritage, research problems, research questions and research objectives. After explaining the research questions and objectives of the study, it states the significance of the study and gives a summary of the research methodologies employed. Finally, the chapter summarize the findings of the thesis. This puts the overall discussion into perspective.

1.2 Past Research on Preservation of Cultural Heritage

Previous researches on intangible cultural heritage of performing arts focus on preserving cultural heritage for tourism (Hani et. al. 2012), approaches to preservation and challenges to sustain practices of traditional performing arts. Wan Ariffin et.al. (2016) focuses on the factors that influence how the art form of intangible cultural heritage of Wayang Kulit and Main Puteri were able to survive albeit challenges of modernization. Shuaib & Enoch (2013) studied the intrinsic

values behind Kelantan's traditional arts unique heritages; together with analysis of issues, challenges and proposed how these issues can be addressed. Mean while Amin, et.al. (2012) developed a model of factor in archiving intangible cultural heritage. Archiving was done through transformation from the model to Meta model with guideline, standard and base for developing a repository of intangible culture heritage. Ghulam-Sarwar (2017) in his research and keynote address at the Mak Yong Spiritual Dance Heritage: Seminar and Performances, organized by SEAMEO SPAFA in collaboration with the Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University has discovered that serious problems have developed and connected with both its survival as well as with preservation and conservation of Mak Yong traditional performing arts. There were many factors for the decline and near extinction of traditional performing arts of Mak Yong including declining audiences, lack of opportunities to perform, modernization, the popularity of alternative media particularly films, lack of financial support and religious factors as well as suffers from discouragement on the part of the authorities despite the much-touted international recognition of its unique qualities proclamation by UNESCO as an "Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity" in 2005 (Ghulam-Sarwar, 2017).

Mustafa and Abdullah (2013) undertake studies on preservation of cultural heritage in Malaysia from the context of the National Heritage Act 2005 and its limitation on administration of cultural heritage by Commissioner of Cultural Heritage particularly the absent of archaeological impact assessment and the kind of protection provided to the list of tangible cultural or item or objects in the Register as well as protection for intangible living heritage. While Idris et al (2016) in their studies on preservation of intangible cultural heritage associated with tradition and living expressions has proposed usage of advanced digital technology as preservation medium due to threats of urbanization, rapid development, human conflict and natural disasters. According to Yuan (2008) intangible cultural heritage consist of three important aspects: 1) the pattern of whole area, 2) the life of inhabitants and 3) traditional handcrafts, folklore etc. Without all these aspects, the historic area would be like human with no soul. Furthermore, he asserted that certain principles of conservation for tangible heritage are also suitable for intangible heritage such as authenticity and integrality. However, some special principles should be applied consistent with the character of intangible cultural heritage. Yuan (2008) suggested

two (2) special principles of conserving intangible cultural heritage. These are (1) human – oriented principle and (2) dynamic conservation principle.

In addition to studies on approaches and methods of preservation of intangible cultural heritage, other studies related to conservation of cultural heritage are challenges faced by George Town such as conservation management, revitalization, economic activities and gentrification after UNESCO's nomination as world heritage site (Mohamed et.al, 2012). Nur Izzati Mohd Rodzi et al. (2013) studied tourism's relationship with intangible cultural heritage and examines their positive and negative views towards the importance of tourism and cultural heritage as well as development of cultural mapping in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. Foo and Krishnapillai (2019) examines how gentrification has undermined the intangible living heritage that partly projects the OUV for GTWHS, and why intangible living heritage should be safeguarded for the knowledge of the future generations and heritage tourists while Abdul Aziz (2017) investigated the authenticity and vulnerability of living heritage of local communities in Melaka World Heritage site.

In another study, George (2010) investigated issues relating to tourism and intangible cultural heritage; and discovered the increasing commodification of intangible cultural heritage to please the tourists in most of the communities is being distracted by new concerns and issues outside their local domain where culture gets transformed and reconstructed into a completely different entity, and a consumer value system supersedes a longstanding community value system. Chin-Hai Yang et al. (2010) studied determinants of international tourist arrivals in China and discovered that cultural world heritage sites exhibit stronger impact on tourist arrivals than natural heritage sites as well as how it contributed to the uniqueness of historical sites, cultural traditions and colorful folk customs besides having higher elasticity in promoting tourist's arrival. Studies on tourist satisfaction at cultural heritage site in Malacca by Ai-Lin (2010) revealed that cultural and heritage attraction met the tourist expectation and satisfaction. Alnafeesi (2013) focus on preservation of architectural heritage or tangible living heritage as attraction that needs protection, rehabilitation, regeneration and restructuring of architectural heritage for local and regional development of tourism. Atalan (2018) proposed use

of conservation culture in education to instill conservation consciousness towards cultural heritage.

Past literatures and studies about traditional music and performances in Malaysia focused on sustaining musical culture and specific cultural performances such as Portuguese Music and Dance, Semai Music and Dance, Gamelan, Teochew opera and Po te hi (Glove puppet show) that are facing global and local challenges (Sooi Beng, 2017, Sarkissian, 2017; Ching Chan, 2017; Lai Chee, 2017; Wong, 2016; Min Jyeh, 2014), formation of national culture, performance of cultural show for tourism consumption (Sarkissian, 1998), endangered Malaysian music such as Kenyah vocal performance, gambus, Mek Mulung and Wayang Kulit and strategies to stay relevant (Mohammad Aslom, 2017; Gorlinski, 2017; Jamaluddin, 2017; Yong, 2017), divergence of cultural values such as *dikir barat* and *Mak Yong* was used to representing religious doctrine promoted by state government of Kelantan and wayang kulit, the shadow puppet theatre that have been actively discouraged by the Government because of their links with Hinduism and animism (Brennan, 2001; Shurentheran, 2017; Khan et. al., 2017), the history and development of traditional music and performance (Matusky, 1993; Sooi Beng, 1989) as well as portrayal of multicultural tourism imagery of Malaysia has come into conflict between cultural practitioner and activists against the state due to the differences in what the state displays to the world and the actual domestic state of affairs (Hoffstaedter, 2009).

The traditional performing arts which have OUV were chosen due to its existence and its forms as intangible living heritage are legacy that is easily vanished by the passage of time when compared to tangible heritage. Mustafa & Saleh (2017) believes that intangible cultural heritage can easily vanished and extinct for two main reasons, change in the tradition and a transition towards modern times. They opined that change can be controlled if the intangible cultural heritage can be preserved and passed down to become a tourist attraction that is based on heritage tourism. In addition to ease of vanishing of intangible cultural heritage, the intangible living heritage expressions are not limited to one single domain as defined by UNESCO Convention of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) is another factor for focusing on intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts. Boria (Mubin Sheppard cited in Manan, 2016; Bujang, 1987), Ghazal Party (Yusop, 2015; Sahabudin, 2015) and

Bangsawan, a popular theatre adapted from Persian Theatre since 1875 (School of Arts USM, 2010) that are originated from state of Penang together with Teochew opera and puppetry brought in by Chinese immigrants during 18th and 19th century (Ho, 2015; Ferrarese, 2017) and Bharatanatyam performed since early 1900s in Malaya (Thiagarajan, 2017) for example, are synchronic expression of music, dance, recitation, chants, songs and costumes as well as knowledge of the human, nature and cosmos. Therefore, performing arts are always organically linked to other domains, and together make the most unique, impressive and representative expressions of a given culture. Traditional performing arts are a central part of what is referred to here as “traditional knowledge,” which also includes the knowledge and skills necessary for or embedded within other domains of living heritage, such as oral traditions, social practices or handicrafts. Performing arts have a long tradition in the Asia and Pacific region, and constitute a core cultural resource in local communities. Their continuation depends largely on the transmission of skills from one generation to the next.

The conservation of traditional performing arts, one of the five domains (traditional craftsmanship, knowledge and practices, oral traditions, performing arts & social practices, rituals & festive events) of intangible cultural heritage (UNESCO, 2003; Bertorelli, 2018; UNESCO, 2011) of George Town with OUV is of critical significance, not just for an individual, but for a society to be aware of and appreciate its culture and heritage. When an intangible cultural heritage is recognized as having OUV, it is acknowledged as exceptional testimony of cultural tradition with global perspective and cultural worth as well as authentic. Besides that, there should be an adequate system of protection and management to safeguard the cultural heritage. Recommendations made by the World Heritage Committee during its 33rd session in June 2009 has compelled the state of Penang to have Special Area Plans (SAPs) for city were gazette in the year 2013 and implemented as statutory resources for the city. The guidelines in the SAPs acknowledged the need to manage the development of city, but somehow inadequately addressed intangible elements that currently affect the prevailing character or atmosphere of the city (Che Amat, 2019). According to Kurin (2007) intangible cultural heritage is not preserved in states archives or national museums. Safeguarding outstanding cultural sites and monuments is an essential aspect of the preservation of cultural identity and heritage. Equally

important to the protection of cultural identity is the preservation of the intangible heritage. Traditional performing arts which have true and authentic expression of cultural heritage with outstanding universal value can best represent an example of intangible heritage resource exceptional to GTWHS.

Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage have stated that safeguarding intangible living heritage or intangible cultural heritage is always a necessary condition in securing the national, communal or ethnic identity and continuity of individuals, no matter where the people are located (UNESCO, 2003). According to Scovazzi and Westra (2017), for many countries, especially developing countries, traditional culture is the main form of cultural expression and an important contribution to economic and social progress. Local Teochew opera performances are now scarce and can only be found during Chinese holidays and festivals such as Lunar New Year and important religious celebrations such as the birthdays of deities (The Star, 2016; Olga & Errol, 2017).

The current trend of globalization also threatens the continuation of traditional practices, also because people, especially young people, are attracted to a unified culture, mostly based on Anglo-American models (Scovazzi and Westra, 2017). Prasad (1999) cautioned that folk cultures will continue to die out or change in order to survive in the ever changing and globalising environment, while the local and indigenous intangible cultural heritage is rapidly being replaced by a standardised international culture strengthened by the socio-economic modernisation and facilitated by the progress in information and transportation technology. Harnish (2018) and Virulrak (1999) believes the globalization process and resurgence of religiosity apart from loss of prestige and instruments, poor music education, socioeconomic challenges as well as infrastructure challenges, internationalization, social changes, tourism promotions are the immediate forces jeopardizing the sustainability of performing arts especially music and traditional performing arts across Asia. As such safeguarding intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts is crucial in ensuring folk cultures; an indigenous cultural heritage does not die out due to pressure of globalization and replaced by standardized international culture.

Traditional performing arts of Boria, Ghazal Party, Bangsawan, Bharatanatyam, Teochew opera and puppetry are intangible living heritage asset incorporating norms, practices, dance, and rituals as well as having crucial expression and education roles in culture and society are recognized as criteria III of OUV of living intangible multicultural heritage and traditions available at GTWHS (UNESCO, 2018). One of the aims of 1972 World Heritage Convention is identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of cultural and natural heritage of OUV. When the OUV of the property which justified its inscription on the World Heritage List is lost, the World Heritage Committee may consider deleting the property from the World Heritage List. Furthermore, the Convention also emphasize that the cultural and natural heritage is among the priceless and irreplaceable assets, not only of each nation, but of humanity as a whole. The loss, through deterioration or disappearance, of any of these most prized assets constitutes an impoverishment of the heritage of all the peoples of the world (UNESCO, 1972).

Another reasons for choosing traditional performing arts as the focus of this research is due to OUV accorded to GTWHS. Although Foo and Krishnapillai's (2019) research has examines how gentrification undermined the intangible living heritage due to displaced local multicultural community and traditional traders which are associated with OUV at GTWHS; they did not discuss nor investigate intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts, a form of intangible living heritage. George Town and Melaka which were accorded with title of historic cities have met the criteria of OUV signifying exchange of human values that are unique and exceptional to cultural tradition together with build heritage that has rich and distinctive architectural elements. In order to preserve George Town's status as a World Heritage Site, it is imperative to safeguard the city's OUV's. According to UNESCO (2003), OUV means cultural and/or natural significance which is as exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity. As such, the permanent protection of this heritage is of the highest importance to the international community as a whole. In fact, the lack of understanding of authenticity and integrity as qualifying conditions for inscription are evident in many of the nomination documents submitted by State parties which is critically important for managing nominations to

the World Heritage List and improving conservation activity on World Heritage properties (Stovel, 2007). The authenticity and integrity aspects of cultural heritage are referred to the ability of a property to convey, secure or sustain the significance of the inscribed world heritage site. If the qualifying conditions are not met, it could lead to failure in retaining the inscription; which is also one of the compelling reasons as well as urgency to focus on this research topic.

The other compelling reason for selecting traditional performing arts as the main focus of this thesis apart from its OUV and ease of vanishing as well as its linkage to multiple domains of intangible cultural heritage; is the competitive potentials of traditional performing arts as an important arts clusters of the creative economy. Studies conducted by Jin Hooi et al. (2019) were on prevalence of adoption of creativity and harnessing it as well as commodifying creativity, innovation and culture in developing creative economy using comparative studies in examining innovative culture and prevalence of entrepreneurial orientation in traditional and modern cultural organizations at GTWHS. Intangible cultural heritage is a valuable source of economy because the contribution of the culture is seen through products, expressions and insights that have the role to improve the social and economic situation of a community (Petronela, 2016). Kolesnikova, Salyahov and Fakhrutdinov (2015) think that the category immaterial heritage implies different parts as immaterial wealth and immaterial property. The immaterial national wealth is described as knowledge, level of culture, traditions, national morale and etc. In the context of the new economy, the economic crisis and the fight between nations to achieve competitive advance in the regional development policy can be considered as a defense tool against the possible threats made by globalization. Therefore, the competitiveness of countries in attracting foreign investors is more often determined by their specific and unique intangible resources, like the intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts at GTWHS.

UNCTAD (2008) reported that creative economy is an evolving concept based on creative assets potentially generating economic growth and development in areas such as; job creation, export earnings, cultural, intellectual property (IP) and tourism objectives. With export growth rates of over 7% over 13 years, global trade in creative goods is an expanding and resilient sector buoyed by China, according to

a new UNCTAD report as well. Over the period of 2002 till 2015, the value of the global market for creative goods doubled from \$208 billion \$509 billion (UNCTAD, 2018). Ishak (n.d.), the Chief Executive Officer of MyCREATIVE Ventures said the Malaysian Creative Economy consists of many sub-sectors; they are Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Music, Literature, Film/TV/Gaming Content, Fashion & Design, Traditional & Cultural Arts, Creative Education, Creative Technologies and Culinary Arts based on classification in the Malaysian National Creative Industry Policies and the industry has contributed 1.6% of Gross Domestic Products in 2014.

According to Barrowclough & Kozul-Wright (2008), the developing world has great potential in creative economy due to the significant creative assets and rich cultural resources that exist in these countries. The 3% significant contribution of creative economy to global gross domestic product makes is a powerful emerging economic sector (UNCTAD, 2019). These creative assests and cultural resources not only enable them to project their own unique cultural identities, but also provide them with a source of economic growth, employment creation and increased participation in the global economy, including tourism (UNCTAD 2008). This process is known as cultural reconversion where old and new symbolic forms offer broad opportunities for cultural investment (Murphy 2003). Rather than letting the traditional cultural forms to die, it is better to transit and articulate these traditions to modern process (Cancilini 1992). Furthermore, the Malaysian National Creative Industry Policy drafted in 2009 has diminished in prominence and narrowed, mostly resulting in funding schemes that lack the broad structural changes and infrastructure programmes proposed and promised in the policy should be revisit particularly when the policy is now comes from a number of agencies and through an array of policy initiatives which are multiple, complex, and often-overlapping (Barker & Lee, 2017). Hence, traditional performing arts can be a promising and unique offering in creative economy due to its rich cultural content and having OUV.

In addition to significance of OUV, the studies on preservation of intangible living heritage generally in Malaysia and specifically in GTWHS is negligible compared to tangible heritage (see Idrus, Khamadi, & Sodangi, 2010; Said, Aksah & Ismail; 2013; Cheng, Li, & Ma, 2014). Research conducted by Mooi Kwong (2017) on preservation of intangible living heritage focussed on the need for capacity

building in sustaining practices of traditional artisan traders, a component of intangible living heritage unique to GTWHS and as tourist's attraction. Intangible living heritage of traditional artisan traders at GTWHS were neglected due to gentrification and socio-economic challenges as well being ignored by the heritage site management organization due to irrelevance of such trades in modern time although traditional artisans define the identity of community and depict the living heritage (Mooi Kwong, 2017).

Based on the overview of previous research on preservation of intangible cultural heritage, it is noted that preservation of intangible cultural heritage was for cultural tourism development (Hani et. al. 2012); approaches to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage are through cultural mapping, conservation principles, advanced digital technology, archiving intangible cultural heritage practices using meta model to create repository of intangible cultural heritage (Nur Izzati Mohd Rodzi et al., 2013; Idris et. al, 2016; Amin, et.al., 2012; Yuan, 2008); reviewing protection of cultural heritage accorded under the National Heritage Act 2005 (Mustafa and Abdullah, 2013); social and cultural challenges of preserving intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts of Mak Yong, the only local performing arts which was proclamation by UNESCO as an oral and intangible heritage of humanity (Ghulam-Sarwar, 2017; Shuaib & Enoch, 2013); the challenges of conserving cultural heritage after inscription of GTWHS such as gentrification, conservation management, revitalization, capacity building and economic activities (Mohamed et.al, 2012; Foo and Krishnapillai, 2019; Mooi Kwong, 2017); the authenticity and vulnerability of living heritage of local communities (Abdul Aziz, 2017); the increasing commodification of intangible cultural heritage for tourists has transformed and reconstructed culture into a completely different entity, where consumer value system supersedes a longstanding community value system (George, 2010); tourists expectation and satisfaction were derived from cultural heritage and it also exhibit stronger impact on tourist arrivals (Chin-Hai Yang et.al., 2010; Ai-Lin, 2010); local challenges towards traditional music performances and multi-culturalism (Sooi Beng, 2017; Sarkissian, 2017; Ching Chan, 2017; Lai Chee, 2017; Sarkissian, 1998; Mohammad Aslom, 2017; Gorlinski, 2017; Jamaluddin, 2017; Yong, 2017; Brennan, 2001; Matusky, 1993; Sooi Beng, 1989; Shurentheran, 2017; Brennan, 2001); protecting, rehabilitating, regeneration and restructuring of

architectural heritage for local and regional development of tourism and the use of conservation culture in education to instill conservation consciousness towards cultural heritage (Alnafeesi, 2013; Atalan, 2018) together with negligible studies on preservation of intangible living heritage compared to tangible heritage (Idrus, Khamadi, & Sodangi, 2010; Said, Aksah & Ismail; 2013; Cheng, Li, & Ma, 2014).

Against the backdrop of previous research on preservation of cultural heritage, this research endeavors to fill a significant research gap by focusing on preserving intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts which has OUV through establishment of a framework of an ecosystem comprising of component, functions and criteria that sustain the traditional performing arts with stakeholders' role and collaboration management in sustaining the intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts; an art cluster of creative economy and attraction of heritage tourism at GTWHS - an angle that is unexplored in GTWHS context given that no local previous studies have endeavored to explore this viewpoint together with the compelling reasons for selecting this topic. The ultimate envision of this research outcome is to sustain practices of intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts as part of creative economy. On this note, this study contributes significantly to the existing body of literature related to preservation of intangible cultural heritage of traditional performing arts in the context of an ecosystem comprising of stakeholders with identified role, functions and forms of collaboration management. To fill the void in this scenario, this research will administer a qualitative study approach which can capture the widest variety of viewpoints in determining the components, functions, roles and forms of stakeholder collaboration within the ecosystem of traditional performing arts as well as criteria needed to sustain traditional performing arts and heritage tourism.

1.3 Theories and Research Framework

The theories used in establishing the theoretical framework for sustainable heritage tourism development is based on Alternative Development Theory (Kaplan, 1993) and Globalization Theory (Maddison, 1998) that are group in social-cultural, environment and economics dimensions with certain attributes. While the conceptual framework of ecosystem for traditional performing arts at GTWHS is based on the

ecological system theory which states that the various forms of environmental systems influence human development and socialisation (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and individuals are rooted in the contexts in which they communicate to consciously manage creation and create values and expectations of their surroundings (Roosa et al. 2009). The conceptual framework of ecosystem for traditional performing arts in George Town comprise of components known as *products and services, sector enablers, system enabler and tourist* based on component of ecosystem in strengthening tourism by Nasr & Atalla (2013) and networked relationships focused on exchange of resources and the co-creation of value by Prahalad & Ramaswamy (2000), Möller & Halinen (1999), Möller & Wilson (1995), Anderson, J., Håkansson & Johanson (1994), Grönroos & Gummesson (1985) cited in Polese, et.al, (2018), where the ecosystem is re-conceptualized as systems of actors interconnected through networked relationships based on exchange of resources and producing value co-creation (Normann & Ramirez, 1993). Interpretation of stakeholders in the ecosystem is based on Freeman's (1984) stakeholder theory

The conceptual form for stakeholder collaboration in an ecosystem to sustain intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts at individual, organization and environment levels involve stakeholders are grouped into categories with relevant roles. The stakeholders are grouped into primary/expert and secondary/supplier categories using classification of stakeholders by Xiong & Hu (2005), Swarbrooke (2001), Dabphet (n.d.), Clarkson (1995) and Pavlovich (2003) and collaboration theory by Colbry et. al. (2014) and Yukl, Chavez, & Seifert (2005), while the roles of stakeholders in sustainable heritage tourism are based on WTO (Timur, 2012), Paskaleva-Shapira (2001), Pearce, (1989b) Gunn (1994), Inskip (1991), Ritchie and Crouch (2003), Orbasli (2000), Aseres (2016) and Nicolaidis (2015) as well as mapping of expected roles of the various stakeholders using RACI technique (Haughey, 2017; Wachs, 2015). The conceptual forms of stakeholder's collaboration are based on Morphy (2008) stakeholder's engagement through partnership, consultation, participation, push and pull communications and relationship engagement among stakeholder incorporated with element of influence/power. The conceptual form for stakeholder collaboration in an ecosystem to sustain intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts is based on Freeman's stakeholder theory where effective stakeholder's engagement needs

effective relationships management through development of certain competencies in order to sustain stakeholder engagement. The theories used in establishing the theoretical framework and conceptual framework are deliberated in details in Chapter 2.

The following section of this chapter covers description of the research location and background, issues and the urgency that leads to formation of research problems and followed by research questions, research objectives and significance of research, research methodology, key terms and conclusion.

1.4 Research Location and Background

George Town, the capital of Penang on the island's north-eastern corner was named after the British King George III. After Penang was handed over by the Sultan of Kedah to the English, Sir Francis Light founded the city, George Town. The city is dotted with idiosyncratic shop lots, narrow roads, old-fashioned houses of the colonial era, clan houses, numerous schools and ornate temples (Penang State Bureau of Information, 2020). The inscription of George Town under the list of UNESCO World Heritage Site (GTWHS) in 2008 is not only acknowledging and recognizing the commitment of state authority towards preservation and conservation work but also deployment of relevant resources to improve the economic, social and political conditions through far-reaching development plan that incorporates sustainable practices, empowerment through capacity building and supported by stakeholder engagement with legislative requirements and continuous monitoring of sustainable developmental practices. In order to retain the status of World Heritage Site (WHS), George Town must meet the criteria for selection by highlighting significance of tangible and intangible heritage that possesses OUV as outlined by the UNESCO heritage committee (UNESCO, 2008a).

George Town and Melaka was jointly inscribed as Historic Cities of The Straits of Malacca in 2008 by the World Heritage Committee in Quebec, Canada. With over 500 years of diverse trading history and cultural reciprocate, these two cities were acknowledged as having exceptional historical significance. Fusion of cultural influence of Asia and Europe has enabled George Town to inherit tangible and

intangible cultural heritage; incorporating residential and commercial buildings covering an area of 109.38 hectare (UNESCO, 2018). The multicultural backdrop and living traditions that exists in the architectural heritage of the East and West within George Town are exceptional due to the following features (UNESCO, 2018):

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- Former colonial towns with exceptional cultural and historical influences in trades between East and West.
- Both cities (Melaka & George Town) have the most complete multi-cultural heritage city centre borne out of trade routes.
- Multi-cultural trading cities in Southeast Asia for 500 years with mercantile and exchanges from all over the world.
- Cities that are engraved with European colonial architecture, technology and monumental art.
- Living museum of Asian multi-cultural heritage and tradition with European influence
- Image of exceptional architecture, culture and townscape due to blends of heritage influences

The exceptional multi-cultural backdrop of George Town is unique treasure of humanity with cultural wonders that have OUVs and they represent our past and present has now become popular travel destination with huge potential to impact the local economy.

Likewise, George Town is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Malaysia. It has been listed as one of the top global travel destinations by the likes of The Guardian, CNN, Los Angeles Times and Forbes. Furthermore, both Forbes and CNN have listed George Town as one of the best budget cities to retire in the world. George Town was also ranked 8th in the ECA International's list of most livable cities in Asia. Additionally, George Town is Malaysia's most important medical tourism hub and northern financial centre (Lim, 2019; Penang Convention and Exhibition Bureau, 2020). With multicultural backdrop and living traditions as well as heritage of various ethnicity and earned international accolades, George Town has gained significant attention and attraction from researchers and

tourists to uncover its past. With its exceptional historical and cultural heritage significance, it has been chosen as location to address the research gaps that exists particularly on creating an ecosystem that sustain the intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts.



Figure 1.0 Map of Malaysia and George Town, Penang (Source: Worldatlas.com, 2018)

i. Historic Cities of Melaka and George Town

This section describes more about the research location and why George Town has been chosen by looking into the development of the historical cities of Melaka and George Town in the past. These two historic cities are located along the Straits of Malacca, were inscribed together as a single ‘cultural property’ and listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO on 7 July 2008. Melaka and George Town were the centre of attractions for traders and merchants since the 15th and 18th century respectively. The multi-cultural communities that dwelled within a culturally eclectic urban landscape are important legacy. Unique multi-cultural architectures, activities as well as exchanges among the various communities were results of convergence of cultures. Historical and cultural influences were due to its former function as bustling trading ports. Melaka and George Town are the most complete surviving historic city centres on the Straits of Malacca with a multi-cultural living heritage originating from the trade routes that span from Europe to Asia (UNESCO, 2018).

Both cities comprise a rich collection of tangible architectural heritage, constructed by the European trading settlers, colonists, and migrants from various parts of the India-China trading route. These early settlers in George Town formed their own neighbourhoods or quarters, centred on certain streets or intersections close to Fort Cornwallis, which were the administrative centre, and clustered around St. George's Anglican Church on Farquhar Street. (UNESCO, 2018; George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI, 2014a; Tourism Penang, 2017).

The living heritage and tradition of Asia that coexist has created distinguish architecture, townscape and culture elements originated from various corners of the world. UNESCO has assessed both Melaka and George Town based on three outstanding universal values (OUVs); the multi-culturalism, convergence of cultures at historic ports and built environment based on various sub-cultures from China, India, Europe and the Malay Archipelago. (UNESCO, 2018; Tourism Penang, 2017)

The three OUV criteria (UNESCO, 2018) of GTWHS are: -

OUV Criteria (ii) – Both Melaka and George Town represent exceptional trading towns in Southeast Asia borne out of culture of major civilizations (Chinese, Malay, Indian and Europe), religious and trade exchanges which have left lasting imprint on its present living and built environment.

OUV Criteria (iii) – The living testimony of tangible and intangible multi-cultural heritage and traditions of Asia and Europe's colonial power are expressed through various religious and cultural practices such as languages, festivals, lifestyles, food, arts, music and costumes.

OUV Criteria (iv) – The convergence of multi-cultural influence and cultures has created remarkable urban landscape and architecture with strong colonial influence and flavor in a wide range of buildings such as religious buildings, public buildings, shops and townhouses.

These outstanding universal values (OUVs) of multi-culturalism moulded from the convergence and assimilations of various cultures and civilizations at the former historic ports cities of Melaka and George Town has made both cities as heritage tourism destination. Both cities are linked invariably to the colorful history of Malaysia, but with the World Heritage Site status, there is now more pressure on heritage stakeholders to cement their status as thriving Asian historical cities. Both cities have today become leading sites in the region for heritage conservation (Mohamed et. al., 2012). However, conserving and safeguarding the enclaves alone are inadequate. There is need to ensure that although a record number of visitors are coming after inscription, their presence does not alter the Outstanding Universal Values (OUVs) of both cities through implementation of sustainable preservation strategy; not just a document of words; there are roles and responsibilities for every stakeholder to fulfill. The heritage and tourism stakeholders in Melaka and George Town would therefore need to ensure that the best preservation and conservation practices are adopted and implemented.

ii. George Town UNESCO World Heritage Site (GTWHS)

The inscription of George Town and Melaka as UNESCO World Heritage Site on 7th July 2008 is based on its built heritage and inherited living cultural heritage that are still practiced by locals. A particularly special feature of George Town as well as Melaka is what UNESCO calls their ‘vibrant multicultural living heritage’. No other historic port towns in Melaka or Asia offer similar multi-religious communities, which is another reason George Town is so rare. George Town’s formal inscription as UNESCO World Heritage Site together with Melaka was also due to its unique architecture and cultural urban landscape without aligned anywhere else in East and Southeast Asia (Think City, n.d. c).

George Town is the capital city of Penang State and it represents the British, the first British port town and the oldest British colonial town in South East Asia (UNESCO 2009). Early settlements in Penang started in early 1700s but when Captain Francis Light took possession of the island in 1786, it began to develop and later flourished due to emigrants that have been allowed to claim lands that they have cleared which later attracted more settlers from other parts of Asia to flock to duty-

free port of George Town. Penang, Melaka and Singapore became Straits Settlements in 1826 under British administration in India and later moved to direct British rule in 1867. Straits Settlement later became part of Malayan Union in 1946 and subsequently became a state in Federation of Malays in 1948 before gaining independence in 1957 and later became Malaysia in 1963. Penang was a free port until 1969 before became one of the largest electronic manufacturing in Asia with its Free Trade Zone in Bayan Lepas (Asia Web Direct, 2017; Penang Global Tourism, 2017b).

George Town was awarded with city status prior to Malaysia's independence and continues to grow before losing its duty-free port status to Langkawi in the 1980s. These days tourism plays a huge role in Penang's economy, which has led to authorities taking huge steps to preserve its traditional heritage (Penang Global Tourism, 2017b). This city is a living, vibrant place, unlike many Worlds Heritage sites that have outlived their original purpose and are no longer inhabited. But ironically, it is this living heritage that occasionally makes George Town's uniqueness hard to appreciate, since in many ways it looks just like an ordinary town. The living heritage of George Town gives the city cultural and heritage richness and vitality that is increasingly rare apart from being key remarkable factor of the World Heritage Site. The living heritage refers to the trades and traditions including languages, rituals and performing arts such as music, songs and performances consistently practised since settlement, is one of George Town's Outstanding Universal Values (Think City, n.d.c; UNESCO, 2018). In fact, culture cannot be abridged to its tangible products, because it is continuously living and evolving which is composed not only of tangible properties, but also and especially of the essential elements representing the living culture of human communities, their evolution, and their continuing development. However, the living heritage of traditional performing arts is facing bleak future due to social cultural, economic and environmental challenges.

To sum up, the research location is selected due to its' rich tangible and vibrant intangible multicultural heritage with OUV representing our past and present must have a sustainable preservation and conservation plan to catalyse positive change to protect and conserve the sites and its cultural heritage through stakeholder

collaboration in an ecosystem while enriching the lives of local communities, and at the same time enhancing the experience of travelers that are increasing based on available unique cultural heritage attractions together with continuation of George Town's inscription into World Heritage List by UNESCO.



Figure 1.1 Map of George Town World Heritage Site (Source: Penang Global Tourism, 2018)

1.5 Growth of Heritage Tourism and the Need of Preservation of Intangible Living Heritage at GTWHS

1.5.1 Growth of Heritage Tourism and the Need for Heritage and Cultural Conservation

Rich and diverse cultural heritage of GTWHS coupled with increasing demand for culture-based tourism has led to further development of tourism business and creation of employment opportunities, elevating standards of living for the locals besides preserving its unique and rich cultural heritage. The colorful heritage and amalgamated culture are reflected in its architecture, handicrafts, traditional attire,

cultural and religious practices, music and dance; a true diversity of ethnicity. Heritage tourism must be viewed from tourism planning more holistically. Destinations and local community have identified certain features that warrants preservation and continue to transmit to future generations. People are often dedicated in protecting and caring for their own unique resources and element such as culture, language, music, crafts, dance and built heritage through tourism. In summary, heritage tourism is a broad concept that encompasses diverse elements and phenomena (Tweed & Sutherland, 2007). Besides that, heritage tourism is an engaging form of activities and processes that involves direct contacts between inhabitants, social groups, civic institutions and governments. Various researchers (Hollinshead, 1999; Yale, 1991; Zeppel & Hall, 1992; Silberberg, 1995; Fyall & Garrod, 1998; Richards, 2000; Ashworth, 2000; Prentice 2001; Munt & Mowforth, 2003; McCain & Ray, 2003; Poria et al., 2003; Jamal & Kim, 2005) that have conceptualized the cultural heritage tourism are summerized in **Appendix 1**.

The growth in heritage tourism as a new form of tourism is becoming one of the trump cards for the tourism industry of the future (Graham, 2002; National Assembly of State Arts Agency, 2004; Sellier, 2015; News Straits Times, 2019; Zuliskandar, 2017). Cultural tourists represent prime tourists market segment to tap for new money generation in a heritage destination. With their visit, cultural tourists validate the importance of the arts and heritage to the destination experience and together with their spending in the heritage city of George Town they expand the impact on residents with patronage at various arts and heritage related businesses and enterprises. According to Ismail et al. (2014), the cultural heritage tourism has emerged as a potential form of alternative tourism among both international tourists as well as Malaysian domestic travellers. Domestic and international tourist's arrival through Penang International Airport has been on the uptrend since 2008 till 2016 (Malaysia Airport Holding Berhad cited in Penang Monthly, June 2017); while in 2019, 4.16 million international and 3.39 million domestic passengers arrived at Penang International Airport (Devi et.al., 2020). The advancement of tourism as main stream of income and employment is likely to lead to fierce competition among Asian countries for tourist's dollar according to Matthew Driver, President of Mastercard for Southeast Asia (Harjani, 2015), hence the need for preservation of exceptional cultural and heritage significance of GTWHS.

Heritage tourism depends on sustainable heritage conservation and responsible travel at George Town heritage site which is endowed with indigenous and historical significance. Cultural significance of GTWHS is a unique selling proposition as it has its own significance and settings not available elsewhere in Southeast Asia. In retaining the significance of cultural heritage at tourism destination, it needs careful planning especially involving locals who have special interest and also bearer of cultural significance of places. Responsible tourism is all about heritage conservation which promises preservation of heritage assets and culture. Retaining the natural and cultural significance is the aim of heritage conservation which is critical to heritage tourism at GTWHS.

1.5.2 Threats towards Intangible Living Heritage and Its Relation with OUV

The preservation of intangible cultural asset such as norms, traditional practices, music, dance, multicultural festivals and the livelihood of the people under the criterion III of the OUV at GTWHS is crucial in retaining the inscription of George Town as World Heritage Site. Heritage attractions like traditional trades and business, artisans, performing arts, cultural and heritage practitioners at GTWHS will disappear if there is no preservation initiated (Sawhani, 2016; Mok, 2015; Ooi, Chua & Quah, 2014). Various forms of performing arts are under constant and continuous threat today, not only at GTWHS but in Malaysia and throughout other countries and regions (Japan Foundation, 2017; Ghulam-Sarwar, 2017; Press Trust of India, 2011; Sooi Beng, 2017; Sarkissian, 2017; Ching Chan, 2017; Lai Chee, 2017; Mohammad Aslom, 2017; Gorlinski, 2017; Jamaluddin, 2017; Yong, 2017; Khan et. al., 2017; Virulrak, 1999). When cultural practices become standardized, many traditional practices are abandoned due to lack of interest among the youth, irregular practices, problem of discipleship, unwillingness of old practitioners to share their skills, aging practitioners, high cost of keeping a troupe of performers due to limited performance, irregular income for practitioners, demise of multi culturalism, competition from foreign performing troupes and non-existence of promotions, , challenges of modern entertainment, advocacy and awareness, government regulations, acculturation, erosion of practices, no safeguarding initiative, absent of sponsorship, social stigma associated with performing arts, no nurturing of talents, language barrier and no

credible policy, political will and sustainable infrastructure for performing arts (Wong, 2016; Min Jyeh, 2014; Ruxyn, 2017; Nordin, 2015; Hoo, 2017; National Department of Culture and Arts, 2012 & 2018; Japan Foundation, 2017; Bujang & Samsuddin, 2013; Yousof, 2015; Michael, 2017; Khan et. al., 2017; Phui Jee, 2011; Moh, 2017; Tause Ganu, 2007; Michael, 2017; Citizen Journalist Malaysia, 2011; Ibrahim, 2011; Hoo, 2017; Ang, 2012, GTWHI, 2014a; Ramli and Richards, 2016; Malek, 2018; Olga & Errol, 2017).

Furthermore, globalization, external catalyst, cultural influences, technological advancement and environmental changes may lead to mutation of cultural heritage. The change or mutation in inherited cultural heritage could lead to changes in observable cultural expression and behavior of people (Nasuruddin, 2017a; Amadi et. al., 2016). The original cultural traits may obliterate over time due to prolong exposure to various cultural environments thus leading to acculturation and assimilation (WTO, 2004; Prasad, 1999). Globalization together with internationalization of economic performance and internal structure of cities and regions has further intensified destruction of intangible living heritage. Today, the loss of intangible cultural heritage is highly visible throughout the world and the threats of extinction to intangible cultural heritage are noticeable in Asia, Africa and Middle East (Wong, 2004).

Generations, Y, Z and millennial are no longer interested to inherit the traditional trades and occupations undertaken by baby boomers of George Town but prefer to engage in white collar occupations and staying in high rise modern skyscraper, while heritage trader, cultural practitioners and artisans are facing eviction from rented property, poor demand, low earnings, not technology oriented and recognition are among the threats towards continuous existence of intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts (Springer, 2018).

Economic development and de-urbanization as well as gentrification have also put remarkable tension on the sustainability of cultural tourism particularly the attractions of intangible living heritage of traditional performing arts, traditional trades, cultural and heritage practitioners, artisans and clan jetties in GTWHS. These scenario affects the traditional artisans, performing arts and tradespeople who sustain

the OUV by depleting the underlying value of multi-culturalism, criteria (ii) and (iii) of UNESCO inscription for GTWHS (Lee et al, 2017; Khazanah Research Institute, 2017; Che Amat, 2019). Under the Article 1 & 2 of the 1972 World Heritage Convention, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre has the right to inscribe the world heritage site in danger list if it finds that the condition of the property corresponds to at least one of the criteria described below to encourage corrective action (UNESCO, 2017b).

- a) Notable loss of historical genuineness;
- b) Major loss of cultural significance.

The recognition of intangible living heritage of traditional trades, heritage and cultural practitioners, traditional performing arts, artisans as well as clan jetties in GTWHS by UNESCO as having OUV is necessary in aiding heritage conservation at world heritage sites. Outstanding universal value (OUV) is the main instruments to strengthen the World Heritage Convention and it is interpreted as follows (ICOMOS, 2008): -

- Outstanding - World Heritage Sites that has been recognized of having OUV are exceptional, superlative and remarkable places on earth.
- Universal – world heritage properties need to be outstanding from global perspective and countries as well as heritage sites should develop relevant approaches to recognize these places.
- Value – the elements that makes property outstanding and universal is its value or the natural and/or cultural worth of a property

For any heritage sites to be considered of OUV, a property needs to meet one or more of ten criteria, conditions of integrity and authenticity as well as having an adequate system of heritage protection and management that could safeguard the heritage property (ICOMOS, 2008).

In order to attain condition of integrity and authenticity of cultural heritage with OUV, the transmission of skills of intangible living heritage from one generation to

another signifies the importance of intangible cultural heritage that contains vast amount of knowledge and skills. Components of intangible cultural heritage are often expressed through phrases, abilities, knowhow and processes associated with cultural spaces and objects or artefacts. All these are transmitted and pass down through generations as well as continuously being recreated in supporting continuity and identity of humanity. Economic and societal well-being depends entirely on safeguarding invaluable intangible cultural heritage. Involvement of society, people and individuals that bear such heritage are important in ensuring that safeguarding activities are undertaken. Principle of motivation to travel is due to the wealth of world's tradition as well as tourist's quest for new cultures and to experiencing differences in performing arts, handicrafts, rituals, local norms and food. The convergence of tourist's stimulates meeting prompts, discussion, encourages tolerance and peace through cultural cooperation (UNWTO, n.d.1).

Cultural events and practices can only represent a culture through passing of time if it is able to continuously modifying itself in parallel with the transformation that characterizing the culture itself. This is because culture is living and changeable entity. As living entity, intangible living heritage's main distinguish feature is constantly adapting itself in response to evolutions of history and social surroundings by creator and bearer of living heritage. The preservation of intangible living heritage is not equate with build heritage, hence it should be treated as object with twofold of safeguarding strategies involving preservation and constant adaptation simultaneously in cultural evolution (Lenzerini, 2011).

Heritage city of George Town bears the historical values and significance from the past which is part of the cultural tradition of society. Therefore, it is generally accepted that economic development leverage on cultural resources which can restore, revitalize local community and become catalyst for cultural development to generate economic activities through tourism, crafts, and cultural attractions. George Town's tangible cultural heritage comprise of physical artefacts of artistic creations and built heritage which are produced, maintained and transmitted inter-generationally in a society while the intangible culture that encompasses expressions, knowledge, practices and skills as well as in associated objects and cultural spaces are transmitted through generations and constantly recreated and it provides