PLACE MARKETING AND THE ANTECEDENTS OF SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVE PLACES

By: Norizan Jaafar
Institute for Retail Studies
Stirling Management School

Submitted in Fulfilment of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

February 2012
ABSTRACT

The effect of globalization is recognized as one of the impetus which is forcing places to compete globally. Place marketing approach is an alternative for places to attract their target markets. Review on past literature indicates sustainable competitive concept is a possible solution to handling problem of place competition. The gap in knowledge indicated by rare studies on sustainable competitiveness implies the need to identify factors that describe sustainable competitive places. The sustainable competitive concept is explained through the assessment of the roles and the relationships among factors of place sustainability, place competitiveness, place attachment, place satisfaction, and place loyalty. Conceptual model of sustainable competitive factors demonstrates the relationships of these factors. Quantitative technique based on samples of two medium-sized Malaysian cities provides usable data on residents’ perception of the sustainable competitive factors. Variance based Structural Equation Modeling reveals the conceptual model’s explanatory power and predictive capability to explain sustainable competitiveness of places. The findings mark the importance of place attachment in explaining sustainable competitive places. Economic and social factors are the main components of place sustainability, and quality of life is the main component of place competitiveness. The findings reveal place loyalty as the main factor that influences sustainable competitive place. Inconsistencies in the conclusions of previous studies suggest that they fail to notice the aspect of attachment as an important predictor in investigating place - human relationships. Implications of the thesis findings are given to policymakers.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this thesis is made possible through the contribution of many individuals and institutions. First, I would like to acknowledge the enormous support, motivation, and encouragement from my supervisor, Professor Christoph Teller. I am much indebted to him for his excellent guidance with the thesis. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Leigh Sparks, for his helpful and useful guidance with the thesis. My special thanks go to Sharon Deery (Institute for Retail Studies) and staffs from Division of Marketing, University of Stirling (Neil, Sharon, Lynne, and Sheila) for their hospitality and assistance during my study. I wish to thank University Malaysia Sarawak and Ministry of Higher Education for the opportunity to pursue my study. Thank you also goes to all my friends from the University of Stirling for the great friendship during my stay in Stirling. I would like to thank Professor Stephen Page from London Metropolitan University for his early assistance on the thesis. Last but not least, my sincere thanks go to my husband, Muazamir Jili for his help, patience, and support during my study; and to my children, Nurin, Hazim, Hakim, Hafid and Haziq for their love and support. I wish to thank my family; mother, father, mother in law, father in law, brothers and sisters for their prayers and encouragement. Special thanks to all who helped me along the way and are not listed here. Lastly, the journey to complete this thesis was really challenging, but I am grateful that I took this journey because I now understand the meaning of knowledge; and the purpose of my quest for further knowledge.
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