How Bloggers Use Geography to Develop Online Destination Image for Malaysian Borneo

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Abstract

This paper provides an understanding of how one single brand effectively represents two places drawing from location branding for tourist destinations. How are images and stories within blogs used to create online destination image (ODI)? A qualitative content analysis (QCA) explored a purposive sample of 25 blogs (in English) to evaluate Malaysian Borneo's image. The QCA indicates that Sabah and Sarawak are identifiable for unique experiences related to three tourism attributes: nature, adventure, and culture (NAC). Specifically, Sabah is known for its iconic orangutan and Sarawak for its wilderness. This paper contributes to the practical and theoretical development of one brand for two destinations in two ways. First, findings indicate it is possible for one brand to be shared by two competing destinations. Findings also propose bloggers use geographical characteristics to produce an induced image because descriptions and experiences focus on the physical, human-environment, and human geography. The findings of this paper provide a solid foundation for future research to explore the role played by bloggers in creating ODI based on geographical characteristics.

Keywords:

Travel blogs, Borneo, online destination image (ODI), geographical location, qualitative content analysis (QCA)

1   Introduction

The island of Borneo is a geographical location on the world map located in South East Asia and is an interesting mix of tourist-focused destinations. According to Cai (2002), the name of a destination is usually fixed by the name of its actual geographical location, as it is the foremost reference for a destination. In the tourism context, branding is a geographical issue (Pike, 2009) because a tourist destination is basically a geographical location, which is a position on earth. Although 'location' is an important aspect of destination branding and marketers aim to increase location awareness (Baker & Cameron, 2008), a gap remains with few studies focusing on geographical location as a branding strategy (Hankinson, 2001; Cai 2002; Lucarelli & Berg, 2011). Current literature focuses on branding geographical areas (related to the size of a destination) using city, state, region or country names (Gilmore, 2002; Caldwell & Freire, 2004; Anholt, 2006; Wheeler, 2007; Clifton, 2014). This paper proposes that when geographical location is depicted in the destination image and brand, it immediately links tourists' minds to the location on the world map, creating destination location awareness.

In destination branding literature, there remains a gap as the question of how one single brand can effectively represent multiple destinations without creating brand confusion is unanswered (Hankinson, 2010). Borneo is an interesting case to explore this question because it is one island shared administratively by three nations: Malaysia (the regions of Sabah and Sarawak), oil-rich Kingdom of Brunei and resources-rich Kalimantan (province of Indonesia). On this island are three countries, but four individual destination management organizations (DMOs) all of which use the word 'Borneo' in some shape and form within their branding strategy. Instead of focusing only on the country, state or city names, these DMOs utilise its location and focus promotion via the geographic name of an island, Borneo. This study focuses on Malaysian Borneo because products and experiences on offer are similar and both regions use 'Borneo' in their branding strategy to compete for tourists. Sabah, on the northern portion of Borneo, has tourism as an established pillar of the economy; products on offer range from nature, wildlife, adventure, and culture. Presently, its tourist board aims "to market position Sabah, Malaysian Borneo as the premier nature adventure destination in the world." Sarawak, located on the northwest portion of Borneo has an economy based on oil and gas exports, timber, oil palm, and tourism. Tourists are attracted to its cultural diversity as well as nature, wildlife, and adventure. The current tagline is "Sarawak, Malaysia, Borneo, where adventure lives." Here we have two Malaysian destinations using one brand, 'Borneo.' However, Borneo has neither an official tourism website nor a DMO because it is an island; a geographical location on the world map. This raises interesting questions. What is the destination image of this geographical location? And what differentiates Sabah from Sarawak? As most travellers turn to the internet to seek out destinations, this exploratory study evaluates the online destination image (ODI) of Malaysian Borneo.

ODI is a powerful form of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) which provides tourists with pre-visit image and creates desire to experience a destination (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991; Law & Xiang, 2013; Tham, Croy, & Mair, 2013; Zhou, 2014; Williams, Inversini, Ferdinand, & Buhalis, 2017). In the digital era, selection of travel destination is often influenced by ODI (Lian & Yu, 2017). Destination image can be created and distributed by various parties including DMOs, travel intermediaries, travel magazines, guidebooks, and tourists. However, a newer source of ODI is travel blogs which have a certain influence on potential tourists (Mack, Blose, & Pan, 2008). The literature indicates that tourists tend to believe in personal travel experiences shared in blogs over official tourism websites and other social media websites (No & Kim, 2015; Huertas & Marine-Roig, 2016). One rationale is travel stories shared by bloggers are more personal and authentic. Unlike other channels, bloggers do not promote and sell the tourism destinations. A travel blog is the update of personal travel experiences (Rutenbeck, 2013) which manifests bloggers' travel experiences (Pan, MacLaurin, & Crotts, 2007) and inspire readers to follow in their footsteps. Compared to other social media, a blog is more convincing because it is seen as an avenue for fact, reality and true travel stories (Boukhari & Sair, 2017). This has led to increased research into the role of blogging in tourism promotion (Mack et al., 2008; Schmallegger & Carson, 2008; Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2008; Wenger, 2008; Enoch & Grossman, 2010; Huang, Chou, & Lin, 2010; Volo, 2010; Tse & Zhang, 2013). Although the literature suggests, blogs are a new source of destination image formation (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008; Waldhör & Rind, 2008), the structure of how bloggers create ODI is as yet unknown. To do so, this study evaluates the ODI of Malaysian Borneo as generated in stories and images by bloggers. Travel blogs are a form of user-generated content (UGC) which provide important information and rich data for destination marketers to explore tourists' perceived image of a destination (Thomaz, Biz, Bettoni, Mendes-Filho, & Buhalis, 2017). Therefore, this paper addresses the research question of how a geographical location on the world map, Borneo, is portrayed as a tourist destination by bloggers. Findings could contribute to enhancing an understanding of branding strategy for geographical locations.

2 Literature Review

This section reviews ODI, travel blogs and geography of tourism in order to build the case for this exploratory study.

2.1 Online Destination Image

The destination image is defined as the associations that immediately connect tourists' minds to a destination (Hem & Iversen, 2004; Prebensen, 2007; Kastenholz, 2010; Li & Stepchenkova, 2012). Destination image serves to inform people about the location of a place, its surroundings (social, culture, people, movement), and the interaction between people and the environment. Currently, the Internet and social media are used as platforms to share and exchange information. A wide range of information is available over the Internet, including official tourism websites

(Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2006) and social media (Marine-Roig & Clavé, 2015). Destination image portrayed on the Internet and social media is referred to as ODI which is currently the most influential factor in the selection of vacation destinations. ODI determines tourists' intention to visit because information deficiency has made tourists rely heavily on online information (Pantano & Di Pietro, 2013; Molinillo, Liébana-Cabanillas, Anaya-Sánchez, & Buhalis, 2018). Besides, online information gives tourists a pre-visit image and creates tourists' desire to experience a destination. One powerful mode for spreading ODI is eWOM (Zhou, 2014). eWOM is a powerful source of the organic image. Tourists might learn about a destination unintentionally, through photos, or recommendations posted by friends and family on social media sites. Upon the development of preferences towards a destination, tourists develop the intention to visit and proceed to purposefully search for information through online sources. Hence, the induced image is formed. But, how do tourists glean destination information? Notably, there are four types of online sources including official DMO websites, travel intermediaries websites, travel magazine and guide websites, and travel blogs (No & Kim, 2015) which can contribute to the pre-visit image. These online sources are managed individually, and various images might be projected for the same destination. Travel blogs are said to have the most influence on potential tourists.

2.2   Travel Blogs

Currently, blogs are the most influential and uncontrollable form of UGC known to marketers (Dennhardt, 2013). According to No and Kim (2015), and, Huertas and Marine-Roig (2016), tourists tend to believe in personal travel experiences read in blogs over official tourism and other social media websites. For that reason, bloggers have replaced official DMOs and professional reviewers (Viglia, Minazzi, & Buhalis, 2016). The blog is a weblog, personal journal, or diary updated by individuals on a regular basis used to share personal opinions and experiences (Rutenbeck, 2013). The difference between a blog and other social media is the depth of the content (Boukhari & Sair, 2017). Social media shares and exchanges information from tourists' objective review, whereas blogging shares stories based on blogger's personal and subjective view during the travel. Blogs provide information that allows readers a virtual experience and inspires readers to follow in their footsteps. Traditional WOM succeeds because people listen to their friends, family and are strongly convinced by their recommendations. In the digital world, the blog is regarded as an eWOM (Pan *et al.*, 2007) because a blog is a two-way interactive social platform to share and exchange information (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Compared to other social media, the blog is more convincing because it is seen as an avenue for a fact, reality and true travel stories (Boukhari & Sair, 2017). As argued by Mack *et al.* (2008), blogs may not as credible as traditional WOM, but certainly, influence tourists. Indeed, the literature agrees that blogs are a new source of destination image formation (Schmallegger & Carson, 2008; Waldhör & Rind, 2008) which indicates that bloggers are the image creators (Tseng, Wu, Morrison, Zhang, & Chen, 2015). Boukhari and Sair (2017) have conceptualized the relationship between travel blog and bloggers' perceived image, or a complex image, and suggest the need to

develop a theoretical framework for the two concepts. Although the literature explains 'why' blogs are reliable, as yet unanswered is 'how' bloggers generate a reliable ODI.

Bloggers are story tellers, information sharers, and trip advisors. They travel and document events they encountered from planning to the end of the trip. Through blogs, they share their stories to inspire others to pursue similar experiences. According to Hollenbaugh (2010), the main characteristic of a blog is self-disclosure, where bloggers express their personal and subjective view based on their past experiences. The blog is a social platform where two ways interaction happens. Bloggers share their experience of places of attractions, accommodation, hospitality, budgets, and other functional cues in written text, photos, video, audio, and vlogs based on their judgment of the trip. Bloggers generate ODI through story-telling and images as representations of the destination. Readers receive and respond to blog posts (Chen, Shang, & Li, 2014), and either an organic or induced image forms in the mind of the potential tourist. To understand why ODI in the blogosphere is so enticing, this study draws upon the geography of tourism. This paper suggests bloggers unintentionally structure their experiences against a geographical representation of tourism attributes. This form of ODI is attractive to the curious, human mind and answers key questions related to where what, and why.

2.3   Geography of Tourism

Geography is "the study of places and the relationship between people and their environments" (National Geographic, 2017). Physical geography focuses on natural features in the natural environment, whereas human geography emphases the study of people and their societies, cultures, economies (Lew, Hall, & Timothy, 2008). Geography also explores the interactions between humans and the environment. As an experiential product, tourism products and experiences, as well as destination image are defined by geography (Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2007; Herstein, 2011). This section aims to unravel an understanding of how geography facilitates a clearer representation of ODI.

Although geography was used to provide place descriptions (the where and what), it evolved into the science of understanding places by asking why, and seeking to explain aspects of place, from physical features that shape the environment, to the way people behave, and the connection between environment and people (Nelson, 2017). In sum, geography seeks to answer three questions: where what, and why. Where deals with place location, and asks where it is? What deals with place description, and asks what is it like? Why deals with place transformation, and asks why does it exist in this way?

Bloggers and their readers are naturally curious. Bloggers have a desire to learn about the environment they visit and people surrounding them. As bloggers explore, they describe *where* places are, *what* places are like, and *why* they exist. Bloggers document their exploration from physical features of the natural environment (location, surrounding environments, animals, and flora), to how people behave in different places

(i.e. people, culture, tradition, and belief), against the backdrop of geographic information. In tourism, geography plays a very important role because physical and human geography are key tourism attributes (Lew, 2014). In a tourism context, physical geography includes natural attractions consisting of visible features, such as mountains, weather, flora and fauna, seas and oceans; whereas human geography includes cultural aspects of a destination, consisting social activities, culture, and tradition. The interactions between human and environment offer an opportunity for the place to change and develop. In other words, human-environment geography refers to man-made tourism attributes. To better illustrate the relationship between geography and tourism, Table 1 is created to depict this geographical representation of tourism attributes.

Table 1: Geographical Representation of Tourism Attributes

Geography	Focus	Tourism Attributes
Physical	Natural Environments	Mountains, weather/climate, volcanoes, natural disasters, flora and fauna, seas, oceans
Human	Behavior and how people react to the physical characteristics	Social, culture, tradition
Human-environment	Physical and enrichment activities	Adventure activities, enrichment activities

Source: (Wong, Kler & Sondoh, 2017)

Table 1 provides a clear link between geography and tourism attributes and provides a useful structure to describe Borneo by explaining where, why and what. Could this be the structure that enhances ODI for Malaysian Borneo as generated by bloggers?

Indeed, geography is the answer to this question because every aspect of a tourist destination including destination image is derived from the location's geography (Kotler & Gertner, 2002; Pedersen, 2004). Despite a noticeable link between geography and branding, theoretical discussions on the geographical dimension of branding are rare (Pike, 2009; 2011; Kavaratzis & Kalandides, 2015). One rationale is that most literature has disregarded the fact that tourism is derived from geography itself (San Eugenio Vela, 2013). Geography is a key factor for tourist destinations because it defines its products, experiences, and images. Thus, research on tourist destination branding has called upon the need to understand the influence of geography on destination branding and image (Hanna & Rowley, 2011; San Eugenio Vela, 2013).

Also, there remains a gap in the literature on brand Borneo, with Markwell (2001) identifying tourism attributes of Borneo as consisting of *nature*, *adventure*, and *culture (NAC)*. He proposed *nature* as the main attribute of Borneo which affords the opportunity for *adventure* and *culture*. Markwell proposed the 'orangutan' as the main

attribute of Borneo known to the Western tourists. *Nature* offers the opportunity to 'trek' and 'explore' jungles and wilderness and leads to the opportunity for *adventure*. Also, *nature* consisted of lands previously inhabited by indigenous groups which lead to another attribute of Borneo known as *culture*. However, no link to geographical characteristics is found in the tourism literature which explains the structure of ODI, a gap this paper attempts to address. NAC, as proposed by Markwell (2001), is used as the main category coding frame for data reduction of travel blog content using qualitative content analysis (QCA) which is presented next.

3   Research Method

Due to the exploratory nature of the research question, this paper assumes an interpretive position; hence the research design is qualitative and seeks to understand an issue in-depth. This paper used QCA to analyse English-speaking travel related blogs for Borneo because secondary data provides rich and useful data for exploratory research (Tussyadiah, 2014). QCA summarizes any form of text data into key themes or categories, provides a rich description of social phenomena to support new theories, model development, or to validate existing theories (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009; Mayring, 2014). The method is appropriate for exploratory research as it serves the functions of identifying blog content and allows comparisons and conclusions to be made. At the onset, this paper gathered 42 blogs through an exhaustive purposively chosen keyword search of 'Borneo travel blog,' 'Borneo tourism blog,' 'Borneo destination blog,' and 'Borneo trip blog' in Google and Bing from September 2016 to January 2017. Based on the criteria for purposive sampling, 17 blogs with scarce content on Borneo were eliminated, leaving a sample of 25 blogs (in English) with rich content and sufficient data to create themes saved into .pdf files. All 25 bloggers had travelled to either both or one region of Malaysian Borneo. QCA evaluated both textual and visual blog content.

4   Data Analysis and Findings

The ODI of Borneo was identified through the QCA on blog content posted by English-speaking bloggers who visited Malaysian Borneo. The QCA produced tables of top three most frequently used words and shared photos for each main category under the NAC coding frame. Each blog was analysed separately, but data were coded and incorporated into three main categories found in all blogs, enabling this paper to identify the overall image portrayed by bloggers. These categories are then compared to geographical characteristics presented in Table 1. The next section defines each main and subcategory using extracts focusing on Borneo in general, as well as Sabah and Sarawak.

4.1   Research Constructs

Nature was the dominant category in all blog content with ample references to the inherent features of Borneo (plants, animals, and landscapes). Three subcategories were: (a) wildlife; (b) biodiversity/complex ecosystem; and (c) unique landscapes. In sum, the tourism attributes in this category refer to elements within physical geography. Within nature, wildlife is a key element. One of the main attributes is the "orangutan" for example:

"wild orangutans swinging in the treetop canopies" ["Bemused Backpacker"]

"You simply can't come to Borneo without trying to catch a glimpse at one of its most famous residents: the orangutan" ["Roaming Around The World"]

"It's almost a given that a trip to Borneo incites an insatiable need to see orangutans" ["Border Of Adventure"]

Within biodiversity/complex ecosystem, content described the richness and variety of life in Borneo's ecosystem:

"a land of rich and abundant wildlife, massive caves, and cultures hidden within a vast and largely unexplored jungle" ["Kyle Hammons"]

"I came to Borneo for the jungles and the wildlife" ["Travelling Ted"]

"Borneo is one of the most bio diverse regions on Earth and has some amazing endemic species" ["Wild World Travel"]

The last subcategory is unique landscapes which represent the visible features of Borneo. In bloggers' words:

"Borneo, a place I've only ever seen on BBC documentaries about tribes or jungles or endangered wildlife" ["All Things Go"]

"Stepping away from the depths of the jungle filled with noisy insects to a calm aquamarine sea was heavenly, and I thought to myself, this is how beaches in Borneo are like- straight from the jungle" ["Vickeblueyes"]

Additionally, all bloggers also described nature for Sabah and Sarawak through all three subcategories. For Sabah, "pristine ecosystem," "undisturbed primary rainforest," "endemic species," "imposing mountain tops," "unspoiled islands, "Mount Kinabalu," and "Kinabatangan River." For Sarawak, "wilderness," "unexplored," "impenetrable jungle," "stunning national parks," "uncultivated," "beautiful coastline," "caves," "stalagmites," "stalactites," "isolated," "Mount Mulu," and "Bako."

Adventure is the result of human-environment interactions and landscape, where humans utilize physical environments to create tourist attractions. This tourism attribute refers to human-environment geography. Adventure denotes human-made activities, exploration and experiences focused on Borneo:

"Truly is one of the great adventure destinations on the planet" ["The Planet D"]

"if you're an adventurous person then Borneo will take a special place in your heart" ["The Poor Explorer"]

Adventure had three subcategories: (a) hard adventure; (b) soft adventure; and (c) exploration. This category was found on all blogs. The hard adventure includes physically demanding sports or activities with an element of risk with content describing "SCUBA diving" and "mountain climbing." Soft adventure is a form of physical activity, less dangerous and is often a combination of physical and enriching activities. Content referred to "jungle trekking," "animal spotting," "birdwatching," "canopy walking," and "hiking." Exploration refers to pure enriching activities where tourists travel into unfamiliar areas to learn about the destination. For example, "see wildlife in their natural habitat" ["Goats on the Road"] and "cultures hid within a vast and largely unexplored jungle" ["Kyle Hammons"].

The adventure was visible content for both Sabah and Sarawak. Hard adventure in Sabah as "diving," "night dive," "highest peak," and "Mount Kinabalu climbing." Soft adventure as "spotting wildlife," "Kinabatangan river cruise," "canopy walk," "hiking," "night walk," "snorkeling," and "orangutan feeding." Examples for exploration "learned to make rice from scratch" and "turtle incubation." In contrast, Sarawak's hard adventure included "pinnacle climb"; and soft adventure included "trekking," "overnight in longhouses," "orangutan feeding," "kayaking," "canopy walk,"" caving," and "bat exodus." Exploration activities such as "museum of Sarawak," "Kuching," "peaceful," "various ethnic groups," "mask making," and "cooking in the jungle."

Culture refers to human characteristics and the manifestations of collective groups of people. The tourism attributes in this category refer to elements of human geography. Culture can emerge from nature as human characteristics are influenced by their physical environments.

"Only after time and my own experiences there did I learn the incredible vast culture and identity that the people of Borneo have" ["Vickeblueyes"]

"Sarawak and Sabah are two of the most culturally diverse states in South East Asia" ["Bemused Backpacker"]

Two subcategories were: (a) indigenous tribes; and (b) arts, traditions, and religion. Although not all bloggers had this category in their blog content, Borneo conjures up the image of "indigenous tribes" and "home to the head hunters." Indigenous tribes refer to the native communities and peoples whose identity and history continues and remains strong to this day. One indigenous tribe mentioned is the "Iban," known as the "undiscovered head hunting tribes with blowpipes" while some references made to other indigenous communities. Arts, traditions, and religion refer to the cultural beliefs and the way of living. Interestingly, content on culture for Sabah referred only to cultural harmony. Generous content describes culture for Sarawak: "tribesmen," "indigenous people," and "local tribes." For arts, tradition and religion within culture, Sarawak is described by bloggers as "tribal Borneo", "warrior shield", "strong sense of

community", "tribal tradition", "blowpipe", "Muslim Festival", "traditional longhouses", "Brooke", "cat statues", "*Iban* costume", "*Iban* dance", "mosque", and "temple".

4.1.1 Frequency of Category: Text

This paper did not count the frequency of words used in the blog contents to identify the main categories. Instead, words and meanings that represent the key research question were selected, analysed, and coded. The following table shows the counting of codes for each category. This paper analysed 25 blogs resulting in a total of 60 codes for Borneo, 85 codes for Sabah, and 71 codes for Sarawak. Table 2 depicts the number of codes per the main category.

Table 2: Category Frequency of Text Data

Destination	Main Categories		
	Nature	Adventure	Culture
Borneo	33	14	13
Sabah	73	9	3
Sarawak	40	12	19
Total (%)	146 (67.6%)	35 (16.2%)	35 (16.2%)

From Table 2, it is evident that *nature* is the most frequently used word for both Borneo, Sabah and Sarawak with a total of 146 codes out of 216. For *nature*, 50% of the codes represented Sabah, and another half almost equally represented Borneo and Sarawak. This shows that *nature* is the most discussed attribute reflecting the key image, especially for Sabah. The other two main categories were equally represented, which shows that *adventure* and *culture* are similarly discussed by bloggers as images of Borneo. However, these two main categories were not equally discussed for Sabah and Sarawak. Specifically, only nine codes of *adventure* and three codes of *culture* were produced for Sabah and 12 codes of *adventure* and 19 codes of *culture* for Sarawak. This shows that the image of Sabah is dominated by *nature*, followed by a significant amount of *adventure* and *culture*. Sarawak's image, on the other hand, is also dominated by *nature*. Compared to Sabah, Sarawak's *culture* is more highly discussed than *adventure*.

4.1.2 Frequency of Category: Image

There was a total of 711 photos of Borneo, Sabah, and Sarawak in 25 blogs. However, this paper did not count the frequency of photos used in the blogs to identify the main categories. Instead, photos were interpreted, and meanings related to the key research question were analysed and coded. The following table shows the counting of codes for photos posted by bloggers in the blogs. Table 3 shows the numbers of codes per the main category.

Table 3: Category Frequency of Visual Data

Destination	Main Categories		
	Nature	Adventure	Culture
Borneo	24	3	4
Sabah	28	6	1
Sarawak	29	7	9
Total (%)	81 (73.0%)	16 (14.4%)	14 (12.6%)

From Table 3, it is evident that *nature*-based photos are most frequently posted for Borneo, Sabah, and Sarawak with a total of 81 codes out of 111. The frequency of photos representing the general image is followed by *adventure* and *culture*, which is similar to the word frequency described by bloggers. For *nature*, the codes for Borneo, Sabah, and Sarawak are almost equally represented. The result also shows that *nature* is the most visibly presented attribute for Borneo, Sabah, and Sarawak. Similar to the results of words frequency, the other two main categories were equally represented, indicating *adventure* and *culture* are almost equally projected as the images of Borneo. However, these two attributes were not equally presented for Sabah and Sarawak visually. Specifically, there were six codes of *adventure* and one code for the *culture* of Sabah and seven codes of *adventure* and nine codes of *culture* for Sarawak. Here, the image of Sabah is dominated by *nature*, followed by *adventure* and *culture*. On the other hand, Sarawak's image is dominated by *nature*, followed by *culture* and *adventure*. Compared to Sabah's image, all three categories of Sarawak have a strong presence in content.

4.2   QCA on Blogs

Overall, Table 2 and 3 show a high congruence level of ODI between Sabah and Sarawak consisting NAC with *nature* as the domain ODI. For the theme *nature*, bloggers portrayed a total of 101 codes (82.11%) for Sabah and 69 codes (59.48%) for Sarawak. For the theme *adventure*, 15 codes (12.2%) for Sabah were identified in blog contents; and 19 codes (16.38%) for Sarawak. For the theme *culture*, four codes (3.25%) for Sabah were identified in blog contents; and 28 codes (24.14%) for Sarawak. However, this study needed specific answers, such as tourism attributes or specific features representing each region which a quantitative content analysis shown in Table 2 and three does not provide. Therefore, a QCA on the blog content was conducted and is presented as follows:

Table 4: QCA on Blogs

ODI (Geography)	Sabah	Sarawak
Nature (Physical)	a) Orangutans, other wildlife, rainforest, unique landscapes	a) Orangutans, other wildlife, rainforest, unique landscapes Bako National Park

	Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre	Mulu National Park
	Kinabatangan River	Gunung Gading National Park
	Danum Valley	Semenggoh Orangutan
	Kinabalu National Park	Rehabilitation Centre
	Sipadan Island	Semenggoh Nature Reserve
	Turtle Island (Selingan Island)	Niah National Park
	Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary	Bario National Park
	Borneo Sun Bear Conservation Center	
	Mabul Island	
	Tunku Abdul Rahman National Park (TARP)	
	Gomantong Cave in Sandakan	
Adventure (Human-environment)	a) Mountain climbing Mount Kinabalu b) Scuba diving Sipadan Island Mabul Island c) Wildlife spotting, jungle trekking, conservation activities Kinabatangan River Danum Valley Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre Turtle Island Labuk Bay Proboscis Monkey Sanctuary Sun Bear Conservatory Centre Kinabalu National Park d) Snorkelling TARP	a) Pinnacle climbing, wildlife spotting, jungle trekking, conservation activities Mulu National Park Bako National Park Niah National Park Gunung Gading National Park Bario National Park
Culture (Human)	a) Floating Mosque, friendly locals Kota Kinabalu	a) Strong presence of Chinese Kuching b) *Berawan*, *Penan*, *Iban* people Mulu

Based on Table 4, although bloggers portrayed similar ODI for Sabah and Sarawak consisting NAC, each region is identifiable for unique experiences. For *nature*, both Sabah and Sarawak are portrayed as the orangutan, wildlife, and rainforest. Albeit similar, Sabah is known for a wide range of places of attraction for orangutan viewing; and Sarawak is known for its wilderness found mostly in its national parks. Under *adventure*, Sabah is portrayed with a wide range of adventure activities ranging from mountain climbing, scuba diving, wildlife spotting, jungle trekking, and conservation

activities; and Sarawak is known for pinnacle climbing, wildlife spotting, jungle trekking, and conservation activities in its national parks. In term of *culture*, Sabah is a melting pot filled with friendly locals whereas Sarawak is strong in tradition and cultural preservation.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

This paper evaluated the ODI for Malaysian Borneo as projected by 25 travel blogs (in English) to explore how one single brand can effectively represent multiple destinations without creating brand confusion. Findings are indicating an ODI steeped in NAC based on tourism attributes. The image is the stimulus that connects tourists' minds to a destination (Hem & Iversen, 2004; Kastenholz, 2010; Li & Stepchenkova, 2012). But, it has been suggested that branding strategy should focus on geographical location (Hankinson, 2001; Cai, 2002; Lucarelli & Berg, 2011) because this provides a clear association and builds location awareness. The island of Borneo provided a unique backdrop to explore this idea specifically its ODI as projected by travel blogs. Malaysian Borneo consists of two separate regions, both promoting tourism using 'Borneo' as part of their branding strategy.

Findings have identified the ODI for brand Borneo, and here, four interesting propositions are put forward. First, the ODI is based on the tourism attributes of NAC identified by Markwell (2001) with iconic wildlife and wilderness associated with each region. Secondly, the NAC tourism attributes fall under geographical characteristics of physical (nature), human-environment (adventure), and human geography (culture). Branding strategy for geographical locations could utilise this link as it provides a clear understanding of the structure behind ODI as generated in travel blogs. To facilitate an understanding of how geography facilitates a clearer representation of ODI, Table 1 showed a clear link between three geographical characteristics and corresponding tourism attributes. This paper suggests creating an ODI based on this structure explains the where, why, and what for a destination, thus enhancing the induced image projected to potential tourists.

Thirdly, this paper suggests that bloggers are unofficial ODI creators. This supports the view of Viglia *et al.* (2016), who claimed that bloggers had replaced official DMOs as a new credible source of tourist information. Bloggers have structured their experiences against a geographical representation of tourism attributes. Indeed, through online UGC, potential tourists will shape their experiences and form either organic or induced image (Tanti & Buhalis, 2017). Especially for UGC based on personal travel experiences, this study shows how bloggers have structured their experiences against a geographical representation of tourism attributes. In this manner, the NAC image projects mainly geographical information to tourists' minds and also influences them to link Borneo to these tourism attributes. Fourthly, this paper proposes that ODI similarity generated by bloggers can assist tourist destinations that use the same brand to avoid brand confusion. In particular, this paper provides an answer to Hankinson's (2010) question

of how two destinations use a single brand without creating brand confusion. Findings indicate it is possible for one brand to be shared by two competing destinations as the ODI projects different geographical facets of the brand.

Bloggers are a trusted source of eWOM due to the depth of content, interaction with readers and authentic portrayal of travel experiences. This paper suggests that ODI is no longer only under the purview of official DMOs, and that travel blogger generate a well-structured ODI based on geography which makes it easier to associate a destination with its location. Findings suggest brand 'Borneo' conjures up desirability to visit because bloggers tie descriptions to its geography and guide potential tourists' awareness of the attributes of the destination. Finally, this study provides empirical evidence for destination branding literature by identifying how a geographical location, "Borneo" is used to promote the destination brand for two destinations with highly similar products and experiences on offer. Although Sabah and Sarawak both utilize brand 'Borneo,' each destination has its own ODI and is projected by bloggers as different facets of Borneo. Therefore, this study proposes that promoting geographical location in a destination brand may immediately enhance location awareness. Moreover, this creates associations that link tourists' minds to the image of the destination if the ODI is well-structured and accessible, as is the case in travel blogs. Figure 1 illustrates an understanding of how bloggers have become ODI creators and how they created ODI extending the conceptual paper by Boukhari and Sair (2017).
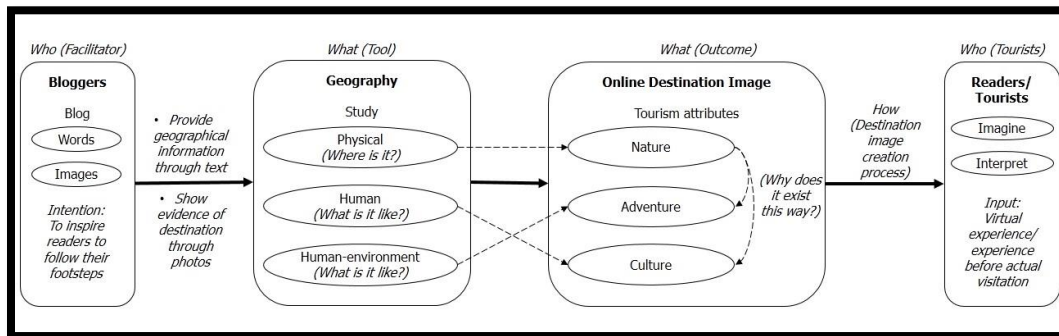

Figure 1: How Bloggers Use Geography to Create Online Destination Image for Borneo

Sources: Adapted from Hollenbaugh (2010), Chen, Shang, & Li (2014), and Boukhari & Sair (2017)

Geography is a powerful component in tourism, complementing the efforts of the influential bloggers to create and distribute ODI. Theoretically, the image should contain geographical data that informs its location and creates a desire to visit. This paper questioned the use of geographical location branding for Borneo and the role of bloggers as creators and distributors of ODI. Placing Borneo as a tourist destination on the world map is facilitated by a geographically structured ODI generated by travel bloggers.

This paper presents findings from a qualitative exploratory study. Although the results are not generalizable, they provide a solid foundation for future research. Specifically, the novelty of this paper has provided knowledge for future work to explore the geography of tourism, especially how geographical characteristics can contribute to the branding process regarding defining authentic ODIs. Limitations of this study are its purposive sampling and contextual findings, but future work could test the findings on a larger sample. Also, future study should examine the ODI for Malaysian Borneo, or a larger scale, Borneo, from both English-speaking and non-English-speaking markets.

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