

A Design Strategic to Promoting Social Dimension Through Hawker Experience in Hawker Environment: A Case Study in Bukit Mertajam Old Town, Penang

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Hawker environment is a casual eating out place where serves various street food. The hawker environment provides an opportunity for people to taste local traditional dishes with a cheap price & meet each other casually (Backhaus, 2020). Consequently, Penang, known as the Pearl of the Orient, is a famous food destination among Malaysians and tourists. Its popularities are based on the existence of hawker culture that reflects the composition and the lifestyle of local people. Penang hawker culture is playing a social role in the communities. However, there no previous studies are analyzing the relationship between hawker environment and hawker experience to promote social dimension in communities. Therefore, this study aims to formulate a new design criterion for quality hawker environment in public space and promoting social dimension in Bukit Mertajam old town. Based on qualitative approach, this study involved a content analysis of 10 narratives from Bukit Mertajam local people. The results are expected to identify the hawker experience & hawker spaces that able to embrace the hawker environment to promote social dimension. The study contributes to combine different body of knowledge and contribute design framework for promoting social dimension in public space through hawker environment. Future research can conduct quantitative research to investigate people behavior in hawker environment.

Keywords: *Hawker Setting, Hawker Experience, Hawker Environment, Social Dimension, Bukit Mertajam*

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the introduction about the hawker environment and eating out experience in public space to promote social dimension will be explained together with the definition as well as the research background and the problem statement. The research gap, aim, question and the purposed of this project will be discussed in this part. The significant of the study and the research structure will also be explained in this chapter.

1.1 Background Study

Hawker environment is a casual eating out place where serves various street food. The hawker environment provides an opportunity for people to taste local traditional dishes with a cheap price & meet each other casually (Backhaus, 2020). Experience in the local hawker food and beverage also become one of the travelling motivations of tourists (Ozcelik & Akova, 2021).

Hawker environment as a part of the public space and it have become a place maker in the urban space (Cifci et al., 2021). The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimated 2.5 billion people around the world consume hawker

food per day. Furthermore, hawker culture became a source of livelihoods to many hawkers and their families, particularly in the urban area (Abrahale et al., 2019). In Malaysia, the open and vibrant hawker setting such as night markets, food trucks, food courts, coffee shops and Mamak's stall shaped Malaysia's hawker food as a national scene. However, hawker experience changes from place to place (Backhaus, 2020). It creates various eating experience based on the various hawker settings and built-forms.

In this sense, hawker experience enables us to experience the hawker environment's flavors, which might be considered a way to know the surrounding context & culture of a hawker setting. This allows people to involve deeply in the relationship between hawker food and hawker experience and simultaneously shorten the gap of people meeting each other in hawker environment. Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG 11), titled "sustainable cities and communities" has been introduced to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. This concept aims promote social dimensions with dealing with social problems by increasing economic productivity improving human capital and reducing inequality to drive development outcome towards sustainability. In this approach, hawker environment is considered as a community eating space and has become a social gathering space that allow social sustainability in the urban context.

This study examines the hawker settings situation in Bukit Mertajam, an old town in mainland Penang, Malaysia in order to analyze the hawker setting, hawker experience and subsequently the space quality of hawker environment. The geography of a hawker setting does not only consist of the hawkers making their appearance and doing business along the streets but also of their customer experience. The hawker environment is more than just a physical space in urban area, it encompasses also social dimension in the community (Backhaus, 2020).

1.2 Problem Statement

Penang, known as the Pearl of the Orient, is a famous food destination among Malaysians and tourists. Its popularities are based on the existence of hawker culture that reflects the composition and the lifestyle of local people. There is an amalgamation of various culinary cultures, including Malay, Chinese, Indian, Mamak and Nyonya (Karim & Halim, 2014). In this sense, Penang hawker culture is playing an important

social role in the communities. Therefore, the study will analyze the hawker setting and hawker experience in one of the old towns in Penang, which is Bukit Mertajam.

Selling and consuming hawker food has a long tradition in urban areas of Asia. Knowing that hawker settings are located in gray area between formality and informality in which many hawkers pursue their business. It is surprising that many hawkers' settings functions quite well and this has gone on for many years (Backhaus, 2020). The reasons behind are much related to the hawker experience whether people will continually visit the hawker setting to achieve hawker sustainability. From the view of social sustainability, hawker environment is a place where people have eating out practices, performing unregulated talk and therefore the potential for people connections to form a social connectivity (Ferreira et al., 2021). However, there no previous studies are analyzing the relationship between hawker environment and hawker experience to promote social dimension in communities.

1.3 Research Aim and Objective

This study aims to formulate a design criterion for quality hawker environment in public space and promoting social dimension in Bukit Mertajam old town.

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- i. To identify the various type of hawker settings
- ii. To identify the relationship between hawker experience and human social behavior

Research Questions

The research questions related to this study are as follows:

Main RQ: How to promote social dimension through hawker environment in public space?

Sub RQ 1: What is the type of hawker setting?

Sub RQ 2: What are the elements of hawker eating experience that can promote social dimension?

Definition of Terms

Hawker: A vendor / street vendor that sells inexpensive food.

Hawker Setting: The location and the type of stall for hawkers to do their business.

Hawker Environment: The surrounding and condition of hawker setting.

Hawker Experience: The feeling and emotion of people while in a hawker environment

Social Dimension: A set of factors link to the interrelationships between people and life in society.

Scope of Study

This research is carried out primarily to identify the role of hawker environment not only as an outdoor eating place, but place which facilitate connection in urban lives and generate the potential for communities to develop through hawker experience. The study will be focus on an old town of Penang, which is Bukit Mertajam to identify the existing hawker setting and the relationship between hawker experiences and social dimension aspect.

Significance of the Study

By understanding the varied ways in which hawker experience and consumers co-create hawker environment, it may be possible to increase their potential to promote social dimension in the community.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the theoretical foundation for a better understanding of what are the types of hawkers setting in public area and the hawker experience elements. Then looks into the relationship of hawker experience elements in various hawker setting to improve the hawker space quality.

2.1 Hawker Setting in public area

Backhaus (2020) states that selling and consuming street food has a long tradition in urban areas of Asia (Backhaus, 2020). While the preparation of food, the appropriation of space and the sale itself follow certain rules, some of them are informal and not always in line with government regulations. However, the study only focuses on the functioning of hawker place as a traditional place to meet and eat by considering government regulation. Therefore, my study will further study on hawker space regulation through Undang-Undang Kecil Penjaja MBSP.

Hanser (2021) highlights that good food in the city shape new street hawker regulation. He emphasis the ideas about ‘good’ food expands beyond the ‘gourmet’ to embrace health, environment, economy, cultural diversity and creativity, as well as community building, local identity and visions of vibrant, shared public spaces (Hanser, 2021). However, this study only focuses on creating consensus around new, less restrictive regulation of food vending on streets and sidewalks. My study will focus on providing new hawker space design criteria in public space.

Flock (2016) states that daily contestation of public order, security agencies reluctantly open flexible windows of business opportunities to hawkers. It highlights hawker zones and periods of control, ‘soft’ approaches, and categories of ethnic belonging influence everyday governance and accessibility of public space (Flock & Breitung, 2016). However, this study only focuses on the dynamic changes in public space and provides functioning public space. My study will further explore on creating spaces for hawker in public spaces.

Ferreira (2021) states that coffee shops have been described as ‘third places; in urban lives separated from the work and home, providing places for people to meet, relax and develop connections (Ferreira et al., 2021). However, this study only focuses on coffee shops that can promote social dimension. Therefore, my study will further investigate on the hawker spaces that can promote social dimension.

De Souza Bispo (2020) highlights that food trucks become popular compare to traditional hawkers. There are 5 innovations presented by food trucks in the eating out practice: gourmetization, vehicle customization, the use of social media to communicate with customers, specific forms of food trucks management, and the way of using the spaces (de Souza Bispo & Almeida, 2020). However, this study only focuses on food trucks elements. Therefore, my study will cover the spaces for hawker design spaces for food trucks and traditional hawkers.

Type of hawker settings			
Food Truck	Push cart along the street	Coffee shop	Food court

Figure 1. Type of hawker settings

2.2 Hawker Experience Elements

Mohamad (2021) highlights that Penang is a popular destination among both local and international visitors where its hawker food is a major attraction. The factors influencing tourist behavioral intention in revisiting Penang hawker food are food hygiene, food price, food quality and service quality (Mohamad et al., 2021). However, this study only focuses on tourism. My study will focus on local people and the hawker's behavioral perspective. Cifci (2021) states that international travelers' hawker experiences and the popularity of the meal-sharing economy platforms are rapidly growing. It identifies 5 components that embrace the hawker experience: a local guide's attributes, perceived food authenticity, local culture, perceived hygiene and cleanliness (Cifci et al., 2021). However, this study only focuses on these 5 components of hawker experiences. Therefore, my study will be using the 5 components to develop a hawker space quality in public space.

Ozcelik (2021) highlights the effect of hawker experience on behavioral intention and the relationship in between (Ozcelik & Akova, 2021). However, the study only shows the positive relationship between hawker experience and behavioral intention. Therefore, my study will further develop the relationship between hawker experience and spaces criteria. Kim (2019) analyses the inscription and prescription of people behavior in public spaces through hawker eating activities. First, it highlights the inscription process from the social interests connected with eating to the physical objects in public space. Second, it shows the different relation dynamics between various actors in the prescription for eating. Last, it highlights eating prescriptions in each case respond to the other activities (Kim, 2019). However, this study only focuses on the diverse public issues. Therefore, my study will further develop people behavior to create hawker space criteria in public space.

Di Matteo (2021) states that street food (hawker) events have rapidly been recognized as a pivotal place marker for attracting visitors from within and beyond the regional boundaries. The visitors' perceptions tend to strengthen if they find the event in memorable atmosphere and non-routine food specialties (Di Matteo, 2021). However, this study only focuses on visitors' behaviors. Therefore, my study will further develop on the hawker spaces criteria in public space.

Elements of hawker experiences based on human behaviors in hawker environment						
Food hygiene	Food price	Food quality	Service quality	Local culture	Surrounding cleanliness	Food taste

Figure 2. Elements of hawker experiences based on human behaviors in hawker environment

2.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has identified that the various type of hawker setting in public space such as food truck, coffee shop and push cart. Based on the review of the element of hawker experience, we identify the behavior intention to revisiting hawker environment due to the food hygiene, food price, food quality and local culture. It has also identified that the hawker environment is immensely important to act as a third place in urban lives. These behavior intentions act as the driver for people to getting each other to in hawker environment to achieve social sustainability in communities.

3. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the methods used to collect and analyze the data for the research. It is divided into four main sessions. The first section explains the approach of this research which is a qualitative approach method. The second section elaborated the interview method involving the selection of interviewees and the interview protocol. While, the third section discussed the case study method and listed down the type of hawker setting in Bukit Mertajam. The final section summarized the chapter.

3.1 Research Approach

The research approach adopted for this research is a qualitative approach to formulate the possible strategies to achieve the research aim. Qualitative approach: The study used a qualitative approach, firstly by exploring through interviews, the hawker background, hawker pattern, hawker food experience, social interaction and hawker setting satisfaction. Specifically, in-depth interviews with local hawkers and local customers in Bukit Mertajam. The selection of the hawkers

is based on different hawker setting, while the customers selection is based on different occupation. Secondly, a comparative analysis of various hawker settings was conducted to analyze the most comfortable hawker setting. Information on these practices was supported through visual survey.

3.2 Interview Method

To answer research question 2, an interview method was employed. The purpose of the interviews is to find out the relationship between hawker experience and social dimension in Bukit Mertajam. It was revealed from the literature review that hawker experience effecting human behavior. Therefore, it was hoped that the interviews data would confirm such a claim. Hence, a comparative analysis of different hawker setting was conducted.

3.2.1 Selection of interviewees

The interviewees were among the people who stay in Bukit Mertajam:

- Hawkers
- Customers

The selection of the hawkers is based on the various type of hawker settings, while the selection of customers is based on the different occupation and income group. The Authority officer is selected based on the health department. Interviews across these 2 parties will help in gaining different opinions on the hawker experiences. Table 1 below shows the five hawkers from different hawker settings were invited. Table 2 below shows five customers from different income group were also invited.

Table 1. Selected Hawker from different hawker settings for interview






Photo	Hawker Setting	Hawker Food
	Shed Hawker at the road alley	Cendol
	Coffee Shop Hawker	Jawa Noodle, Curry Noodle & Drinks
	Cart Hawker by the street	Fruits and Drinks
	Food Court Hawker	Crab Meat Noodle
	Food Truck Hawker by the street	Rojak

Table 2. Selected Customers for Interview

Customer Name	Age	Occupation
Lim Siak Peng	52	Wireman Worker
Tan Say Kiang	52	House Wife
Lee Pei Yuin	26	Admin
Lim Jin Yuan	16	Secondary School Student
Meow Gaik Tiang	70	House Wife

3.2.2 Interview Protocol






The interviews conducted was open-ended with questions prepared in advanced. The interview questions were customized to suit the interviewees. The interviews for both selected hawkers and customers were conducted face-to-face on the different hawker settings. The interview timing was on the spot after seeking for their available timing, usually after 3pm which is the non-peak hour. While the customer interview sessions were conducted after they finish their meal at the hawker settings. Each interview session took around 30 minutes. Lastly, the local authority member interview was conducted

through phone call. The three set of interview questions based on interviewee groups.

3.3 Case Study Method

To achieve research question 1, a comparative analysis of case studies was conducted to identify the types of hawker settings. In order to understand the quality of hawker environment in current hawker settings, it was deemed important to compare the hawker spaces. The case study scope was limit down into hawker settings in Bukit Mertajam only. Therefore, the selected case studies are as follows:

Table 3. Type of Hawker Settings in Bukit Mertajam

Photo	Hawker Setting
	Shed Hawker at the road alley
	Coffee Shop Hawker at the shop lot
	Cart Hawker at the road side
	Food Court Hawker
	Food Truck Hawker at the road side

Therefore, based on the photo of hawker settings, the comparative analysis of case studies were studies on the follow elements:

- Hawker Spaces Quality
- Hawker Build Form

Findings from the case studies were expected to be corroborate with the secondary data from the literatures. Comparison analysis of the hawker settings was made in a table format. The objective for this comparison was to learn about the best hawker setting available and to understand what was the spaces in the hawker settings.

3.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the research methods used for the research namely, interview method and case study method. The research approach was derived from the research design framework and expended after the literature

review. The qualitative method of data collection through interviews was recorded and analyze. Once the data was reviewed, hawker space planning aspects were determined to be integrated into a matrix table as shown in Figure 3. In the next chapter, the data is analyzed and the results are presented with the aim to propose quality hawker environment in public space.



Figure 3. Hawker Space Planning Aspects

4. FINDING: Hawker Experience and Human Behavior in Hawker Settings

This chapter presents and discussed the results collected for the research. This study explored the possible interactive strategies in the planning of a hawker environment. Based on the findings, some strategies were identified to be used to promote social dimension in the hawker environment. Before determining which strategies that can be used, one must understand the human behavior and hawker experience in the hawker environment. These findings were used to formula a matrix table for the space planning aspects which then acts as a guideline for the architectural program of a hawker environment. From the space planning aspects, strategies that are suitable for social engagement could be determined. There are four main sections in this chapter. The first section presents the results from the interviews that revealed the hawker experience and human behavior. The second section outlines the results from the comparative analysis of hawker settings to understand the

hawker spaces and build forms. The third section discusses all results and followed by chapter summary.

4.1 Interview Results: Hawker Experience and Human Behavior in Hawker Settings

Generally, people like to visit hawker settings due to its casual eating environment. The reason behind requires understanding on the hawker background, hawker pattern, food experience, social interaction and hawker setting satisfaction. Hawkers and customers have their own behavior and experiences in the hawker environments.

4.1.1 Hawker Background

Hawker culture has a long history in the society. Hawkers choose to start up the hawker stall business due to its low start-up money and to sustain their life. Mostly, the hawkers have low education level and lack of special skills. The hawker business allows the hawkers to become their own boss and manage their business time flexibility. Besides, some hawker business actually inherits from their family's old generation. Some young people will take over their family hawker business and continue the hawker food recipes. In Bukit Mertajam Old Town, this is the earliest place for the hawker culture to happen due to the strategic location of railway station, temples, markets around. Hawker culture happens around the old town during 19s and sustain until today.

4.1.2 Hawker Pattern

Nowadays, a hawker needs to attend a health course and get vaccinated for the hawker license. Then the hawker only can start-up the hawker business. In Bukit Mertajam, the hawker license can be applied through the local authority, Masjid Bandaraya Seberang Perai (MBSP) and is yearly renewal. Besides, the authority has no longer provide street hawker license as all the hawkers shall operate their business in a proper space such as coffee shop or food court. The intention is to ensure food hygiene. However, the food truck hawkers are recommended as a new way for mobile hawkers. The hawker setting at during Ramadan bazaar and night market is still allow as it is considered as a temporary hawker event.

Hawker business hours are usually separated into morning, afternoon and night shifts. It depends on the hawker's preference. The main hawking activities for hawkers in the hawker setting are food preparation and serving. Some

hawkers will prepare food off site, for example home before they come to the hawker setting, while some hawkers will bring the ingredients to hawker settings and start the food preparation activities. Therefore, an individual washing space and cooking space for them is needed for each hawker. At the same time, the hawkers will arrange the tables and chairs. The food serving activities will start when they receive orders. In Bukit Mertajam, most hawkers will buy their ingredients from the wet market in Bukit Mertajam Town. From the hawker pattern, we know hawkers need space for food preparation. In the eating space, the tables and chairs are non-permanently fix on the floor for some flexibility.

4.1.3 Casual Eating Experience

From the interviews, the main reason people like to visit the hawker setting is the hawker food taste, a taste that generates people memories. These memories include their family members, friends and the moments in the hawker environments. A young girl who works at Kuala Lumpur said that she will visit her favorite hawker food every time she travels back to Bukit Mertajam. Second, the price of the hawker food is usually cheaper than a restaurant food. Workers will get their cheap and good taste lunch at the hawker settings. The food court and coffee shop hawker settings also become a resting area for workers during lunch hour.

Third, hawker settings become an outdoor eating place for most of the people. A house wife, who normally will not cook during the weekend, will eat at the hawker settings with her family members. She also mentioned that her children like to eat outside as well. Last, hawker settings allow people to have a quick meal as the food is served fast. In the early morning, the wireman worker with his colleague will grab their quick meal at the hawker setting before start work.

4.1.4 Social Interaction

In the hawker settings, the social interaction happens everywhere such as food ordering, asking for empty chairs and chit-chatting between same group of customers. It happens between customers and customers, hawkers and hawkers, and customers and hawkers. The people involved in the hawker settings are from any income group and ages. A house wife will let her kids to order the food by themselves as a kick start to interact with people. It can train their communication skill and courageous. Besides, we can also meet our friends incidentally as the hawker setting is a

community dining place. A young girl mentioned that she will has a meal with her friends at hawker settings as well to enjoy the hawker food taste together.

A secondary student mentioned that he will hang out with friends after the curriculum activities. An old lady mentioned that she will stay at hawker settings in the early morning to have a talk with her friends after brough some groceries. From the hawkers and hawkers' interaction happens when they are looking over each other stall. They will share ingredients such as noodles when one of them is not enough.

4.1.5 Hawker Setting Satisfaction

From the hawker point of views, water and electrical supplies are the main criteria for hawking activities. They use water for to wash ingredients, cooking and washing dishes, while electrical supplies is mainly for lighting during night shift hawker and exhaust fan to extract the smoke outside the hawker environment. Besides, the space for food preparation area such as individual sink is required for each hawker. The cold storage area is also needed for ingredients that need to be always freeze or cool. The cold storage can be centralized as hawkers are willing to share to reduce the stall rental. The common stall design is actually the cart type as it is the cheap enough to start up a hawker business. However, hawkers would prefer a permanent built-in stall type as they feel that it is easy to clean the hawker environment.

From the customer point of views, a clean, well ventilated and shaded hawker setting allows them to experience the hawker space comfortably. The unventilated with smoke and oily hawker environment especially in a coffee shop, will lead the customers to just leave the area of the finish eating. They would only visit the coffee shop for the food taste and not staying any longer after finish their meal. Besides, the flexible arrangement of the tables and chairs allows to accommodate different scale of customers. Some secondary students will come in a larger group to have their meal after curriculum activities. Therefore, they usually will join few tables together. The accessibility of hawker settings in term of available parking is convenient as there are feel parking spot around the town area.

In term of cleanliness, the hawker setting toilet usually is not clean enough and not well ventilated. Furthermore, there are still some adults and elderly have less awareness as they smoke and spill at the hawker settings.

Both hawkers and customers feel that most of the hawker settings are only for eating purposes. They recognized that with some attraction events or nodes nearly will attract more people come to visit the hawker settings. People can just walk over from the nodes to the hawker settings to enjoy the hawker food taste. For example, the famous hawker setting in Bukit Mertajam Town is the one located beside the Pek Kong Temple, a Chinese Temple and along the alley. The idea is the surrounding attraction will add more value to the hawker setting nearby.

Main RQ: How to promote social dimension through hawker experience in hawker environment?						
Informants: 3 hawkers, 5 customers within hawker environment						
Research Questions	Deductive Codes	Strategy of Inquiry	Inductive Codes			Emerging Themes
			Coding	Category	Final Theme	
Sub RQ 2: What are relationship between hawker experience and human behaviour in various hawker settings?	Hawker Background	In-depth Interviews	Hawker Background: Reason to operate hawker business Hawker License Hawker Requirement	Space Quality Hawker Culture	Strategy to promote social dimension in hawker environment shall include space quality and hawker culture through Theme 1: Hawker Experience Theme 2: Human Behavior	Lack of control in online food delivery services Cashless payment not convenient to elderly
	Hawker Pattern		Hawker Pattern: Stall Start Up Food Preparation Business Hour			
	Hawker Food Experience		Casual Eating Experience: Food Taste Food Price Outside Eating Place Quick Meal			
	Social Interaction		Social Interaction: People Involve People Relationship Social Activities			
	Hawker Setting Satisfaction		Hawker Setting Satisfaction: Services Operation Space Stall Type Safety Cleanliness Surrounding Context Attraction			

Figure 4. Thematic Analysis Matrix (TAM) on Relationship between hawker experience and human behavior in hawker settings

4.2 Case Study Results: Various Hawker Settings Space Quality in Bukit Mertajam

In Bukit Mertajam Old Town, there are five hawker settings shown in Figure 4.2, such as shed hawker, coffee shop hawker, cart hawker, food court hawker and food truck hawker. Figure 4.3 shows the comparison of these hawker settings in term of hawker build form and operation space quality.



Figure 5. Hawker Settings in Bukit Mertajam Old Town

Hawker Setting	Hawker Build Form	Spaces Quality				
		Surrounding Context & Attraction	Accessibility	Hawker Layout	Cleanliness	Air Quality
A. Shed Hawker at the road alley	2-storey high metal roof shed for the hawking activities underneath.	Located beside a Chinese Temple, where allow people the having their hawker food after praying.	Pedestrian friendly with low traffic road	Flexible open layout with temporary stalls & movable cart stalls as the space will be use for Hungry Ghost Festival in August every year.	Clean environment	Well natural ventilated space
B. Coffee Shop Hawker at the shot lot	A shop lot kind of hawker which only occupies 1-storey high.	Opposite a mini market allow people to have their hawker food after buying the groceries.	Pedestrian friendly with a proper shop lot corridor	Flexible layout with movable cart stalls located at the shot lot corridor. The stalls will be kept safe behind the roller shutter after business hour.	Clean environment	Less natural ventilation as 2 or 3 side of the space is blocking by the walls. The eating area usually hot if no proper mechanical ventilation provided.
C. Cart Hawker at the road side	An individual setting at the roadside with its own extended shading device.	Located in front of an old cinema. Usually attract people who want to have a quick meal/snack.	Pedestrian friendly with low traffic road and allow drive thru	Temporary layout with limited eating space.	Less clean due to beside the road with drainage system.	Expose the whether
D. Food Court Hawker	2-storey high metal roof shed for the hawking activities underneath.	It has a stage to allow some events to happen there.	Less pedestrian friendly due to no proper pedestrian crossing at the main road in front	Fix Cart Stall as hawkers will only lock their stall with metal chain-link	Clean environment	Open ventilated space
E. Food Truck Hawker by the street	An individual setting at the roadside with its own extended shading device.	Located beside a railway and opposite a high school. Usually attract people who want to have a quick meal/snack.	Not pedestrian friendly as it just allocates beside the main road. Usually, people will drive and park beside the road to get the food.	Temporary layout with limited eating space.	Less clean due to beside a high traffic road with dust	Expose the whether

Figure 6. Comparison of Hawker Settings in Bukit Mertajam Town

5. DISCUSSION: Hawker Environment Space Planning

This section discussed the results to meet the aim of the research: to formulate design strategies for quality hawker environment in public space and promoting social dimension in Bukit Mertajam old town. Firstly, data collected from the interview method show the relationship of eating experience and human behavior in hawker settings through the understanding of hawker background, hawker pattern, food experience, social interaction and hawker setting satisfaction. There is a need to understand this relationship while designing a hawker environment setting in public space. Then the hawker environment setting creates a quality hawker space for communal dining and interactive hang out place in Bukit Mertajam.

Secondly data collected from the case study method compared different hawker setting in term of hawker build form and operation space quality. The best hawker setting build form and space quality is the one has proper shed with well natural ventilation. Besides, a flexible layout that engage with different scale of customer and events is a must in a hawker setting. The interesting surrounding contexts or people attraction node such as temple, marker and festival space are an additional to engage people visiting hawker settings easily. Pedestrian accessibility is important when people can easily walk in and out to engage people from every direction. Therefore, a slow traffic control should be taken note into the design. Lastly, cleanliness of hawker settings can be achieved when the hawker stall is allocated at a proper land lot, as long as not just beside a street and drainage.

Findings from the research have helped to determine what are the type of hawker settings and what are the quality of space can be integrated into the hawker center. The selected space is identify based on the research findings derived from the case studies and respondent's preference. The proposed matrix table for space planning aspects is shown in Figure 7.

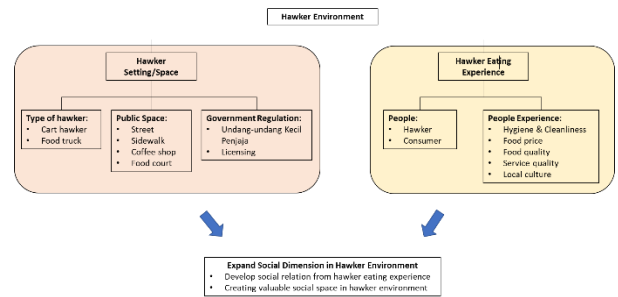


Figure 7 Conceptual framework of the relationship between hawker setting and hawker eating experience

6. CONCLUSION: Hawker Environment as a Social Catalyst

The findings from this study conclude that the elements of hawker experience are the criteria in hawker space planning to promote social dimension. In conclusion, the hawker environment can be a significant social catalyst in an old town with appropriate space planning, considering the hawker experience elements identified in this study.

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