

Historical and cultural similarities to sister city collaboration efforts between Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) and Johor Bahru (Malaysia)

Kemiripan sejarah dan budaya menuju upaya kerjasama sister city antara Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) dan Johor Bahru (Malaysia)

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Abstract

Sister city cooperation based on common historical and cultural ties between Tanjungpinang, Indonesia and Johor Bahru, Malaysia provides a strategic opportunity to enhance socio-cultural interaction and encourage tourism. This research aims to find opportunities for sister city collaboration and the types of activities that are included in the scope of cooperation between the two cities. The method used in this research is descriptive with a qualitative approach by collecting various data, including official government documents, local demographic statistics, socio-cultural characteristics, economic situation, development plans, and public and government views regarding social and development activities. To analyze the phenomena that occur, the theory of liberalism is used which states that a country can achieve political and economic goals through cooperation and promoting individual freedom and social justice. The results of this study indicate that the collaboration can be an effective platform for the exchange of knowledge, practices and resources between the two cities, and can also expand the network of partners involved in inclusive education. The study concluded that there are still several challenges such as limited resources, lack of public awareness and understanding, and structural barriers that can affect the effectiveness of implementing this collaborative effort. Thus, an active and collaborative role is needed from state and non-state actors to achieve sustainable economic and tourism goals.

Keywords: collaborative efforts; historical and cultural similarities; sustainable economy and tourism

Abstrak

Kerjasama kota kembar yang didasarkan pada ikatan sejarah dan budaya yang sama antara Tanjungpinang, Indonesia, dan Johor Bahru, Malaysia, memberikan peluang strategis untuk meningkatkan interaksi sosial budaya dan mendorong pariwisata. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan peluang kolaborasi sister city dan kegiatan dalam lingkup kerja sama kedua kota. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini yakni deskriptif dengan pendekatan kualitatif dengan mengumpulkan berbagai data, termasuk dokumen resmi pemerintah, statistik demografis lokal, karakteristik sosial budaya, situasi ekonomi, rencana pembangunan, pandangan publik serta pemerintah mengenai kegiatan sosial dan pembangunan. Kemudian untuk menganalisis fenomena yang terjadi digunakan teori liberalisme yang menyatakan bahwa suatu negara dapat mencapai tujuan politik dan ekonomi melalui kerjasama dan mempromosikan kebebasan individu serta keadilan sosial. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kolaborasi tersebut dapat menjadi platform yang efektif untuk pertukaran pengetahuan, praktik, dan sumber daya antara kedua kota, dan juga dapat memperluas jaringan mitra yang terlibat dalam pendidikan inklusif. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa masih terdapat beberapa tantangan seperti keterbatasan sumber daya, kurangnya kesadaran dan pemahaman masyarakat, serta hambatan struktural yang dapat mempengaruhi efektivitas pelaksanaan upaya kolaboratif ini. Sehingga diperlukan peran aktif dan kolaboratif dari aktor negara dan non-negara untuk mencapai tujuan ekonomi dan pariwisata yang berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: upaya kerjasama; kemiripan sejarah dan budaya; ekonomi dan pariwisata berkelanjutan

Introduction

Building international networks across world cities is a response to decentralization, globalization and development demands (Al Syahrin et al. 2020). Local governments can create international networks through processes of globalization and decentralization in an effort to meet local demands and become more competitive worldwide (Qing et al. 2020). Local governments have access to global resources and can participate in international affairs. Inter-city collaboration through these networks, which began construction in rich countries in the 1950s, eventually expanded to industrial cities around the world and cities in poor countries. This phenomenon weakens the power differential between local and national governments. Sister city networks are international networks in which two or more communities in at least two countries collaborate over a long period of time through sharing resources, technology and knowledge, skills and education (Sitinjak et al. 2022). This kind of collaboration is widespread and first developed out of good relations between two cities drawn by their proximity to each other and the historical, cultural, and economic traits they shared (Han et al. 2022). This partnership later grew to include cooperation between cities in several areas of development, driven by mutual interests and benefits to improve the quality of life in the cities concerned. Since the 1980s, Indonesia as a developing country has formed sister city agreements to expand its network throughout the world. However, less than 15% of these partnerships are successful and the majority experience difficulties. In fact, more than 65% of them are not involved in any activity.

There are now 47 sister city partnerships among 33 provincial cities. Thus, accelerating economic growth between these cities is the main goal of the sister city program, both in Indonesia and cities in developing countries (Affandi et al. 2021). The idea of learning from sister cities has not been given much weight by the Indonesian government. Another criticism of the sister city concept is that many partnerships produce economic benefits for the city. However, operating this program requires funding from the city. In this case, the cities of Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) and Johor Baru (Malaysia) in the past were the centers of government for the Kingdom of Johor Riau and community interaction in the two cities still continues until today. In fact, official visits from the regional government in the two cities are often carried out. However, until now there has been no formal agreement for collaboration between these two cities, which are in different countries. The historical and cultural potential in cities from different countries currently only exists in Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) and Johor Bahru (Malaysia). Therefore, a study of the collaborative efforts of the two cities is very necessary (Putri 2022).

Thus, on May 2, 2017, to advance Malay culture, the Tanjungpinang City Government (Riau Islands Province) partnered with the Johor Cultural Council (Malaysia). H. Lis Darmansyah, the mayor of Tanjungpinang at the time, claimed that the traditional arts of Malaysia and the Riau Islands functioned as a unifying force for intergenerational relations. It is important to grow the relationships that have existed from the past to the present. He also said that the Malay cognate group is connected by history with innate Malay culture including customs, language and religion. The Mayor of Tanjungpinang hopes that the Johor Cultural Council's visit will inspire new enthusiasm that will strengthen family and business ties. The Tanjungpinang City Government will provide Malaysia with access to expand investment, because the people of Johor and the Riau Islands are allied from the past of the Malay Kingdom, even though they are separated today. However, culture and language still have similarities today. Johor Bahru cultural administrators also traced the history of the Malay Kingdom. They also visited Penyengat Island, where evidence of the Malay Kingdom exists (Akurat.co 2018).

Tanjungpinang sees future opportunities through historical sites as an allied area with sister city cooperation. So it is necessary to hold a meeting between Johor and Tanjungpinang entrepreneurs to establish this cooperation. In reality, this collaboration already exists, albeit unofficially as many Johorese own companies in Tanjungpinang, and vice versa, Tanjungpinang residents marry individuals from Johor, and vice versa, and there are deep emotional ties between the Malays of Tanjungpinang, the Riau Archipelago and Malaysia. The most basic thing starts from the history of the Riau-Johor-Lingga-Pahang Kingdom which still shows relations to Penyengat, Tanjungpinang and Lingga Islands as proof, to inspire future generations and encourage the spirit of Malay solidarity which needs to be developed further. The development of collaborative efforts was seen on February 14, 2019 through the signing of the Deputy Mayor of Tanjungpinang, Hj. Rahma, S.IP., with the Indonesian Consulate

General for Johor Bahru, Agus Nugroho, as well as observations by the Mayor of Tanjungpinang, H. Syahrul, S.Pd., Dato' Bandar Johor Bahru, and YB Dato' Amran bin Abdul Rahman. This partnership has the potential to significantly improve Tanjungpinang City's tourism industry. It is estimated that the City of Tanjungpinang and the Johor Bahru tourism industry will benefit significantly from working together from the same cultural background (Prokepri 2019).

On 12 March, 2020, in Johor Bahru, the Governor of the Riau Islands, paid a courtesy visit to Johor State, to discuss various topics. In each area, collaboration can be further strengthened. Many areas may not have been improved to encourage the Riau Islands and Johor economy, borders, socio-culture and economy. To make the collaboration a success, both parties can focus on potential collaboration that is easy to realize (low-hanging fruit) first which will later be followed by various other collaborations. This was carried out on 14 March, 2020 (Pemprov Kepri 2020). On August 9, 2021, the Indonesian Consulate General in Johor Bahru, Malaysia, promoted MSMEs in Malaysia and Indonesia to collaborate more, especially those near the border such as the Riau Islands Province. The Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia, Johor Bahru Sunarko, conveyed this through a written statement in Business to Business Opportunities also known as Kepri-Malaysia Business Opportunities which was carried out remotely. The ongoing pandemic will not stop MSME development initiatives, on the contrary, it will only prevent MSME actors from becoming more sophisticated and involved.

Both countries continue to develop and implement steps in the Riau Islands business community and its surroundings to improve cooperative relations with partners, potential partners and buyers in Malaysia. Apart from having similar historical and cultural backgrounds with Johor Bahru, Tanjungpinang City also has a strategic location and is an attractive area for investment. To support the investment climate, the City of Tanjungpinang has a Free Trade Zone (FTZ) Enterprise Agency (BP) which is tasked with bringing in investors. Based on information from the Indonesian Investment Data Information Center (PIDII), the potential and investment opportunities of Tanjungpinang City are in the economy and tourism sector. Due to the interconnection and increasing complexity of human existence in a global society, international relations are needed to prevent a country from closing its doors to the outside world. Culture has long been said to play an important role in determining investment and international trade and sister city relations are a useful tool for promoting deeper cultural and economic ties between countries. The focus is on integrated strategies that take into account various trade and cultural practices in conjunction with exclusive strategies that adhere to dubious commercial or cultural goals.

Strong local leadership also supports this scenario. Meanwhile, the process of partnership growth and connection that does not directly impact partnership performance requires shared interests and community involvement. The previous research above can provide an overview of the appropriate pattern for the establishment of cooperation between the cities of Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) and Johor Bahru (Malaysia) which have a historical and cultural background and a different geographical location from previous research. In the current period, international interactions have grown more complicated. In international relations, non-state actors also play an important role in interactions besides state players. In accordance with this, studying international relations today includes studying economic and cultural issues. Current low-politics international relations topics include issues of trade cooperation, international trade, bilateral trade, cultural exchange, and arts promotion, all of which are run by the central government and its components (Wirastomo & Lituhayu 2020). This research looks at the cooperation efforts of sister city Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) with Johor Bahru (Malaysia) which is included in the theme of social history and international relations. The findings of this research will increase knowledge about urban management and help local governments in making plans to manage their cities through sister city alliances. So the problem formulation that can be drawn from this has the common thread, namely how are the sister cities of Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) collaborating with Johor Bahru (Malaysia).

Research Method

This research aims to find opportunities for sister city collaboration and the types of activities that are included in the scope of cooperation between the two states. The method used in this research is descriptive with a qualitative approach. This method is appropriate to use to analyze the phenomena that occur by collecting various data including official government documents, local demographic statistics,

socio-cultural characteristics, economic situation, development plans, community and government views regarding social and development activities in the last ten years. It focuses research on the cooperation efforts of sister city Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) with Johor Bahru (Malaysia).

Data were collected from official government documents, local demographic statistics (National Statistics Agency), socio-cultural characteristics, economic situation, development plans (RENSTRA Tanjungpinang City), public and government views regarding social and development activities from print and electronic media (Pemprov Kepri and Pro Kepri) which stated that the arrival of Johor Bahru Government officials to Tanjungpinang City was inventoried to analyze cooperation efforts. Meanwhile, historical and cultural data from primary sources (Malay manuscripts) and secondary sources (journals) in the two cities were analyzed and then connected to the current context to see the potential for historical and cultural tourism. Analysis of collaborative efforts and the potential of the historical and cultural heritage of the two cities is needed to realize cooperation in economic, socio-cultural and tourism aspects (Gil 2020).

Results and Discussion

The cities of Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) and Johor Bahru (Malaysia) are the centers of government of the Kingdom of Johor Riau. In the current context, these two cities are like sister cities, but in different countries. Efforts to connect two cities in different locations in the country to create cultural connections in the form of cooperation between local governments in the two cities have never been carried out, even though regional government leaders between the two cities have visited each other and discussed cooperation. In Indonesia, a concrete and mutually beneficial form of cooperation between two cities from different countries, which are called sister cities, is regulated in the circular letter of the Minister of Home Affairs No. 193/1652/PUOD on April 26 1993. This Circular regulates the procedures for establishing cooperative relationships.

Sister city concept

A sister city is a collaboration between cities in two countries which aims to encourage economic growth, promote national culture, and establish formal cooperation in various other fields (Liu & Hu 2018). The formation of the sister city refers to the similarity of demographics, interests and problems between the two cities, which is often the main reason. It is hoped that this collaboration will create a mutually beneficial relationship and strengthen ties between the two cities and countries. In addition, this collaboration creates wider regional government collaboration between countries. Sister city cooperation is carried out in several fields, including education, tourism, culture and trade. In implementing sister city cooperation, paradiplomacy plays a role in carrying out foreign relations with foreign parties in order to achieve interests (Putri 2022). Sister city collaboration is a form of implementation of sub-national actors or paradiplomacy, namely regional governments. Cooperation with regions abroad is still snowballing because cooperation begins thematically and is followed up with cooperation in other fields. Sister city cooperation contributes to additional foreign exchange which influences the level of development of a region (Han et al. 2022). In Article 4 of the Minister of Home Affairs Regulation no. 03 of 2008 it emphasizes that before forming a sister city partnership, local governments need to fulfill the following requirements: *First*, diplomatic relations, namely the collaborating region already has diplomatic relations with Indonesia. *Second*, do not open representative offices abroad but only meetings between regional representatives are held by delegations. *Third*, local government authorities are responsible for implementing sister city cooperation agreements. *Fourth*, it does not lead to interference in its internal affairs. *Fifth*, it is in accordance with development policies and plans.

Safitri et al. (2023) found there are several cities that have failed to carry out sister city cooperation as follows: first, between the City of Fremantle, Australia and the City of Padang. Second, the Malaysia Technology Development Cooperation with the Kampar Regency government. Third, between the City of Seoul (South Korea) and the City of Bandung. Fourth, the cities of Bandung and Barunschweig (Germany). Fifth, Bandung City with Cuenca City (Ecuador). Sixth, Bogor City and Tainan City, Taiwan. Seventh, between Malang City and Fuqing City, China. Eighth, the City of Yogyakarta which carried out collaborations from 2003-2012 with a total of 11 collaborations; however, only six collaborations

continued and the rest did not work, namely Ismalia Province (Arab Republic of Egypt), California State (United States), Benhard (Malaysia), Tyrol Province (Republic of Austria) and Chugcheongnam-Do Province (South Korea). Ninth, sister city cooperation between the city of Medan and the city of Penang (Malaysia). Tenth, Central Java Province has four sister city cooperations, namely with Queensland (Australia), Fujian (China), Chungcheongbuk-Do (South Korea) and Siem Reap Eleventh, sister city collaboration between the city of Surabaya and the city of Guangzhou, Semarang City and the city of Brisbane, Australia, in 1993-2005. Twelfth, the city of Semarang is also collaborating with the city of Beihai (China). Thirteenth, the city of Baubau is collaborating with the city of Seoul (South Korea), sister city with the city of Mossel Bay (South Africa). Fourteenth, collaboration between the government of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) Province and Kujaswko-pomorskie (Poland).

Relations between governments other than states have a more complex pattern than a fixed pattern whereby patterns in international relations referred to as conflict and cooperation can involve other actors, for example sub-national governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), MNCs, and International Regimes. The presence of paradiplomacy explains a response by city governments in responding to globalization, as well as the state's inability to protect its subordinate entities in facing the globalization process. Sister Cities International explains that apart from the use of the term “sister city” there is the use of the term “friendship city” which has a different meaning. Because, in general, it is less formal and is a form of initial stage in establishing city-level relations. If the relationship becomes stronger and the partner city is sure that it wants to have a long-term relationship, then it will be called a sister city. Cities that carry out international cooperation in sister cities are obliged to carry out securitization of an issue, for example overcoming natural disasters, providing education, health services and alleviating poverty which can threaten human security. So that city governments have the opportunity to act as subunits in the international system, participating by providing solutions to various human security problems, especially when the state is unable to carry out good penetration in the city wherein internal factors are due to lack of communication, city government human resources are still low, and central government and community participation does not support sister city collaboration. The external factors are because the policies of the two cities have changed, the influence of global level policies, and the COVID-19 pandemic (Haughton & Han 2022).

Sister city implementation model

The concept of “sister city” or “twinning” is a dynamic concept and has continued to change since its inception. Based on his research in Australia, O'Toole identified three stages of development that indicated a shift in focus from friendly relations toward economic development. The first stage is the Associative Phase which focuses on friendship and cultural exchange. The second stage is the Reciprocatative Phase which involves educational exchange and community involvement. The final stage is the Commercial Exchange Phase which focuses on economic development. These three stages are interconnected and often overlap. To establish relationships with cities that will become sister city partners, there are several principles that can be used as a reference, although these principles may differ from one city to another. These principles are: (1) Community-oriented: there is active leadership, as well as involvement and support from the community through existing organizations or businesses to build or maintain existing relationships. (2) Strategic benefits: short-term and long-term benefits derived from relationships exceed the public costs that must be incurred to establish or maintain existing relationships. (3) Exclusivity & Proximity: does not have sister city relationships with other cities in the same country or locations that are close to potential sister city partner locations. (4) Political stability: stable political conditions in the country where the sister city is located, in accordance with the results of announcements from the central government (Putra et al. 2022).

To formalize the sister city agreement, there are several stages that must be gone through (Putra et al. 2022). The first thing that must be done starts with scoping, namely assessing regional potential through exchanging information between the two parties. If both parties agree to cooperate, they will sign a Letter of Intent (LoI). After that, the City Government prepares a Cooperation Plan or Terms of Reference, and a Plan of Action. The Cooperation Plan and LoI are then submitted to the Regional People's Representative Council (DPRD) for approval. After obtaining DPRD approval, the City Government submits a request for cooperation facilitation to the Minister of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, which is used to discuss the Draft MoU with various related ministries. This MoU is then prepared by the Directorate

General of Law and International Treaties of the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and discussed in an inter-ministerial forum. Once approved, the draft MoU is then communicated with potential sister city partners to obtain responses. Then, after the MoU is approved by the foreign partner, the draft MoU is submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs and the City Government for submission of a Power of Attorney (Rudiany et al. 2021).

Once the Power of Attorney is issued, City Government officials can sign the MoU (Atikah et al. 2023). The signed MoU is then stored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a State Document. After the MoU is signed, the agreed programs can begin to be implemented. The City Government forms a work team to carry out the agreed activities and allocate the necessary funds. Evaluation of the implementation of cooperation is carried out periodically by the Ministry of Home Affairs and other relevant Ministries/Institutions to determine the achievements and results of cooperation. Furthermore, the City Government then submits a report to the Ministry of Home Affairs regarding the implementation of the cooperation program in accordance with the format contained in the Monitoring and Evaluation Instrument. The results of this evaluation are used as a basis for consideration for further “sister city” plans with other city partners abroad (Tristofa & Tham 2022).

The Directorate General of Spatial Planning of the Ministry of Public Works and Public Housing of the Republic of Indonesia, without mentioning several benefits that can be obtained from Sister City collaboration: Creation of opportunities to exchange knowledge and experience related to development management in the areas of cooperation; Encourage the growth and active role of regional/city governments, communities and the private sector; Strengthen friendship between the governments and communities of both parties; Create opportunities for cultural exchange in order to enrich regional culture.

The main reason that resulted in urgency in the implementation of Sister City Cooperation in Indonesia was the failure to fulfill the rights and obligations of the sister city cooperation parties, thus having a major impact on the implementation of sister city cooperation (Yian & Fang 2021). This reason is the basis for other reasons, namely the MoU material is not complete and clear, the cooperation period is 5 years and is extended automatically without evaluation, the lack of a role for the joint working committee formed by the parties, and the absence of formal rules regarding authority in regions in carrying out international cooperation. These reasons ultimately have an impact on the lack of significant results from sister city cooperation that are felt by the community, the burden on the government budget to finance sister city cooperation, and cooperation materials not being implemented optimally (Erdem 2023).

It turns out that sister city cooperation in Indonesia still cannot be implemented optimally. There are several factors that hinder the implementation of the agreed sister city cooperation, namely: (1) Communication is hampered, both between ministries and regional governments, as well as regional governments and overseas regional governments; (2) Differences in perceptions from both parties caused by the local government’s lack of foreign language skills; (3) Implementation of the MoU is sometimes hampered due to the busy schedule of each government, so that the programs that have been launched do not run optimally; (4) There is no firm time limit in the Cooperation MoU, which means that the parties are not pressured to implement the cooperation; (5) Lack of or even almost no supervision (monitoring) and evaluation in the implementation of cooperation; (6) Bureaucratic procedures which tend to be convoluted and lengthy; (7) The nomenclature is different in each country which sometimes makes it confusing for governments who want to sign the MoU. Thus it is necessary to find out how a sister city collaboration does not run smoothly or fails, namely by the stages in the implementation of sister city (Mahyuni & Syahrin 2021). If one of these stages is not implemented, then the collaboration fails and the actors create a vision and mission as well as objectives for implementing the collaboration and how to manage the collaboration. Sub-state actors look for partners that suit the goals they want to achieve (Zhang & Liu 2024). Previous collaborations are reviewed and evaluated (Ham & Kim 2020) and there are negotiations with partners about the activities to be implemented and an agreement or MoU created. There is then implementation of the collaboration that has been carried out and each activity will be evaluated (Fitriana & Rubiyanto 2022).

Johor Bahru (Malaysia)-Tanjungpinang (Riau Islands) relations: Historical flashback

The relationship between Johor (Malaysia)–Tanjungpinang (Riau Islands) begins with the historical story from Bintan to Riau. Entering the 13th century, Sriwijaya's power increasingly waned (Marihandono et al. 2019). Based on the Malay manuscript *Sullalatus Salatin*, the first Islamic kingdom in Sumatra was Samudera Pasai, and in Java the Majapahit kingdom which entered the 14th century became increasingly expansive. After trying to attack Samudera Pasai in 1350 but thwarted by Sriwijaya, in 1377 Majapahit then attacked Sriwijaya. Finally, the kingdom that had existed since the 3rd century collapsed. Parameswara became the fourth king of Temasik Paduka Sri Maharaja Parameswara (1399-1401). In 1401, Temasik was attacked by Majapahit with the help of the treacherous Temasik Treasurer, Sang Rajuna Tapa. This is reinforced by the statement in the *Hikayat Siak* which states that Parameswara and his followers moved to the peninsula, combed this area and finally stopped in one place and founded a new kingdom called Melaka in 1402. In 1409 Parameswara married the princess of the Pasai kingdom. Many people think that after getting married, Parameswara converted to Islam, because then he had the title Megat Iskandar Syah. Raja Iskandar Syah ruled until 1424, then was succeeded by his son Sri Maharaja who had the title Sultan Muhammad Syah (1424-1444). Muhammad Syah was an intelligent and wise king. He is known for implementing the power structure of the Melaka palace and his efforts toward the glory of Melaka. The next period of rule was a turning point in the city's religious life.

Melaka's heyday coincided with the time when European nations began to expand their power in the east (Swastiwi et al. 2023). According to the *Undang Undang Malaka*, Melaka was the first target for controlling trade in the eastern region. At that time, Malacca was already getting bigger with a population reaching 100,000 people. As detailed by Duarte Barbosa, the Portuguese sent the first expedition to Melaka in 1509 led by Diego Lopez de Sequera. But they failed to conquer Melaka and many Portuguese were then taken prisoner by the Sultan of Melaka. The second Portuguese expedition was led by Afonso de Albuquerque. After circling Melaka for 10 days, on August 24, 1511 Malacca fell into Portuguese hands. The Sultan of Melaka at that time, Sultan Mahmud Syah, withdrew to Muar, Johor. From Muar, Sultan Mahmud and his followers launched several attacks on Melaka but were never successful. After Muar was attacked by the Portuguese, Sultan Mahmud Syah then headed for Pahang. Not long after, he moved again to Bintan. According to sources, *Sullatus Salatin* in Bintan, he built the Kopak palace which is located at the foot of Mount Bintan to the west and two forts at the mouth of the river. In 1521, under Afonso de Albuquerque, the Portuguese attacked the fort in Bintan, but Sultan Mahmud and his troops were able to survive. Sultan Mahmud began to rebuild his power. In 1525, under the leadership of Admiral Hang Nadim, Sultan Mahmud's troops succeeded in besieging Famosa, so that the Portuguese were forced to ask Goa for food aid. However, a year later, the Portuguese with full strength under the leadership of Pedro Mascharenhas attacked Bintan and succeeded in subduing Sultan Mahmud's troops.

Kopak Palace was burned and Sultan Mahmud Syah and his family were forced to flee to Kampar. After two years in Kampar, Sultan Mahmud Syah died and his second son, Raja Muzzafar, went to Perak and ruled there with the title Sultan Muzzafar Syah (Ahmad 2008). He founded the Malay sultanate dynasty which still survives to this day (Samin 2015). Meanwhile, his third son, after temporarily returning to Pahang, established a new center of power in the Johor River in the 1530s and ruled there with the title Sultan Alauddin Riayat Syah. At this time Johor, assisted by Perak and Pahang, launched an attack on Melaka. Likewise, Aceh launched attacks on Johor and Melaka several times. Finally, Johor collaborated with the Portuguese in Melaka to attack Aceh. However, as soon as Aceh's power weakened, Johor and Melaka returned to war. In 1623, the throne of Johor was handed over to Raden Bujang, who had the title Sultan Abdul Jalil Syah III, who was based in Kota Tinggi, Johor (Natuna & Sabli 2022). The arrival of the Dutch in this area was seen by Sultan Abdul Jalil who ruled Johor at that time as a good opportunity to face his arch enemies, Aceh and the Portuguese. He then collaborated with the Netherlands. In 1641 the Dutch succeeded in overthrowing the Portuguese in Melaka. In 1685, Sultan Ibrahim Syah died and was succeeded by Sultan Mahmud Syah II. However, Johor's condition increasingly deteriorated, as dissatisfaction among officials and the people grew with the new sultan's ability to rule (Swastiwi 2022).

The beginning of the 17th century was the era of Dutch colonialism (Swastiwi et al. 2017). In 1699, an alliance between the Dutch and several Bugis chiefdoms to control the port of Makassar led to a civil war. Thousands of Bugis refugees sailed across the Java Sea in search of new land. Based on written

sources, the name ‘Riau’ was used long before the Daeng Celak marriage incident (Salam 2014). The Johor State History Memorial (estimated to have been written around the 1750s), states that Laksamana was ordered by Sultan Abdul Jalil to go to Bintan Island and build a settlement on the Carang River, which was then called Riau. The Johor State Historical Memorial is probably the first Malay text to mention the name ‘Riau’ (Lombart 2005). Similar information is also obtained in the Hikayat Negeri Johor, which is thought to have been written in the early 1800s (Arman & Swastiwi 2018).

Collaborative efforts

The Riau Islands and Johor Bahru Provincial Governments are trying to form a small team that will focus on discussing future economic developments such as the roro plan from Batam to Johor Bahru. The use of FTZ and Cooperatives is not only intended for the middle class but also MSMEs. Apart from that, the Riau Islands and Johor Bahru Provincial Governments also agreed to collaborate in the cultural sector. One of them is a joint cultural event. Johor and the Riau Islands Provincial Government have a very close family relationship and many families in Tanjungpinang and Bintan have relatives or family in Johor State. Close good relations will be followed by increased economic cooperation between the two neighboring countries. To make this collaboration a success, both parties focus on the potential for collaboration that is easy to realize (low-hanging fruit) first which will later be followed by various other collaborations (Prokepri 2019).

Sister city cooperation is guided by administrative regulations and rules in accordance with Minister of Home Affairs Regulation Number 3 of 2008 concerning Guidelines for Implementing Regional Government Cooperation with Foreign Parties. Planning and implementation of Regional Government cooperation with foreign parties must also be in accordance with regional capabilities in terms of finance, institutions and availability of human resources as well as in accordance with the potential and policies of foreign partners. There are several areas where sister city cooperation between Tanjungpinang and Johor Bahru can be pursued, including: (1) economy, trade, investment, industry and tourism; (2) cultural (3) other fields as further agreed upon by both parties. The cooperative relationship that exists between Tanjungpinang–Johor Bahru is intended to increase economic development and development in other fields. Therefore, cooperative relationships must be equipped with a permanent and planned program of activities, both regarding the areas to be worked on together, the goals to be achieved, the development costs incurred by each party, as well as the time period required to implement them cooperative activities.

Application of liberalism theory in Johor Bahru-Tanjungpinang cooperation efforts

As a theory of international relations, liberalism emphasizes the importance of cooperation and interdependence between countries in overcoming global problems (Kézai & Páthy 2023). The theory of liberalism states that countries can achieve their political and economic goals by cooperating with each other and promoting individual freedom and social justice (Xue et al. 2020). Liberalism also emphasizes the importance of international law and international organizations as a means of addressing global problems such as international trade, international security and the environment (Deng et al. 2021). In the view of liberalism, countries do not always compete and conflict with each other in achieving their national interests, but can also collaborate and work together to achieve common interests (Ambrose et al. 2020).

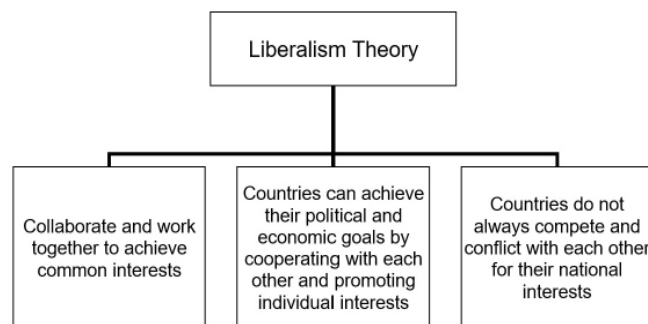


Figure 1.
 Structure plot of sister city collaboration between Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) and Johor Bahru (Malaysia)
 Source: Processed data 2024

Analysis of sister city cooperation efforts between Tanjungpinang and Johor Bahru is discussed through the theory of liberalism. Such cooperation can be an effective platform for the exchange of knowledge, practices and resources between the two cities. Sister city cooperation is proof of that and answers the basic assumption of liberalism which says that cooperation is a way to advance the life of both cities. Therefore, the application of theory of liberalism can be seen by observing that the sister city collaboration between Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) and Johor Bahru (Malaysia) has resulted in MSME development and development of historical and cultural tourism, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Efforts in the economic sector

The Riau Islands Provincial Government delegation led by Plt. Governor H. Isdianto, S.Sos., M.M. visited Johor Bahru and met with Johor State Government Officials on 12 March, 2020. Indonesian Consul General Johor Bahru Sunarko accompanied the delegation to attend the meeting held at the Johor Chief Minister’s Office. Johor State Government officials were represented by the Chairman of the Department of Agriculture, Basic Agricultural Industries and Rural Development, Datuk Samsolbari Jamali, Chairman of the Department of Education, Information, Heritage and Culture, Mazlan Bujang, and Deputy Chairman of Usaha Usaha, Dr. Badrul Hisham bin Kassim. The Governor of Riau Islands and his staff hope that the visit will continue. To make this collaboration a success, both parties can focus on potential collaborations that are easy to realize (low-hanging fruit) first and which will later be followed by various other collaborations. In this case, Riau Islands hopes that cooperation in building Ro-Ro ships connecting Tanjung Pinang and Johor Bahru can be realized soon. The Indonesian Consul General in Johor Bahru welcomed the visit of the provincial government delegation. It is hoped that the Governor of Riau Islands and his staff will be able to encourage business actors, the private sector and tourists in both regions to achieve mutually beneficial cooperation.

Opportunities for cooperation are wide open for these two bordering regions to complement each other and help move the wheels of the economy (Nadya et al. 2023). The Indonesian Consulate General in Johor Bahru supports and facilitates increased cooperation between the two parties. The meeting at the Indonesian Consulate General in Johor Bahru was attended by all staff of the Indonesian Consulate General in Johor Bahru, and community leaders and extended families of Bintan descent in Johor. During the meeting, the Indonesian Consul General again explained Indonesia’s foreign policy priorities, namely strengthening economic diplomacy, protecting Indonesian citizens, maintaining sovereignty and unity, as well as increasing Indonesia’s leadership role in the region and the world (Noormansyah et al. 2024). Regarding economic diplomacy, the Indonesian Consul General reiterated that the opportunity to increase economic cooperation between Tanjungpinang and Johor Bahru is still very open for opportunities for cooperation in similarities between the two countries.

Efforts in the tourism sector

The efforts made by the Tanjungpinang City Government and Bandar Johor Bahru, Malaysia in developing tourism are carrying out cooperation which was marked by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding which was carried out on 14 February, 2019. This collaborative effort can make a big contribution to the world of tourism in Tanjungpinang City (Prokepri 2019). Where there are similarities in historical and cultural backgrounds, people from two cities from different countries can visit each other through historical tourism and cultural tourism.



Figure. 2

Dohot water drink and *tenggiri* fish crackers
Source: Processed data 2024



Figure 3.

Typical souvenirs of the City Tanjungpinang
Source: Processed Data 2024

Optimizing the tourism potential of the city of Tanjungpinang, a Master Plan for Tourism Development for the City of Tanjungpinang 2022-2023 has been prepared which is stipulated in Regional Regulation Number 8 of 2021. This collaborative effort continued with a visit from Johor on 24 May, 2024 to Tanjungpinang which can have a positive impact on the development of Malaysia's investment value especially Johor Bahru and the Riau Islands, especially Tanjungpinang City (AntaraNews 2024). So, that it becomes a change for the people of Tanjungpinang City to open the employment sector, especially the economy like MSME by promoting food, drinks, and typical souvenirs of the city, like in Figure 2 and 3.

Conclusion

The cities of Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) and Johor Bahru (Malaysia) have several similarities, namely that both were once the center of government for the Kingdom of Johor Riau and both cities have the same history and culture. Therefore, the realization of the sister city collaboration effort between Tanjungpinang and Johor Bahru has significant potential in strengthening the economy and sustainable tourism in the form of tourist visits to the two cities. The cooperation can be an effective platform for the exchange of knowledge, practices and resources between the two cities, as well as expanding the network of partners involved in inclusive education. In addition, MSME players can further develop, develop historical, and cultural tourism packages that are interrelated between the two cities. But this effort has several challenges such as limited resources, lack of community awareness and understanding, and structural barriers can influence the effectiveness of implementing this collaborative effort. In the Tanjungpinang (Indonesia) and Johor Bahru (Malaysia) sister city cooperation efforts, an active and collaborative role is needed from state actors and non-state actors to achieve sustainable economic and tourism goals.

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