CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Public transportation in Malaysia is claimed by the customers as unsatisfactory. The Transportation plays an important role in the life of human society since time immemorial for a living, transporting goods and also for the purpose of living, as well as to the movement of people from one destination to another.

Taxis play an important role as a transportation alternative in all parts of the world. Although sometimes defined as a semi-public transport mode, the taxi service is, in fact, the first public transport in small towns when the distances between common origins and destinations become too large to be travelled by non-motorized modes. According to Lowitt (2006), however, the demand for taxi services is highly heterogeneous and differs in developed and developing countries.

In developed countries, taxis tend to be used as a substitute for private vehicles by passengers who use the service for convenience reasons or because they do not want to own a car, even though they can afford it. Lowitt (2006) observes that, as in this
market taxis tend to operate on a non-shared basis and their supply is limited by legislation, they can be a reasonable source of income for taxi operators.

The Transportation is one of alternative communication systems in the world. It is considered as the driving force and income for some people. In Malaysia, the transport system is the most significant factor in whether a communication system for both urban and rural communities. As the country grew increasingly advanced, system development in a state should have the competence and progress in terms of services and technologies used. Therefore, the government has sought to make various changes and new strategies to improve the quality of public transport services in order to attract the tourist.

In developing countries, taxis are often used to supplement inadequate public transport systems based on buses or trains. In those cases, they may be also characterized by shared taxis and low cost single passenger services. These are services demanded by upper lower income users who do not own private motorized vehicles. Although this is usually not the case in Brazil, the market in many developing country cities is quite often unregulated. For Lowitt (2006), unregulated markets result in an oversupply of services, high competition for passengers and, as a consequence, low fares and low incomes for taxi operators.

However, the taxi service but not still does not meet to all passengers that ride of taxi in study area. Some passengers are not satisfied with the service provided as some users have problems in terms of taxi fares, comfort, taxi driver, and convenience. For passenger who cannot afford their income using other services such as buses and private vehicles.

The Transport refers to a vehicle transporting someone from one place to another to another and usually it leads to long distances than if on foot. Transport aims to facilitate public transport system whether city or in the countryside. While most people have their own vehicles, public transportation is still a top choice for those on
low incomes. There are many faithful years of complaints from those who expressed dissatisfaction with public services in Malaysia.

1.2 Background of Kota Bharu

Kota Bharu is the capital city for Kelantan state, located on the East-Coast of Peninsular Malaysia. Kota Bharu has a population about 500,000 citizens with area of 403 square kilometers. The population density is 1264 person per square kilometers with annual average population growth rate 1.9%. The citizen of Kota Bharu is mainly Malay (92.4%) followed by Chinese (4.8%), Indian (0.3%) and other ethnicity including non-Malaysian citizens (2.4%). The percentage of male population in Kota Bharu is 49.7% and female population 50.3% (98.8 males for every 100 females) compared to 50.3% male population for the whole Kelantan state (101 males for every females).

Kota Bharu was originally found to be the royal residence; however it now becomes the centre of administration, commerce, finance, culture, and education of Kelantan state. The culture in Kota Bharu often becomes the reason for tourists outside Malaysia to visit, and as for local tourist, Kota Bharu is the place where you can “shop till you drop” (due to cheap retail price).

In Kota Bharu, the places of interests are divided into four categories; Historical Zone, Handicraft and Rural Industries Zone, Countryside Zone, and Ecology Zone. These zones have their own tourism products such as Tokong Mek Temple (220 years, oldest in Asia), handicrafts like songket and batik, homestays at fishing villages, as well as beautiful beaches. Besides those places, people go to Kota Bharu for shopping. There are many shopping markets in Kota Bharu that sells Kelantan foods and crafts as well as clothes in cheap price compared to other places in Malaysia. During holidays, the city becomes crowded with local and outside tourists. In Kota Bharu, available public transportations are bus, taxis, and bicycle trishaws. The bus and taxi stations are connected and located in the centre of the city to ease the citizen’s movement and activities.