AN INVESTIGATION OF TOURISTS SATISFACTION IN MALAYSIA CULTURAL MUSEUM: ENTRANCE SPACE EXPERIENCE

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Abstract. Malaysia is known with its rich and diverse cultural heritage. Therefore, a number of cultural museums which display Malaysia's multifarious history, traditions, and art forms has established. However, there is a decreasing trend of visitor visiting the cultural museum in Malaysia. This trend is highly influenced by the tourists' experience gained during their visit to the museum. This study aims to study the tourist satisfaction in the entrance space of Malaysia cultural museum. This study analyses the data gathered from 381 respondents through a questionnaire survey. The statement in the survey represents different elements which are education, escape, aesthetic, and entertainment. The findings show that the aesthetic element is the most appreciated element by the respondents during the visit while escape element is the least appreciated element. Most of the respondents are in the younger group age, which is an age group that appreciates aesthetics the most while almost a third of the respondents went to the museum due to work, hence make the element of escape the least appreciated. From history, museum institutions have been evolving throughout the time as it is only known as a place called "Cabinets of Curiosities" in 1500s. The existing museum can start integrating itself with other attractions or providing more activities for the visitor to turn it into a more interesting and fun place for the visitor.
Keywords: *tourism, cultural museum, tourist satisfaction, tourist behavior*

Introduction

Cultural museums serve an important role in conserving a nation's heritage, promoting cultural exchange, and boosting tourism activity (Chen and Ryan, 2020; Mey and Mohamed, 2010). Malaysia which is known with its rich and diverse cultural heritage, has established numerous cultural museums which display Malaysia's multifarious history, traditions, and art forms. On the other hand, cultural tourism is a growing area of the global travel business, with visitors seeking authentic and immersive experiences which link them with the cultural heritage of the area (Sappa, 2023; Simpson, 2009). Malaysia's cultural museums allow visitors to learn about the country's varied ethnic group, religious customs, historical events, and artistic achievements (Md Ali et al., 2019). The relationship between the museum setting, the display of cultural items, and the perceptions and behaviours of tourists generates a complex network of interactions which require a systematic investigation (Centorrino et

al., 2021). The behaviour of visitors at museums is crucial for the museum management and authorities. Understanding the way visitor interact with exhibits, interpret cultural narratives, and experience the museum setting shall provide useful insights for improving visitor experiences, optimizing museum layouts, and establishing effective interpretive strategies (Ma et al., 2018; Juvan et al., 2017).

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Literature review

According to the International Council of Museums (ICOM) Statutes, Article 3, Section 1: "A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, research, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment" while Sandahl (2019) defines museum as the concept of a collection, of objects bearing information and transmitting emotions, memory and knowledge to those who view, contemplate and connect with the. According to Gurian (2006), there are two types of museum which are the museum built according to its intent and the museum built according to its content. *Figure 1* below shows the types of museum. This study focuses on cultural museum according to the content typology as Malaysia has numerous cultural museum with the potential in attracting wide market of visitors.
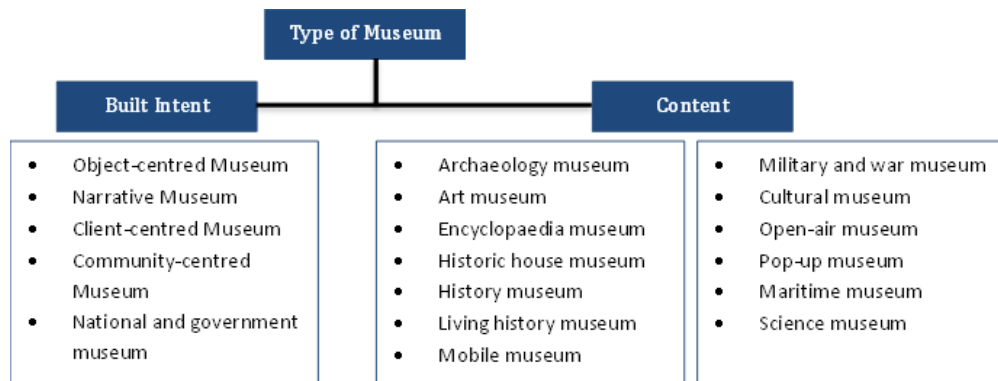

Figure 1. *Type of museum.*
Source: Gurian (2006).

Spaces in cultural museum building

There are four types of spaces in cultural museum building which are entrance area, museum building, outdoor exhibition, and other supporting facilities with 25 components. *Table 1* below shows the four types of space with 25 components of museum building. For this study, the space focused is only several entrance components which includes parking lot, outdoor exhibition area, and plaza/square.

Table 1. *Spaces and components of spaces in museum building.*

Entrance	Museum building	Outdoor exhibition	Other supporting facilities
Parking	Exhibition hall	Model buildings	Any facilities that can enhance the visitors' experience
Gateway	Lobby	Space for workshops	
Ticke counter	Public lecture hall	Spae for games/activities	
Information counter	Public toilet	Research center	
Tourist info; briefing area/room; brochures; translation; equipment; etc.	Workshops	Stage/performance areas	
Entrance sign	Prayer rooms	Restaurants/cafe/food kiosk	
		Plaza/square	
		Public tiolet	
		Prayer room	
		Souvenir shops	
		Other attractions	

Source: Gurian (2006).

Tourist satisfaction

Satisfaction has been a major focus in tourism research (Correia et al., 2013). According to Bayih and Singh (2020), tourist satisfaction is response or choice made by tourist, influenced by their emotional or cognitive state or in other word is the response associated with a particular focus. Baker and Crompton (2000) identified the satisfaction can be determined by gap factors, which include individual tourists' social and psychological aspects such as their expressions, behaviours, and needs, as well as external environments like weather conditions and interactions within social groups. It is important to identify the tourist satisfaction as it can affects the tourists' choice of destination and their future behaviour (Haque and Khan, 2013).

Tourists behaviour

Tourist behaviour can be defined as the activities the tourists engage in, the goods they purchase, and any additional services they use throughout their vacation (Juvan et al., 2017) while Engel et al. (1986) define tourist behaviour as those activities directly involved in obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and services including the decision processes that precedes and follows these actions. Future tourist behavior during the visit can be highly influenced from the experience gained during the visit (Juvan et al., 2017). According to Güzel (2014), there are four elements which can influence the overall experience of the tourist during the visit. The elements are education element, escape element, aesthetic element, and entertainment element.

Materials and Methods

A questionnaire survey was employed as the means of data collection. A survey is a method used to gauge the opinions or experiences of a group of individuals through a series of questions (Rasyida et al., 2016). This survey encompasses various stages of the research process, including research design, survey creation, sampling methodology, data collection, and analysis of responses. The responses are graded and paired with

obligatory statements, using a four-point Likert scale: 1=Very Unsatisfied, 2=Unsatisfied, 3=Satisfy, 4=Very Satisfy. This scale is technically straightforward to develop, administer, and comprehend by the respondents (Rasyida et al., 2016). Sample size refers to a tiny subset of the population that is supposed to accurately reflect the total population. Sample size is a critical feature of any empirical investigation in which generalizations about a population are made. Large sample size is advocated in research for accuracy and dependability especially when the findings are to be used to represent a wider population or set of data. However, regardless of how large a community is, if its members share certain traits, the sample size required for the study will be substantially smaller than in a population with more diversified features (Bujang et al., 2024). According to Hair et al. (2010), the minimum sample size is 100 when models contain five or fewer constructs, each with more than three items and high item communalities (.6 or higher); 150 when models contain seven or fewer constructs and modest commonalities (.5); 300 when models contain seven or fewer constructs and low communalities (.45), and/or multiple under identified (fewer than three items) constructs; and 500 when models contain a large number of constructs. This proposal provides a general estimate of the sample size for this investigation. It is widely accepted that 100 is the feasible minimum size for employing structural equation modelling (Hair et al., 2010). Memon et al. (2020) also suggests a sample size of 150 for a scale with 40 variables (item statements). For this study, a total number of 381 respondents were acquired. The sampling technique used was simple random sampling by distribution of questionnaire through face-to-face administration in various locations and online form.

Relative Importance Index (RII) is a type of relative importance analysis. RII helps to determine the contribution of a certain variable to the prediction of a criterion variable. A set of items are ranked in such a way which the first item is either "ranked higher than", "ranked lower than", or "ranked equal to" the others for any two items. For the relevant questions, the Likert scale will be used and converted to relative importance indices (RII).

$$\text{Relative Important Index} = \frac{4n_4 + 3n_3 + 2n_2 + 1n_1}{A \times N} \qquad \text{Eq. (1)}$$

Where;
n_4=Number of respondents for Very Satisfy;
n_3=Number of respondents for Satisfy;
n_2=Number of respondents for Unsatisfy;
n_1=Number of respondents for Very Unsatisfy;
A=Highest Weight;
N=Total number of respondents.

Results and Discussion

Table 2 below shows majority of the tourist participating in this survey is female with an amount of 250 respondents covering 65.6% from the whole respondents. 34.4% of the respondents is male which consist of 131 respondents. Most of the respondents participating in this survey are from the group age of 19 to 24, which covers 34.6% of the respondents followed by age group 25 to 34 which covering 26.5%. 17.3% of the

respondents are from under 18 years old followed by the age group 35 to 44 with 15.2%. The least age group participating in this survey is over 65 years old followed by age group 44 to 64 with 0.5% and 1.0% respectively. *Table 3* below shows the age group of the respondents in detail. In the entrance of parking lot, the tourist agree with statement of the entrance to the car park has an informative information board the most which indicate the educational element in the entrance of parking lot. Second is the environment of the driveway in the parking lot is interactive which indicates the entertainment element as the second most appreciated in the entrance of parking lot. The least appreciated is the statement of the atmosphere on the way into the parking lot is exciting which indicates the escape element. The result is illustrated in *Table 4*.

Table 2. Gender percentage of the respondents.

Gender	Frequency (N)	Prcentage (%)
Male	131	34.4
Female	250	65.6
Total	381	100

Table 3. Age group percentage of the respondents.

Age group	Frequency (N)	Prcentage (%)
>18	66	17.3
19-24	132	34.6
25-34	101	26.5
35-44	58	15.2
45-54	18	4.7
55-64	4	1.0
>65	2	0.5
Total	381	100

Table 4. Rank of the most appreciated statement by the respondents in the entrance of parking lot.

Statement	VS	S	U	VU	T	TN	A x N	RII	Rank
The entrance to the car park has an informative information board.	428	621	96	19	1164	1524	6094	0.19101	1
The atmosphere on the way into the parking lot is exciting.	204	621	224	11	1060	1524	6094	0.17394	4
The environment of the driveway in the parking lot is unique and attractive.	344	573	188	10	1115	1524	6094	0.18297	3
The environment of the driveway in the parking lot is interactive.	292	681	126	18	1117	1524	6094	0.18329	2

Note: VS=Very Satisfy; S=Satisfy; U=Unsatisfied; VU=Very Unsatisfied; T=Total; TN=Total Number.

In the area of parking lot, educational statement which is the parking area has informative information boards is the most appreciated statement followed by the statement the environment in the parking lot is unique and interesting which indicate aesthetic element. The least agreed statement is the atmosphere in the parking lot is exciting which indicates escape element and entertainment element form the statement the area in the parking lot is interactive is ranked third. The result is illustrated in *Table 5*. The element of escape from the statement 1 appreciate the exhibits in the parking lot is the most appreciated element by the respondents with both statements indicate the education and aesthetic element from the statement exhibition materials in the parking lot are equipped with informative information boards and the exhibits in the parking lot

are unique and interesting appreciated at the same value and ranked second. The least appreciated element by the respondent is entertainment element through the statement of the exhibits in the parking lot is interactive and ranked the third. The result is shown in *Table 6* below. In the entrance of outdoor exhibition area, the statement the environment of the entry way in the outdoor exhibition space of the museum is unique and interesting which indicates aesthetic element is the most appreciated element followed by the statement the atmosphere at the entrance to the outdoor exhibition space of the museum is exciting which indicates escape element. The statement the entrance to the museum's outdoor exhibition space is interactive which indicates the entertainment element is the least appreciated element followed by the statement the entrance to the museum's outdoor exhibition space has an informative information board which indicates educational element. The result can be seen in *Table 7* below.

***Table 5**. Rank of the most appreciated statement by the respondents in the parking area.*

Statement	VS	S	U	VU	T	TN	A x N	RII	Rank
The parking area has informative information boards.	348	642	112	24	1126	1524	6094	0.18477	1
The atmosphere in the parking lot is exciting.	232	624	202	14	1072	1524	6094	0.17591	4
The environment in the parking lot is unique and interesting.	388	519	192	15	1114	1524	6094	0.18280	2
The area in the parking lot is interactive.	312	579	190	15	1096	1524	6094	0.17984	3

Note: VS=Very Satisfy; S=Satisfy; U=Unsatisfied; VU=Very Unsatisfied; T=Total; TN=Total Number.

***Table 6**. Rank of the most appreciated statement by the respondents toward the exhibition material in the parking lot.*

Statement	VS	S	U	VU	T	TN	A x N	RII	Rank
Exhibition materials in the parking lot are equipped with informative information boards.	304	597	150	14	1065	1452	5808	0.18337	2
I appreciate the exhibits in the parking lot. (like sculptures and gates).	304	612	144	11	1071	1452	5808	0.18440	1
The exhibits in the parking lot are unique and interesting.	304	588	164	9	1065	1452	5808	0.18337	2
The exhibits in the parking lot are interactive.	216	648	130	28	1022	1452	5808	0.17596	3

Note: VS=Very Satisfy; S=Satisfy; U=Unsatisfied; VU=Very Unsatisfied; T=Total; TN=Total Number.

***Table 7**. Rank of the most appreciated statement by the respondents in the entrance of outdoor exhibition area.*

Statement	VS	S	U	VU	T	TN	A x N	RII	Rank
The entrance to the museum's outdoor exhibition space has an informative information board.	396	774	48	0	1218	1524	6094	0.19987	3
The atmosphere at the entrance to the outdoor exhibition space of the museum is exciting.	444	699	64	5	1212	1524	6094	0.19888	2
The environment of the entry way in the outdoor exhibition space of the museum is unique and interesting.	464	690	64	3	1221	1524	6094	0.20036	1
The entrance to the museum's outdoor exhibition space is interactive.	388	747	42	14	1191	1524	6094	0.19543	4

Note: VS=Very Satisfy; S=Satisfy; U=Unsatisfied; VU=Very Unsatisfied; T=Total; TN=Total Number.

In the outdoor exhibition area, aesthetic element through the statement the environment of the museum's outdoor exhibition space is unique and interesting is the

most appreciated element by the respondents with educational element through the statement the museum's outdoor exhibition space has informative information boards ranked second. Third most appreciated element is escape element, through the statement the atmosphere in the museum's outdoor exhibition space is exciting while the entertainment element with the statement the museum's outdoor exhibition space is interactive as the least appreciated element. *Table 8* below shows the result. The respondents appreciated both entertainment and aesthetic element toward the exhibition material in the outdoor area with the statement the exhibits in the museum's outdoor exhibition space are interactive and the exhibits in the museum's outdoor exhibition space are unique and interesting as both elements have the same relative importance index hence ranked first. Second is escape element with the statement I focused on examining the exhibits in the museum's outdoor exhibition while educational element ranked third with the statement exhibit materials in the museum's outdoor exhibition space are equipped with informative information boards. The result is shown in *Table 9* below.

Table 8. *Rank of the most appreciated statement by the respondents in the outdoor exhibition area.*

Statement	VS	S	U	VU	T	TN	A x N	RII	Rank
The museum's outdoor exhibition space has informative information boards.	396	732	44	16	1188	1524	6094	0.19494	2
The atmosphere in the museum's outdoor exhibition space is exciting.	396	708	60	16	1180	1524	6094	0.19363	3
The environment of the museum's outdoor exhibition space is unique and interesting.	388	756	38	13	1195	1524	6094	0.19609	1
The museum's outdoor exhibition space is interactive.	324	783	54	12	1173	1524	6094	0.19248	4

Note: VS=Very Satisfy; S=Satisfy; U=Unsatisfied; VU=Very Unsatisfied; T=Total; TN=Total Number.

Table 9. *Rank of the most appreciated statement by the respondents toward the exhibition material in the outdoor area.*

Statement	VS	S	U	VU	T	TN	A x N	RII	Rank
Exhibit materials in the museum's outdoor exhibition space are equipped with informative information boards.	360	753	62	9	1184	1524	6094	0.19429	3
I focused on examining the exhibits in the museum's outdoor exhibition space.	412	747	42	8	1209	1524	6094	0.19839	2
The exhibits in the museum's outdoor exhibition space are unique and interesting.	468	720	32	8	1228	1524	6094	0.20151	1
The exhibits in the museum's outdoor exhibition space are interactive.	504	675	38	11	1228	1524	6094	0.20151	1

Note: VS=Very Satisfy; S=Satisfy; U=Unsatisfied; VU=Very Unsatisfied; T=Total; TN=Total Number.

In plazas and squares, the most appreciated element by the respondent is entertainment element through the statement the plaza/square is interactive followed by aesthetic element through the statement the atmosphere of the plaza/square is unique and interesting. The least appreciated element is the entertainment element which ranked fourth with the statement the plaza/square has an informative information board followed by escape element with the statement the atmosphere when in the plaza/square is exciting. *Table 10* below shows the result. The rank from every component is accumulated. There are seven components observed in this study. Therefore, the minimum accumulation which is also the best is 7 points while the worst point is the

point closest with the maximum points which are 28 points. Based on *Table 11*, the most appreciated element by the respondents in the open-air area of cultural museum in Malaysia is aesthetic element with 12 points while the least appreciated element is escape element with 19 points. However, the gap between the second least appreciated elements, which is entertainment element, is only by 1 point at 18 points. This is followed by education element with a total of 16 points.

Table 10. Rank of the most appreciated statement by the respondents in the plaza/square.

Statement	VS	S	U	VU	T	TN	A x N	RII	Rank
The plaza/square has an informative information board.	320	657	82	12	1071	1408	5632	0.19016	4
The atmosphere when in the plaza/square is exciting.	340	654	76	11	1081	1408	5632	0.19194	3
The atmosphere of the plaza/square is unique and interesting.	348	645	78	11	1082	1408	5632	0.19212	2
The plaza/square is interactive.	348	660	76	7	1091	1408	5632	0.19371	1

Note: VS=Very Satisfy; S=Satisfy; U=Unsatisfied; VU=Very Unsatisfied; T=Total; TN=Total Number.

Table 11. Overall rank result of open-air area in cultural museum.

Components	Education element	Escape element	Aesthetic element	Entertainment element
Entrance of the parking lot.	1	4	3	2
Area of parking lot.	1	4	2	3
Exhibition material in parking lot.	2	1	2	3
Entrance of outdoor exhibition area.	3	2	1	4
Outdoor exhibition area.	2	3	1	4
Exhibition material in outdoor exhibition area.	3	2	1	1
Plaza/Square.	4	3	2	1
Total	16	19	12	18

Based on the survey, 51.9% of the respondents are aged 25 years old and below. The results acquired from this study might be highly influenced by this. Annechini et al. (2020) state that younger people tend to be appreciated or attracted toward the aesthetic value more compared to older people. The younger people believe that museums provide the opportunity to complete learning task with effortless concentration through a high level of fascination which is best experience. Aesthetic appreciation only can be achieved through three main neural systems which is the sensory-motor, the emotion-valuation, and the meaning-knowledge system (Cattaneo, 2020). Therefore, the entrance space of existing cultural museum in Malaysia manage to activate those neural system of the tourist. Escape element which creates a restorative environment can help the tourist recover from the efforts to meet the demands of everyday life (Packer and Bond, 2010). The pressures and challenges of daily life often led to mental exhaustion, which is a frequent issue in our modern world. One of the primary motivations for people to participate in tourism and leisure activities is to find a respite from these personal and social demands (Simpson, 2009). Working purposes can be the reason why escape element is the least appreciated element by the respondent as 16% of the respondents visiting the museum as their formal visit, 7.9% to do their research, and 4.5% for meeting as it located at the museum. Museums made as a working place has been an issue for a long time. This issue has been highlighted by Forgan (2005) as museum stands at the intersection of scientific research work and public exhibition while still be majorly interested by the researcher. Therefore, there will always be conflict between the roles of the museum as a leisure place or a working place which is why escape element is the least appreciated element in the open-air area in the cultural museum.

Conclusion

To conclude, this study has attempted to study the tourist experience in the open-air area in the cultural museum in Malaysia. The museum components highlighted in this study are entrance of the parking lot, the parking lot area, exhibition material in the parking lot, entrance of outdoor exhibition area, outdoor exhibition area, exhibition material in outdoor exhibition area and plaza/square. Overall finding shows aesthetic element as the most appreciated element by the respondents with 51.9% of the respondents are from a young group age. The least appreciated element by the respondents is the escape element as 28.4% of the respondents went to the museum for working purposes. According to Annechini et al. (2020), the museum which we know today is evolving from a place called "Cabinets of Curiosities" that started to appear in the 1500s. This shows museums are an evolving institution throughout time. Therefore, the existing cultural museum can be evolved into a tourist attraction places which prioritizes the visitor experience. To increase the escape element toward the existing cultural museum, the overall environment of museum can be turned into a place with more activities. Formosan Aboriginal Village is a cultural museum made from a cultural village in Taiwan which offers educational and recreational opportunities to the visitor. This cultural village then turned into indigenous theme park that is divided into three sections which are Aboriginal Village Park, Amusement Isle and European Park. This cultural village highlights the outdoor environment of the nine major tribes in Taiwan.

The existing cultural village in Malaysia also can add workshop area to increase the escape element. This had been practiced in Mah Meri Cultural Village, one of the existing cultural villages in Malaysia. Through this workshop, the visitor can learn the crafting and carving skills from the Mah Meri tribes. Some of these skills need several classes and appointments to be mastered and some required hours of learning to be mastered. This can surely make the visitor focus on their visit and forget about their working environment. In hope for future research study, the study can be improved by selecting a specific cultural museum in Malaysia as a case study to produce a more precise data about the experience of the visitor of the selected museum by using the same data collection method and analysis. In terms of type of data collection, future study also can consider measuring the visitor's expectation level before their visit to the cultural museum. This data can be used to identify the gap between visitors' expectations before the visit and experience gained after the visit. From this, a more detailed analysis can be made to identify whether the existing cultural museum can met the expectations of the tourist or not.

Acknowledgement

Conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest involve with any parties in this research study.

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