

Heritage Through the Eyes of Tourists: Comparison of Kota Tua Jakarta and Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur

Warisan Melalui Perspektif Pelancong: Perbandingan antara Kota Tua Jakarta dan Medan Pasar, Kuala Lumpur

SYAKIR AMIR AB RAHMAN^{1*}, LUKMAN HAKIM MAHAMOD², SYAHRIAH BACHOK³, NOR NADIAH NAJIB⁴, MAIMUNAH ABDUL AZIZ⁵ & UMAR MANSYUR⁶

^{1,2,3} Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental Design, International Islamic University Malaysia

⁴ PLANMalaysia Melaka

⁵ Tourism Planning and Development, Universiti Kuala Lumpur Business School

⁶ Postgraduate School, Pakuan University, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: syakiramir@iiu.edu.my

Received: 4 May 2025 ; Accepted: 13 July 2026

ABSTRACT

Heritage tourism sites significantly influence visitor experiences in historic urban settings. Although physical conservation and destination planning have been extensively examined in prior studies, there is a paucity of research about tourists' perceptions of the appeal of heritage districts as conveyed through internet user-generated material. This study seeks to analyze tourist perceived appeal at two significant Southeast Asian heritage tourism locations: Kota Tua Jakarta in Indonesia and Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, utilizing visitor opinions sourced from Google reviews. Thirty perception-based criteria were assessed through a thematic clustering methodology to determine the predominant experiential factors affecting visitor happiness. The results demonstrate that tourists' perceptions of Kota Tua Jakarta are closely linked to heritage ambiance, museum attractions, local cultural exposure, and visual aesthetics, while Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur is predominantly viewed in terms of accessibility, public transport connectivity, urban comfort, and shopping opportunities. The data indicates that although both sites attained comparable overall satisfaction ratings, tourists were attracted by distinct experiential factors: cultural immersion in Kota Tua and convenience-oriented usability in Medan Pasar. The study emphasizes the significance of integrating tourist perceptions obtained from internet reviews as a supplementary assessment method for comprehending destination appeal in heritage tourism settings.

Keywords: Tourist Behaviour; Tourist Perception; Google Reviews Heritage Tourism; Tourist

ABSTRAK

Tapak pelancongan warisan memainkan peranan penting dalam mempengaruhi pengalaman pelawat dalam persekitaran bandar bersejarah. Walaupun pemuliharaan fizikal dan perancangan destinasi telah dikaji secara meluas dalam penyelidikan terdahulu, terdapat kekurangan kajian yang meneliti persepsi pelancong terhadap daya tarikan kawasan warisan sebagaimana yang disampaikan melalui kandungan janaan pengguna dalam talian. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis daya tarikan yang dirasakan oleh pelancong di dua lokasi pelancongan warisan utama di Asia Tenggara, iaitu Kota Tua Jakarta di Indonesia dan Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur di Malaysia, dengan menggunakan ulasan pelawat yang diperoleh daripada Google Reviews. Sebanyak tiga puluh kriteria berasaskan persepsi telah dinilai melalui pendekatan pengelompokan tematik bagi mengenal pasti faktor pengalaman dominan yang mempengaruhi kepuasan pelawat. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa persepsi pelancong terhadap Kota Tua Jakarta berkait rapat dengan suasana warisan, tarikan muzium, pendedahan kepada budaya tempatan, serta estetika visual, manakala Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur lebih banyak dinilai dari aspek kebolehcapaian, keterhubungan pengangkutan awam, keselesaan

bandar, dan peluang membeli-belah. Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa walaupun kedua-dua lokasi mencapai tahap kepuasan keseluruhan yang hampir sama, pelancong tertarik oleh dimensi pengalaman yang berbeza, iaitu penghayatan budaya di Kota Tua dan kemudahan penggunaan berasaskan keselesaan di Medan Pasar. Kajian ini menekankan kepentingan mengintegrasikan persepsi pelancong yang diperoleh daripada ulasan dalam talian sebagai kaedah penilaian tambahan dalam memahami daya tarikan destinasi dalam konteks pelancongan warisan.

Kata Kunci: Tingkah Laku Pelancong; Persepsi Pelancong; Ulasan Google; Pelancongan Warisan; Pelancong

INTRODUCTION

Historic urban districts constitute a significant element of historical tourism owing to their architectural distinctiveness, cultural identity, and experiential worth. These districts frequently function as living historical sites, allowing visitors to engage with historic edifices, communal areas, and cultural events in an urban context (Trinh & Ryan 2015). With the expansion of tourism in urban centers, heritage districts have emerged as key attractions for both local and foreign tourists in pursuit of genuine cultural experiences. The appeal of legacy tourist locations is intricately linked to visitors' perceptions of their physical surroundings and the quality of their experiences (Maklan & Klaus 2011). The conventional assessment of tourism locations typically emphasizes conservation status, infrastructure development, or policy execution. Nevertheless, these methodologies may inadequately encompass the experiencing aspect of tourism, especially from the viewpoint of tourists who actively interact with the location (Pahrudin et al. 2021). As digital platforms proliferate, tourists increasingly depend on online evaluations to convey their experiences and assess tourism locations (Yu et al. 2012). Google Reviews has emerged as a prominent medium for travelers to articulate their views on accessibility, environmental quality, cultural ambiance, and general satisfaction. These assessments offer significant insights into tourist perceptions and destination imagery, which can be employed to evaluate the appeal of heritage tourism sites.

Kota Tua Jakarta and Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur are two history tourism areas situated in prominent metropolitan cities in Southeast Asia. Both locations exhibit historic architecture and cultural importance, drawing tourists seeking urban historical experiences. Notwithstanding these commonalities, the two districts diverge in geographical organization, environmental conditions, and tourism activities, which may affect visitors' perceptions of their appeal. This study seeks to perform a comparative analysis of tourist perceptions in Kota Tua Jakarta and Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur utilizing Google Review data. This

research aims to discover essential experience elements that enhance destination appeal in heritage tourism contexts by analyzing tourist comments and evaluations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Heritage tourism has become an increasingly important segment of the global tourism industry, particularly in historic urban districts that offer unique architectural character and cultural identity (Csurg'o & Smith 2022). Heritage tourism destinations provide opportunities for visitors to experience historical environments through built forms, public spaces, cultural practices, and interpretive facilities (Li & Hunter 2015). Unlike conventional tourism attractions, heritage sites are often evaluated not only based on physical infrastructure but also on the experiential quality perceived by visitors during their interaction with the environment (Hughes & Allen 2005).

Tourist perception has been widely recognised as a critical determinant of destination attractiveness and overall satisfaction. Perception refers to the cognitive and affective impressions formed by visitors based on their experiences, expectations, and environmental interactions (Ab Rahman et al 2023; Esu & Arrey 2009). In the context of heritage tourism, perceived attractiveness is influenced by a combination of tangible attributes such as architectural authenticity, spatial organisation, accessibility, and environmental quality, as well as intangible elements including cultural atmosphere, emotional attachment, and interpretive meaning (Amelung et al. 2007; Khalid et al. 2023). Previous studies have demonstrated that visitors tend to evaluate heritage destinations based on experiential authenticity rather than solely on conservation quality or historical significance.

The concept of destination image is closely associated with tourist perception. Destination image represents the mental representation formed by visitors regarding the characteristics and appeal of a place (Amir et al. 2017). In heritage tourism settings, destination image is often shaped by visual elements such as historic buildings, street ambience, landscape features, and public activities. A positive

destination image contributes to visitor satisfaction and influences behavioural intention (Amir et al. 2020), including the likelihood of revisiting or recommending the destination to others (Fenton 2005; Chin et al. 2005). Consequently, understanding how tourists perceive heritage environments is essential for evaluating the experiential effectiveness of tourism destinations.

With the advancement of digital technology, user-generated content (UGC) has emerged as an alternative data source for analysing tourist perception. Online platforms such as Google Reviews allow visitors to express their opinions, share experiences, and evaluate destinations based on personal encounters. Unlike traditional survey-based research methods, online reviews provide spontaneous and unsolicited feedback, reflecting authentic visitor sentiment. This has led to increased interest among researchers in utilising UGC for tourism performance evaluation.

Online review platforms offer several advantages for perception-based studies. Firstly, they capture real-time visitor experiences from diverse demographic backgrounds. Secondly, they provide qualitative descriptions of tourist interactions with the environment, including positive and negative impressions. Thirdly, they enable thematic analysis of experiential attributes through keyword frequency and sentiment patterns. As a result, UGC has been widely used to assess visitor satisfaction, destination competitiveness, and service quality in various tourism contexts.

In heritage tourism research, thematic clustering of online reviews has been applied to identify

dominant experiential attributes that influence visitor perception (Ab Rahman et al. 2024). These attributes may include cultural authenticity, interpretive facilities, walkability, accessibility, environmental comfort, safety, and commercial activity. By grouping review content into thematic categories, researchers can determine which aspects of the destination contribute most significantly to perceived attractiveness (Ballesteros & Ramirez 2007).

Furthermore, comparative studies using online review data allow researchers to examine differences in visitor perception across multiple destinations. Such comparisons are particularly relevant in urban heritage contexts where destinations may share similar historical characteristics but differ in accessibility, environmental quality, or tourism activities (Del Barrio et al. 2012). Despite growing interest in perception-based tourism analysis, comparative research focusing on historic urban districts remains limited, especially in Southeast Asia.

Kota Tua Jakarta and Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur represent two heritage tourism districts located within metropolitan environments that attract both domestic and international visitors. While both destinations possess historic architecture and cultural significance, they offer distinct experiential characteristics that may influence tourist perception. Therefore, analysing visitor reviews from online platforms provides an opportunity to examine how tourists evaluate the attractiveness of these heritage environments based on their lived experiences.

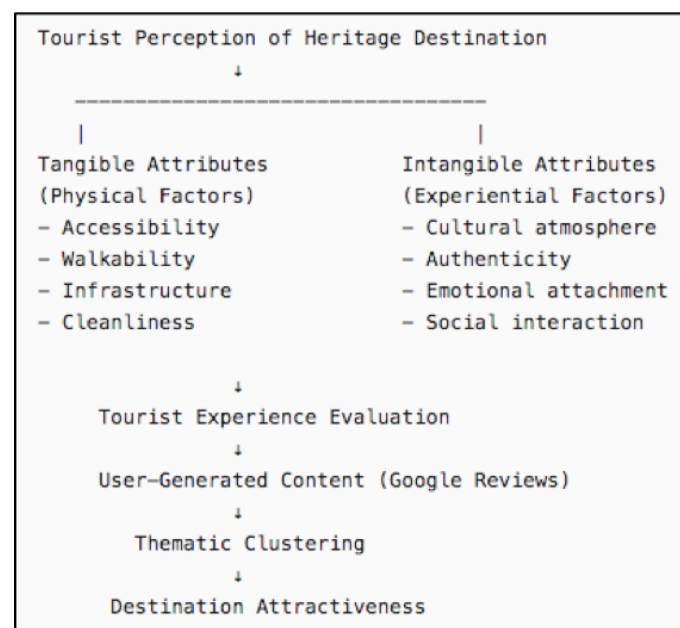


FIGURE 1: Conceptual framework

According to the literature, the perception that tourists have of heritage places is influenced by both tangible and intangible characteristics, which, when taken together, have an effect on the evaluation of the experience. As time goes on, these perceptions are gradually articulated through user-generated content, which includes Google Reviews. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the attractiveness of destinations by combining these elements into a thematic clustering framework, which is illustrated in Figure 1 by the way.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative content analysis methodology to investigate tourist perceptions derived from online reviews sourced from Google Reviews. The study examines two heritage tourist sites: Kota Tua Jakarta in Indonesia and Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. Google Reviews were chosen as the principal data source because to its extensive utilization and accessibility, enabling tourists to provide input based on their own experiences. Because of their availability, abundance, and representation of unprompted visitor feedback, Google Reviews served as the primary source of data for this study. From the official Google Maps sites of Kota Tua Jakarta and Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur, reviews were painstakingly collected and compiled. In order to ensure that there is consistency in interpretation, only reviews written in English and Bahasa Melayu were considered to be appropriate contributions.

An inspection of evaluations was performed as part of the method for collecting data. This was done in order to eliminate any unnecessary content, such as advertisements, comments that were not experiential, or duplicate entries. The subsequent step involved classifying every legitimate review according to the predetermined perceptual criteria and the characteristics of the subject matter.

Two hundred reviews for Kota Tua Jakarta and two hundred reviews for Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur were included in the total number of Google Reviews taken into consideration for this study. The size of the sample was determined based on the concept of data saturation, which is the process by which recurring themes and patterns become consistently apparent throughout the dataset. According to a previous study that utilized user-generated content in tourism research, it was shown that topic saturation can

typically be achieved between 100 and 200 reviews per place, depending on the variety of experiences that tourists have. It has been determined that the sample size that was selected is sufficient to ensure that the theme analysis is both comprehensive and reliable, while also allowing for a substantial comparison to be made between the two case study communities.

A perception-based assessment framework of 30 evaluation criteria was established to analyze tourist experiences concerning heritage ambience, accessibility, safety, cleanliness, public space quality, tourism activities, and visitor comfort. Each criterion was assessed using a five-point scale, with a score of 1 denoting very poor perception and 5 signifying outstanding perception.

Thematic clustering was executed with a multi-phase qualitative coding approach. Initially, all selected assessments were thoroughly analyzed to identify recurring themes and phrases relevant to visitor experience. The keywords were subsequently classified into primary categories, including heritage appreciation, accessibility, comfort, and commercial activity. In the second stage, similar categories were combined into broader thematic clusters to reduce redundancy and improve analytical accuracy. Terms like “historic buildings,” “colonial architecture,” and “old town atmosphere” were classified under the theme Heritage Architecture Appreciation. In the last step, frequency analysis was conducted to determine the percentage distribution of each topic, indicating its relative importance in shaping tourist perception. This approach enables systematic examination of qualitative data while maintaining awareness of contextual importance.

RESULT AND FINDINGS

The perception composition analysis based on Google Reviews reveals distinct differences in how tourists evaluate the attractiveness of Kota Tua Jakarta and Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur across the 30 assessment criteria. Overall, Kota Tua Jakarta recorded relatively higher scores in experiential heritage attributes, including heritage ambience (5), museum attraction (5), local culture exposure (5), and photo opportunity (5). These findings suggest that tourists associate the destination with strong visual identity and cultural engagement derived from its colonial architecture and museum-based attractions.

TABLE 1: Perception Composition Analysis Google Review Thematic

No.	Criteria	Kota Tua	Medan Pasar	No.	Criteria	Kota Tua	Medan Pasar
1	Overall attractiveness	4	3	16	Museum attraction	5	2
2	Heritage ambience	5	3	17	Food availability	4	4
3	Authenticity feel	4	3	18	Shopping experience	3	4
4	Walkability	4	4	19	Event/festival atmosphere	4	3
5	Accessibility	3	5	20	Photo opportunity	5	4
6	Public transport access	3	5	21	Crowd management	3	3
7	Signage & wayfinding	3	4	22	Tourist friendliness	4	4
8	Safety perception	3	4	23	Information availability	3	4
9	Cleanliness	3	4	24	Commercial diversity	3	4
10	Maintenance quality	2	4	25	Urban comfort	3	4
11	Building conservation	4	3	26	Shaded walkways	2	4
12	Public space quality	3	4	27	Resting areas	2	4
13	Night-time vibrancy	2	4	28	Riverfront appeal	3	4
14	Street activity	4	3	29	Connectivity to attractions	3	5
15	Local culture exposure	5	3	30	Overall satisfaction	4	4

Perception Index Scale:

1 = Very poor; 2 = Poor; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Good; 5 = Excellent

TABLE 2: Thematic Analysis of Tourist Perceptions of Kota Tua, Jakarta

Cluster Theme	Review Keywords	% of Reviews
Heritage Architecture Appreciation	Colonial buildings, historic identity	28%
Museum & Cultural Attraction	Museums, art exhibitions	18%
Street Atmosphere & Local Activity	Buskers, cycling, street vendors	17%
Photo Opportunity & Visual Appeal	Instagrammable scenery	14%
Walkability	Pedestrian-friendly space	9%
Cleanliness & Maintenance Issues	Dirty areas, poor upkeep	6%
Safety Concerns	Pickpocket warnings	4%
Night-Time Limitation	Quiet after dark	3%

TABLE 3: Thematic Analysis of Tourist Perceptions of Medan Pasar, Kuala Lumpur

Cluster Theme	Review Keywords	% of Reviews
Accessibility & Location	Near LRT / city centre	26%
Shopping & Souvenir Activity	Handicrafts, retail	22%
Walkability	Pedestrian linkages	15%
Urban Comfort & Cleanliness	Well-maintained public space	13%
Food Availability	Restaurants & cafes	10%
Heritage Architecture	Art deco buildings	7%
Lack of Attractions	“Nothing much to do”	4%
Commercialisation Feel	Touristy atmosphere	3%

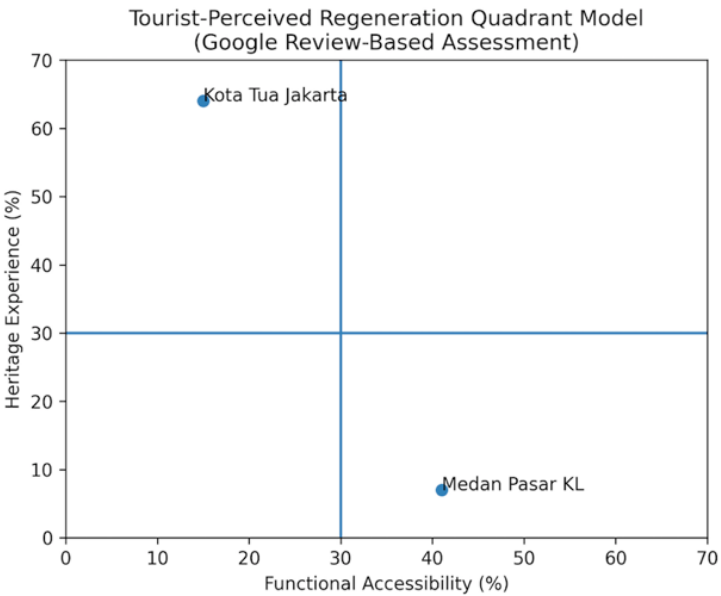


FIGURE 2: Radar diagram illustrating tourist-perceived regeneration performance based on Google Review-derived dimensions for Kota Tua Jakarta and Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur.

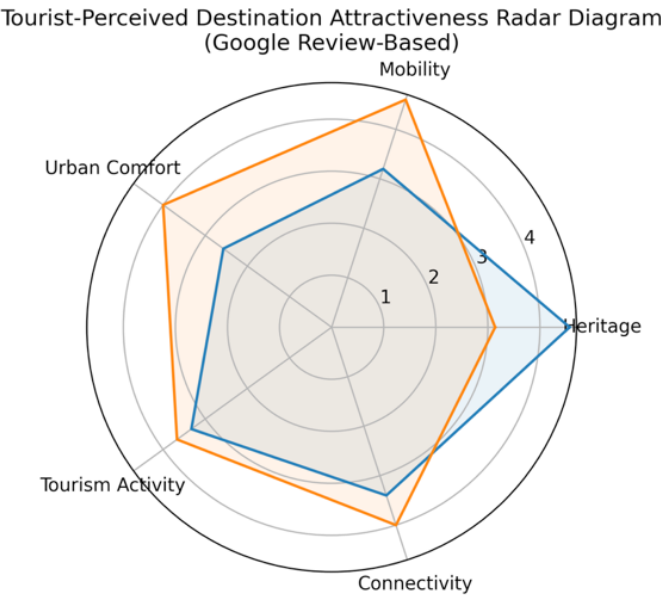


FIGURE 3: Tourist-Perceived Radar Diagram

The elevated grade for heritage ambience suggests that visitors regard Kota Tua as having a unique historical character that enriches the authenticity of their travel experience. Museum attractions significantly enhance interpretative engagement with the site’s historical narrative, enabling visitors to connect with cultural heritage beyond mere visual admiration. Exposure to local culture and street activities enhances experience immersion by offering possibilities for engagement with traditional performances, informal vendors, and community-oriented events.

Nevertheless, the data reveals diminished ratings for categories associated with environmental comfort, including maintenance quality (2), shaded paths (2), resting areas (2), and nocturnal vibrancy (2). The findings indicate that although tourists value the scenic and cultural features of Kota Tua, deficiencies in supporting infrastructure and environmental facilities may compromise their overall comfort during the visit. The absence of covered pedestrian walkways and seating areas may affect visitor enjoyment in tropical climates.

Conversely, Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur has superior performance in functional characteristics related to accessibility and convenience. Tourists assigned much higher ratings to accessibility (5), public transport access (5), and connectedness to attractions (5) in comparison to Kota Tua. These findings underscore the significance of transit integration in influencing visitor perceptions of destination appeal. The proximity of transit amenities, such as the Pasar Seni Light Rail Transit station, facilitates convenient access for tourists to the heritage district from other areas of the city.

Furthermore, Medan Pasar achieved elevated ratings in cleanliness (4), safety perception (4), urban comfort (4), covered walks (4), and resting spots (4). These features foster a conducive physical environment that elevates visitor comfort during their stay. The presence of food outlets and shopping facilities enhances the destination's functional allure by offering additional tourism activities.

Notwithstanding these benefits, Medan Pasar garnered somewhat lower ratings in experiential heritage criteria, such as museum attraction (2), heritage ambience (3), authenticity perception (3), and local culture exposure (3). The results indicate that tourists may view the destination mostly as a commercial or transit-focused area rather than a culturally enriching heritage site. Thematic cluster analysis corroborates these findings, indicating that 64% of tourist assessments for Kota Tua Jakarta pertain to historic experience qualities, including architectural appreciation, cultural exhibitions, and street ambience. In contrast, 41% of Medan Pasar reviews pertain to accessibility and locational convenience, indicating a heightened focus on functional usability.

DISCUSSION

The findings that are presented in Table 1 and the radar graphs that are shown in Figures 2 and 3 demonstrate that there are distinct variances in the patterns of perception that are associated with the two destinations. When it comes to experiential and cultural aspects, Kota Tua Jakarta consistently achieves elevated ratings. These ratings include heritage ambience (5), museum attraction (5), and local culture exposure (5). On the other hand, Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur demonstrates superior performance in functional attributes such as accessibility (5), public transport connectivity (5), and urban comfort (4).

This gap is further supported by the topic distribution that is depicted in Tables 2 and 3, which shows that 64% of evaluations for Kota Tua pertain to historical and experiential aspects, whereas just 7% of reviews for Medan Pasar pertain to these same categories. Medan Pasar, on the other hand, has 41% of assessments that place an emphasis on accessibility and commercial viability, which reflects a pragmatic view of the location. According to these findings, there is a significant distinction between the two: Kota Tua is considered to be a historic site that is centered on experiences, whereas Medan Pasar is considered to be an urban historical area that is focused on convenience.

The comparative analysis reveals that tourists assess the appeal of heritage tourism locations based on varying experiential priorities, which may be shaped by the spatial qualities, environmental conditions, and functional attributes of the location. Visitor perception of Kota Tua Jakarta seems predominantly influenced by heritage-related experiential elements, including architectural authenticity, museum attractions, and local cultural activities. The findings suggest that tourists visiting Kota Tua are driven not only by leisure but also by a desire to connect with the historical narrative and cultural identity inherent in the physical landscape.

The robust correlation between heritage ambience and visitor perception indicates that Kota Tua serves as a cultural interface, enabling tourists to engage with local history through both tangible and intangible features. Street performances, informal vendors, bicycle activities, and museum exhibitions enhance the social life of the location by facilitating interactions between visitors and the local population. Such activities may augment the sense of place attachment and authenticity experienced by tourists, enabling them to consider the heritage area as a dynamic setting rather than a static exhibition space.

These social encounters may facilitate cultural transmission, allowing tourists to encounter local traditions, crafts, and historical narratives through experiential participation (Amir et al. 2014). Kota Tua may be seen as a socially immersive locale that fosters significant cultural interactions. The comparatively lower ratings for environmental comfort features, including maintenance quality, covered walks, and resting spots, indicate that infrastructural deficiencies may impede visitors' ability to fully interact with the social context.

In tropical regions like Jakarta, thermal comfort significantly influences outdoor travel experiences. The lack of sufficient shaded areas and seating options may diminish visitor length, especially during peak daytime hours when temperature and humidity are elevated. This constraint may indirectly hinder social connection by dissuading extended participation in street-based activities and cultural performances. Thus, while Kota Tua exhibits significant experience allure, infrastructural shortcomings may limit its ability to facilitate ongoing visitor engagement in social activities.

From an economic standpoint, the focus on heritage authenticity in tourist perception may indicate the destination's dependence on cultural attractions as a principal tourism asset. Museums and historic edifices function as informative institutions and economic catalysts, drawing people and generating income through admission fees, guided tours, and supplementary services. Informal street sellers and small enterprises in the region may gain from travelers seeking local crafts, souvenirs, or refreshments (Shang et al. 2019).

Nonetheless, the restricted availability of nocturnal activities, as evidenced by the low ranking for night-time liveliness, implies that the economic potential linked to night time tourism may remain underexploited. In numerous metropolitan tourism locales, nocturnal economies significantly contribute to prolonging visitor stays and augmenting tourism spending (Mehmetoglu & Engen 2011). The lack of sufficient illumination, safety protocols, or recreational amenities during nighttime may deter tourists from frequenting the region after dark, thus diminishing potential income for local enterprises. Conversely, Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur has a distinct perception pattern marked by robust functional performance. Tourists often highlight accessibility, connectivity, cleanliness, and urban comfort as crucial aspects affecting their assessment of the site. The incorporation of public transportation systems, such as the Light Rail Transit (LRT) network, improves mobility and convenience, allowing visitors to reach the heritage district with ease.

From a societal perspective, enhanced accessibility may promote more inclusivity by enabling tourists from varied demographic backgrounds to reach the site. Enhanced transport connectivity may diminish physical obstacles related to travel, rendering the heritage district more accessible to senior visitors, families with

children, and those with mobility limitations (George 2010). Moreover, well-maintained public areas and pedestrian routes can augment perceived safety, motivating tourists to navigate the area with assurance (Ab Rahman et al. 2025). The relatively lower ratings for legacy ambience and authenticity indicate that tourists may view Medan Pasar mostly as a commercial or transit-focused area rather than a culturally enriching heritage site. Retail establishments and souvenir shops may enhance economic vitality by creating employment opportunities and producing revenue for local entrepreneurs. However, excessive commercialization may undermine the apparent authenticity of the cultural environment by converting historic locations into consumption-driven areas.

From an economic standpoint, the prevalence of retail and culinary activities in tourist assessments suggests that Medan Pasar may serve as a service-oriented tourism center, where commercial transactions are integral to the visitor experience. The presence of commercial amenities can improve convenience and enjoyment for travelers pursuing recreational or retail activities. The focus on commercial services may diminish opportunities for interpretive interaction with historical narratives (Kim & Eves 2012), thereby undermining the experiential richness of the heritage environment.

From an environmental standpoint, Medan Pasar exhibits superior performance in cleanliness, urban comfort, and resting amenities in comparison to Kota Tua. These features may foster a conducive physical environment that improves visitor pleasure by reducing discomfort during site engagement. The presence of covered pathways and lounging places may alleviate temperature stress, enabling tourists to remain in the region for extended durations without exhaustion. The quality of the environment may affect tourists' perceptions of safety and hygiene, which are critical factors in urban tourism situations (Wood & Kinnunen 2020). Immaculate and well-preserved public areas can foster a favorable perception of destination management, promoting return visits and positive referrals. Conversely, perceived environmental shortcomings in Kota Tua may adversely impact tourist assessments despite the existence of robust cultural characteristics.

The disparity between experience authenticity in Kota Tua and functional usability in Medan Pasar underscores the intricacy of assessing heritage tourism sites based on visitor perception. Cultural

immersion may augment emotional attachment and happiness; nevertheless, accessibility and environmental comfort are equally crucial in fostering great travel experiences. Moreover, travelers exploring heritage neighborhoods may emphasize varying experiential aspects based on their motivations and anticipations. Individuals pursuing educational or cultural enrichment are likely to favor locations with a robust historical atmosphere and interpretive resources, while those prioritizing convenience or leisure activities may opt for destinations with efficient transportation links and adequate amenities.

This divergence illustrates wider behavioral patterns in modern tourism, where tourists' expectations are increasingly shaped by lifestyle choices, travel limitations, and exposure to digital media. Social media platforms may motivate tourists to favor visually appealing destinations for photography, so augmenting the allure of heritage sites with unique architectural characteristics (Wilson & Harris 2006). Consequently, comprehending tourist perceptions via internet evaluations yields significant insights into the real-world experiences of heritage tourism places. Integrating such feedback into destination management methods may facilitate the equilibrium between cultural authenticity and functional comfort, ensuring that heritage districts retain their appeal to varied tourist demographics while safeguarding their historical importance.

CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes the significance of tourist perception in assessing the appeal of heritage tourism sites in historic urban areas. Analysis gathered from Google Reviews indicates that Kota Tua Jakarta has a heightened experience allure linked to its heritage ambiance, cultural exposure, and visual appeal. In contrast, Medan Pasar Kuala Lumpur has superior functional performance regarding accessibility, urban comfort, and connectedness. The results indicate that tourist pleasure at historical tourism sites is affected by many experiential goals. Some tourists are driven by cultural immersion and historical authenticity, while others prioritize ease and environmental comfort throughout their vacation. Consequently, the appeal of a site cannot be assessed exclusively on physical heritage components; it must also account for the experiential quality observed by tourists. This study employs internet tourist reviews as an alternative

assessment method, offering important insights into tourists' experiences at heritage tourism attractions. The findings underscore the necessity for destination managers to reconcile cultural authenticity with practical utility to improve visitor happiness and preserve the appeal of historic tourism destinations.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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

REFERENCES

- Ab Rahman, S.A., Abdullah, A., Mohmad Zakir, M.I., Abu Bakar, A. & Abdul Majid, N.H. 2025. An investigation of tourist satisfaction in Malaysia cultural museum: indoor space experience. *Planning Malaysia* 23(1): 303-318.
- Ab Rahman, S.A., Bachok, S. & Mahamod, L.H. 2023. Effects of travel characteristics on tourism expenditure: a case study of Malaysia young outbound tourists. *Planning Malaysia* 21(1): 193-202.
- Ab Rahman, S.A., Mohmad Zakir, M.I., Abdullah, A., Abdul Razak, R., Abdul Majid, N.H., Harun N. & Abu Bakar, A. 2024. An investigation of tourists satisfaction in Malaysia cultural museum: entrance space experience. *Quantum Journal of Social Science* 5(2): 59-69.
- Amelung, B., Nicholls, S. & Viner, D. 2007. Implications of global climate change for tourism flows and seasonality. *Journal of Travel Research* 45(3): 285-296
- Amir, S., Azizan, A., Zahari, R.K. & Asmawi, M.Z., 2020. Urban public space as social interaction space: case study in Petaling Street. *Tourism, Hospitality and Environment Management* 5(19): 90-101.
- Amir, S., Mohamed Osman, M., Bachok, S. & Ibrahim, M. 2014. Understanding of tourists' preferences pattern: A study in Melaka, Malaysia, *Planning Malaysia* 3: 81-94.
- Amir, S., Mohamed Osman, M., Bachok, S., Ibrahim, M. & Mohamed, M.Z. 2017. Tourism stakeholders perception on tourists' expenditure in entertainment sector in Melaka UNESCO World Heritage Area. *Advanced Science Letters* 23(7): 6336-6338.
- Ballesteros, E. R. & Ramirez, M. H. 2007. Identity and community - reflections on the development of mining heritage tourism in Southern Spain. *Tourism Management* 28 (3): 677-687
- Chin, C., Swatman, P. & Swatman, P. 2005. The virtual shopping experience: using virtual presence to motivate online shopping. *Australasian Journal of Information Systems* 13(1): 239-253.
- Csurgó, B. & Smith, M. K. 2022. Cultural heritage, sense of place and tourism: an analysis of cultural ecosystem services in rural Hungary. *Sustainability* 14(12): 1-24.
- Del Barrio, M. J., Devesa, M. & Herrero, L. C. 2012. Evaluating intangible cultural heritage: the case of cultural festivals. *City, Culture and Society* 3(4): 235-244.
- Esu, B. B. & Arrey, V. M.-E. 2009. Tourists' satisfaction with cultural tourism festival: a case study of calabar carnival festival, Nigeria. *International Journal of Business and Management* 4(3): 116-125

- Fenton, J. 2005. Space, chance, time: walking backwards through the hours on the left and right banks of Paris. *Cultural Geographies* 12(4): 412-428
- George, W. E. 2010. Intangible cultural heritage, ownership, copyright, and tourism. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research* 40(4): 376-388
- Hughes, H. & Allen, D. 2005. Cultural tourism in Central and Eastern Europe: the views of induced image formation agents. *Tourism Management* 26(2): 173-183
- Khalid, M.A., Ab Rahman, S.A. & Bachok, S. 2023. Domestic tourists' behaviour on islamic tourism In Kota Bharu Malaysia. *Asian People Journal* 6(1): 156-166.
- Kim, Y. G. & Eves, A. 2012. Construction and validation of a scale to measure tourist motivation to consume local food. *Tourism Management* 33(6): 1458-1467
- Li, Y. & Hunter, C. 2015. Community involvement for sustainable heritage tourism: a conceptual model. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development* 5(3): 248-262
- Maklan, S. & Klaus, P. 2011. Customer experience. Are we measuring the right things? *International Journal of Market Research* 53(6): 771-792
- Mehmetoglu, M. & Engen, M. 2011. Pine and Gilmore's Concept of Experience Economy and Its Dimensions: an Empirical Examination in Tourism. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Tourism* 12(4): 237-255.
- Pahrudin, P., Chen, C. T. & Liu, L. W. 2021. A modified theory of planned behavioral: a case of tourist intention to visit a destination post pandemic Covid-19 in Indonesia. *Heliyon* 7(10).
- Shang, W., Qiao, G. & Chen, N. 2019. Tourist experience of slow tourism: from authenticity to place attachment – A mixed-method study based on the case of slow city in China. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research* 25(2): 170-188
- Trinh, T. T. & Ryan, C. 2015. Current issues in tourism heritage and cultural tourism: the role of the aesthetic when visiting my son and cham museum, Vietnam. *Current Issues in Tourism* 1: 1-28
- Wilson, E. & Harris, C. 2006. Meaningful travel: women, independent travel and the search for self and meaning. *Tourism. An International Interdisciplinary Journal* 54(2): 161-172.
- Wood, E. H. & Kinnunen, M. 2020. Emotion, memory and re-collective value: shared festival experiences. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 32(3): 1275-1298.
- Yu, X., Kim, N., Chen, C. C. & Schwartz, Z. 2012. Are you a tourist? Tourism definition from the tourist perspective. *Tourism Analysis* 17(4): 445-457.