

The Role of Public Art in Encouraging Social Interaction Among Visitors at Elmina Lakeside Mall Urban Park, Shah Alam

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ABSTRACT

Public art has long been seen as a significant contributor to create vibrant and interesting public spaces. However, its potential in fostering social interaction and community engagement remains underutilised in some urban contexts. This research investigates the role of public art in promoting social interaction among users at Elmina Lakeside Mall, Shah Alam. Public art installations, such as sculptures and monuments, are not merely decorative but have the potential to become social catalysts that foster interaction and community engagement. This study aims to evaluate how public art can transform public spaces into interactive environments that foster connections and encourage diverse groups to engage actively. Using a combination of direct site observations and questionnaire survey, the research examines how public art influences user behaviour, with a specific focus on its role in promoting meaningful social interaction and fostering a cohesive community environment. The findings offer insight into how public art can be more effectively integrated into urban landscapes to enhance community life and create more socially dynamic spaces. The study recommends strategies for landscape designers and urban planners to maximise the social benefits of public art.

INTRODUCTION

In modern urban environments, public spaces serve as essential areas where community members can engage in social activities, recreation, and relaxation. These spaces, such as parks, plazas, and malls,

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provide opportunities for social interaction that can enhance community ties and foster a sense of belonging. However, there has been limited research integrating the physical characteristics of public spaces with patterns of social interaction and their implications for social cohesion (Qi et al., 2024). When a public space lacks a high-quality environment and appropriate complementary uses, it risks becoming a “non-place” with limited social meaning (Uwase, 2025). In this regard, public art, which encompasses sculptures, installations, and monuments, presents an opportunity to address this issue by transforming previously passive spaces into interactive, vibrant environments (Zhou et al., 2024). Elmina Lakeside Mall, located in Shah Alam, serves as the site study area for this research. The mall's integration of public art within its landscape presents an opportunity to assess how these elements impact user behaviour and foster social interaction. As urbanisation continues to increase, the need for spaces that promote human connection becomes more pressing. By analysing the role of public art in this commercial space, the research seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on urban landscape design and its potential to foster community engagement. Thus, the research aims to assess the role of public art in promoting social interaction among users particularly in urban commercial area.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Public Art and Social Interaction in Urban Spaces

Public art installations, including sculptures, murals, and monuments, have a profound impact on the social dynamics within urban spaces. They contribute to the visual and cultural identity of a place while fostering a sense of community and engagement. Public art can act as a social catalyst, providing platforms for conversation, interaction, and communal activities. It also has the potential to stimulate local economic activity, attract visitors, and strengthen the commercial vitality of adjacent areas (Nyaiyonga, 2024). Moreover, public art plays a vital role in enriching public spaces by transforming them into interactive environments that encourage diverse forms of engagement. This is largely due to the wide range of forms that public art can take. These include landscape features such as topiary, trees, and shrubs shaped into animal or geometric forms, which can enliven streets and public squares and fulfil a public art function. In addition, practices such as guerrilla gardening may also be considered public art, as they seek to beautify neglected spaces, support ecological restoration, and strengthen community connections (Milne & Pojani, 2022).

The Role of Public Art in Social Interaction

Public art is increasingly recognised as a key element in promoting social interaction and community identity. When integrated into urban landscapes, art installations offer not only aesthetic value but also spaces where individuals from diverse backgrounds can connect. Ujang et al. (2018) suggest public spaces enhanced by art installations foster a sense of place attachment, which is vital in creating meaningful interactions among diverse groups. These installations provide a common ground where people can engage, discuss, and build connections, strengthening the social fabric of urban areas. Besides, public art also plays a significant role in community and urban development that extends beyond aesthetic enhancement. It is crucial in shaping community identity by reflecting and celebrating local cultural, historical, and social narratives. Moreover, public art functions as a catalyst for social interaction and community engagement by attracting people to shared urban spaces. Through the creation of interactive environments, public art strengthens social connections and contributes to the development of social capital (Gesare, 2024).

Public Art and User Experience at Elmina Lakeside Mall

Elmina Lakeside Mall, as an urban public space, offers a unique opportunity to explore the interaction between public art and user experience. Drawing on Lynch (1960) theory of urban space perception, the art installations at Elmina Lakeside Mall are designed to enhance visibility, guide movement, and create areas for social interaction. A study by Yang (2021) reveals that public art in commercial areas should go beyond merely serving functional or commercial objectives. It should also fully engage with the artistic potential of space itself, using site-specific expression to enhance spatial identity and attract public interest, thereby contributing to the vitality and popularity of the commercial environment. Elmina Lakeside Mall is a master-planned, biophilic, lifestyle-focused commercial township hub located in Shah Alam, Selangor. It features public art installations, including interactive sculptures and symbolic monuments, to foster social connections. Research by Nyaiyonga (2024) indicates that spaces featuring art designed for user engagement result in increased physical activity, longer visitation times, and more frequent social interactions among users.

Influence of Public Art on Community Identity

Public art not only encourages social interaction but also enhances the quality of social engagement in public spaces. Art that reflects local culture, history, or shared experiences strengthens the connection between users and their environment, making spaces more meaningful and personalised. Previous studies have reported that public art has the power to invoke place attachment by representing local identity, which in turn fosters a sense of pride and belonging among community members (Nyaiyonga, 2024; Ujang et al., 2018; Yang, 2021). The integration of culturally significant public art at Elmina Lakeside Mall aims to create a space where visitors feel connected to both the art and the environment, promoting community engagement.

Public Art for Social Interaction in Commercial Area

The effectiveness of public art in fostering social interaction largely depends on its design and placement. According to Gao and Misni (2025), public art that is interactive or located in high-traffic areas tends to stimulate more social engagement than passive installations. For example, installations that allow physical interaction, such as climbing sculptures or art that responds to user input, create opportunities for communal experiences. Moreover, public art installations make a significant contribution to expressing the spirit of the city, enhancing its artistic quality, and providing enduring aesthetic and cultural enjoyment for the public (Wang, 2025). Public art does not merely function as a focal point for social interaction; rather, its presence reveals how spatial design informs behavioural responses to public environments. Sensory stimuli and observable behaviours such as sitting, lingering, and co-presence with others highlight the intensity of spatial occupation and modes of engagement with public art. Within the broader urban context, spatial settings shape the physical possibilities they offer, thereby influencing the nature and extent of public interaction and engagement (Gao & Misni, 2025). At Elmina Lakeside Mall, the integration of public art with the landscape creates interactive environments that attract diverse groups of users.

Apart from enhancing the user's experience, public art also contributes to broader social benefits. Beyond enhancing the aesthetic quality of urban environments, public art facilitates sensory experiences such as visual, auditory and tactile. Thus, it is evoking emotional responses that strengthen community interaction and social cohesion (Cui & Misdi, 2025). As part of the urban areas, public art also essential to transform commercial areas into places where visitors feel comfortable interacting, relaxing, and engaging with others. The research indicates that integrating public art into commercial areas significantly enhances the consumer experience, particularly in terms of aesthetic appreciation, entertainment, immersion, and educational value. Consequently, public art serves as a catalyst for increasing the value of

commercial spaces by improving consumer satisfaction, loyalty, and place attachment. In this context, public art functions not merely as a physical artefact but also as an interactive and functional platform for social activities, contributing to the development of high-quality commercial spaces that support cultural growth (Zheng, 2022). Hence, public art installations can bridge the gap between functionality and community engagement, turning what might otherwise be transactional spaces into vibrant social hubs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Study Area



Fig. 1. (left) Key plan of the site; (right) Location plan of Elmina Lakeside Park

Source: Google Earth (2026)

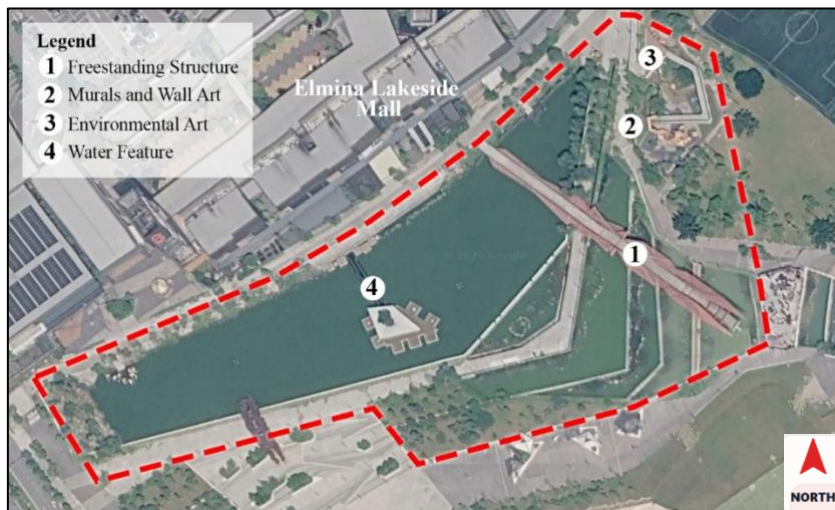


Fig. 2. Site plan of Elmina Lakeside Park showing the locations of the four public art typologies: (1) Freestanding Structure, (2) Murals and Wall Art, (3) Environmental Art, and (4) Water Feature

Source: Authors (2024)

Elmina Lakeside Mall, located at the heart of Elmina City Centre in Shah Alam, spans over 17.18 acres and designed with a unique biophilic approach. Combining nature-inspired elements with modern amenities, the mall reflects Sime Darby Property's commitment to sustainable and vibrant communities. As a lifestyle hub for the City of Elmina's growing population of 67,000 and nearby areas, Elmina Lakeside

Mall offers a mix of retail, leisure, and recreational experiences. Its design enhances the quality of life by fostering connections to nature and providing spaces for social interaction. Situated close to Elmina Lakeside Park, the mall complements the township's vision by blending commerce, community, and culture into one (1) dynamic destination.

Methods of Data Collection

This research employs site observation and a questionnaire survey. The site observation is to identify the types and locations of public art, document user movement patterns, and analyse how visitors interact with the art. At the same time, the questionnaire survey aims to assess visitor perceptions of public art's aesthetic appeal, inclusivity, and its effectiveness in fostering social interaction at Elmina Lakeside Park. Together, these methods provide insights into how public art shapes user behaviour and fosters social connections in the park.

Direct Site Observation

Direct site observations will document the types of public art, including sculptures, murals, environmental art, and water features, as well as their placement and how visitors engage with them, such as through conversations, group activities, or photography. The spatial relationship between public art and activity spaces, such as seating areas and pathways, will also be assessed to determine how art installations encourage or limit park usage.

Table 1. Site Observation Details

Aspect	Details
Duration of Conduct	- Two weeks - 23/11/2024 – 06/12/2024 - 10:00 AM – 10:00 PM
Rationale	The observations were conducted at various times of the day, on both weekdays and weekends, to capture variations in movement patterns and user behaviour around public art.

Source: Authors (2024)

Table 2. Elements and Techniques of the Site Observation

Attributes	Method	Instrument
Types of Public Art	Document the types of public art, including sculptures, murals, and environmental art, and water features.	Use an observation checklist, a map and photos to categorise each type of public art.
Behavioural study	Record how visitors engage with public art, such as taking photos, having conversations, or participating in group activities.	Mapping the visitors' activities.
Time of Engagement	Observe peak and low interaction times based on morning and afternoon, and evening usage patterns.	Conduct observations at different times of the day over three (3) days, including weekends, using a checklist.
Gathering Points	To identify the gathering spot of public art area.	Notes of duration and engagement by mapping on the map.

Source: Authors (2024)

Questionnaire Survey

The study employs a questionnaire survey to assess the role of public art in promoting social interaction at Elmina Lakeside Park. The questionnaire consists of three (3) sections. Section A collects respondents' demographic information, Section B examines visitors' perceptions of public art, and Section C explores respondents' preferences for different types of public art based on their perceived social impact.

The sample size for the survey was determined using Slovin's formula, based on an estimated population of 500 park visitors. A sample of 24–30 respondents was targeted to achieve a 20% margin of error. Convenience sampling was employed to select participants, allowing data to be collected efficiently from accessible visitors during the observation period. The survey was distributed both in-person and digitally, ensuring a diverse range of responses and facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the role of public art in shaping social interactions at the park. It is important to note that, the value $n = 23.81$ calculated via Slovin's Formula was used strictly as the statistical absolute minimum required threshold to preserve mathematical viability for this small, targeted group during field planning. To enhance data validation, the study extended field outreach, successfully collecting a total of 36 valid responses during the two-week observation window.

Slovin's Formula

$$\text{Formula} \quad - n = \frac{N}{1 + N \times e^2}$$

Variable - n : The sample size

N : The total population

e^2 : The margin of error, expressed as a decimal

$$\text{Calculation} \quad - n = \frac{500}{1 + 500 \times (0.20)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{500}{21}$$

$$n = 23.81 \approx 24$$

Data Analysis

The data collected through the survey was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods to evaluate the role of public art in fostering social interaction at Elmina Lakeside Park. The questionnaire responses, structured on Likert scales for most sections, were processed and analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, such as mean, median, and standard deviation, were calculated to summarise the overall trends in participants' perceptions of public art's visual appeal, inclusivity, and its influence on social interaction. Frequency distributions and percentages were used to analyse demographic data, such as gender, age group, and visit frequency, providing insights into the respondent profile.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings derived from the analysis of survey data collected to evaluate the role of public art in fostering social interaction at Elmina Lakeside Park. The analysis integrates both descriptive and analytical approaches, offering insights into visitor demographics, perceptions of public art, and its impact on social interactions. Key factors influencing these outcomes are discussed in consideration of the existing.

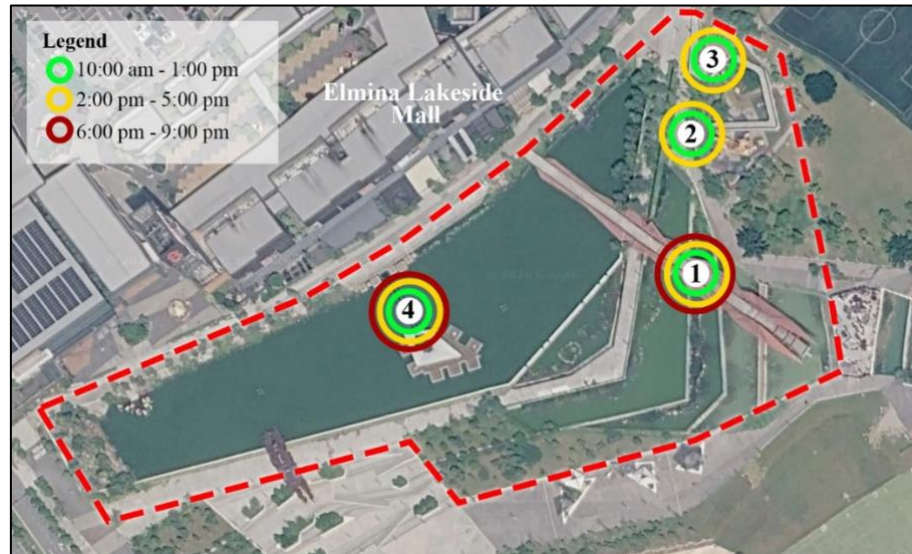


Fig. 3. Visitor Engagement and Gathering Patterns Surrounding the Four Public Art Installations at Elmina Lakeside Park Based on Temporal Observations.

Source: Authors (2024)

Table 3. Behavioural Observations and Visitor Engagement with Public Art Installations

Types Of Public Art	Behavioural Study	Time of Engagement	Gathering Points
	Visitors take photos, engage in group activities, and spend time admiring the design.	Mostly active between 10:00 AM - 9:00 PM.	Moderate gathering occurs during the early morning and evening due to shade and scenic views appeal.

Fig. 4. Freestanding Structure at Elmina Lakeside Park (Authors, 2024)

Types Of Public Art	Behavioural Study	Time of Engagement	Gathering Points
	Used as a backdrop for photos, casual conversations occur around the murals, particularly in the morning and afternoon.	Active primarily during 10:00AM - 1:00PM, with reduced activity later.	Low gathering murals are visited briefly for photos before moving on, and it is dark during night hours.
 	Visitors sit, relax, or have informal group discussions around these features.	Steady engagement throughout the day, particularly during 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (daytime).	Moderate clustering near seating areas or shaded rocks for resting.

Fig. 6. Environmental Art at Elmina Lakeside Park (Authors, 2024)

Types Of Public Art	Behavioural Study	Time of Engagement	Gathering Points
	Highly popular; visitors engage in water-based activities such as water walking, and taking photos.	Peak engagement during 6:00PM - 9:00PM, with consistent activity throughout the day.	Highly popular; visitors engage in water-based activities like paddle boating, water walking, and take photos.
	Highly popular; visitors engage in water-based activities such as paddle boating, and taking photos	Peak engagement during 6:00PM - 9:00PM, with consistent activity throughout the day.	Highly popular; visitors engage in water-based activities like paddle boating, water walking, and take photos.

Fig. 7. Water Feature at Elmina Lakeside Park (Authors, 2024)

Source: Authors (2024)

The observation shows that visitors to the public art installations exhibited distinct behavioural patterns, with the water features at the man-made lake emerging as the most popular gathering point throughout the day due to interactive activities such as water walking and paddle boating. Freestanding structures also attracted moderate engagement, as visitors frequently took photos and explored the installations, particularly during afternoon hours. Meanwhile, murals and wall art drew interactions primarily through passive appreciation, including photography and discussions, with peak activity observed in the early afternoon. Environmental art, such as boulders and rock installations, garnered sporadic attention, mainly as seating or rest areas rather than focal points of interaction. These findings highlight the significance of interactivity and usability in attracting visitors, with active, experience-driven installations, such as water features, outperforming static artworks in fostering sustained engagement.

Survey

Section A: Demographic Profile

The findings in Table 4 indicate that the site primarily attracts young adult females as the dominant demographic group, with the age group of 18–24 years being the largest (33.3%) likely due to this age

group's higher engagement in social and leisure activities, while the under-18 age group is the smallest (11.1%) as younger individuals may have limited independence or access to such locations. The frequency of visits reveals that most visitors attend on a monthly or rare basis, with 30.6% visiting rarely and 25% monthly, which may indicate that the site is perceived as a destination for special occasions or periodic recreation rather than for routine or daily use, as shown by the low percentage of daily visitors (5.6%). Regarding the purpose of visits, the site is predominantly used for family-related activities (47.2%), likely due to its design or amenities that cater to family-friendly environments, such as open spaces, safe surroundings, or recreational features conducive to gatherings, making it a popular choice for families seeking leisure time together.

Table 4. Results of Demographic Profile

Description	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	14	38.9%
	Female	22	61.1%
Age Group	Under 18 years old	4	11.1%
	18 – 24 years old	12	33.3%
	25 – 34 years old	9	25%
	35 – 44 years old	6	16.7%
	45 years old and above	5	13.9%
Frequency of Visitors	Daily	2	5.6%
	Weely	7	19.4%
	Monthly	9	25.0%
	Rarely	11	30.6%
Purpose	First-time visitor	7	19.4%
	Alone	4	11.1%
	Family	17	47.2%
	Friends	15	41.7%

Source: Authors (2024)

Section B: Social Interaction and Public Art

As in Table 5, the Water Features exhibit the highest mean score of 4.75, with a low standard deviation of 0.439, indicating a strong consensus that they significantly enhance the visual appeal of the space. The Freestanding Structure follows closely with a mean of 4.67 and a similarly low standard deviation (0.478), highlighting its contribution to the park's aesthetics. The Environmental Art scored 4.08, reflecting moderate agreement on its impact on visual appeal. Meanwhile, Murals and Wall Art scored the lowest mean of 3.94, suggesting a lower emphasis on their contribution to the park's overall visual attractiveness. These results emphasise the prominence of water elements and freestanding structures in improving the park's aesthetic value.

Table 5. Perceptions Toward the Aesthetic Value of Public Art

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The freestanding structure enhances the overall visual appeal of the space.	36	4	5	4.67	0.478

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The Murals and Wall Art enhance the overall visual appeal of the space.	36	2	5	3.94	0.754
The Environmental Art elements enhance the overall visual appeal of the space.	36	3	5	4.08	0.937
The Water Features enhances the overall visual appeal of the space.	36	4	5	4.75	0.439

Source: Authors (2024)

Table 6 shows that the Freestanding Structure received the highest mean score of 4.44, with a standard deviation of 0.652, demonstrating its effectiveness as a backdrop for group activities, such as photos and discussions. Environmental Art scored 4.25, followed by Water Features with 4.19, reflecting moderate agreement on their suitability for group activities. Murals and Wall Art, with a means of 4.14, ranked lowest, indicating slightly less preference as a backdrop for social gatherings. Overall, the findings highlight the Freestanding Structure as the most effective element in fostering group activities. The higher preference for freestanding structures could reflect their versatility, strong visual presence, and functional advantage in fostering group interactions. Other elements, although effective, may lack the same degree of adaptability or immediacy in capturing attention, resulting in comparatively lower scores.

Table 6. Influence of Public Art Typologies Towards Users' Activities

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The freestanding structure serves as a backdrop for group activities (e.g., photos, discussions).	36	3	5	4.44	0.652
The Murals and Wall Art serve as a backdrop for group activities (e.g., photos, discussions).	36	2	5	4.14	0.683
The Environmental Art elements serve as a backdrop for group activities (e.g., photos, discussions).	36	3	5	4.25	0.732
The Water Features serves as a backdrop for group activities (e.g., photos, discussions).	36	2	5	4.19	0.710

Source: Authors (2024)

The results of the descriptive analysis show that the Water Features exhibit the highest mean score of 4.50, with a low standard deviation of 0.561, indicating a strong consensus that they add the most diversity and interest to the park. The Freestanding Structure follows closely with a mean of 4.42, reflecting its significant contribution to the park's appeal. Environmental Art scored 4.36, indicating moderate agreement regarding its ability to enhance diversity. In contrast, Murals and Wall Art scored the lowest mean of 3.92, suggesting that they are perceived as less impactful in adding variety and appeal. This may be due to their static nature and reliance on specific locations or viewing angles, which limits their ability to engage visitors dynamically compared to other features. These findings reinforce the importance of incorporating dynamic and interactive elements, such as water features, which actively capture and sustain visitors' interest, while also highlighting the need to reconsider or innovate static elements, like murals, to maximise their appeal.

Table 7. Public Art Typologies in Contributing to the Diversity and Uniqueness of the Park

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The freestanding structure adds diversity and interest to the park.	36	1	5	4.42	0.806
The Murals and Wall Art add diversity and interest to the park.	36	3	5	3.92	0.732
The Environmental Art elements add diversity and interest to the park.	36	3	5	4.36	0.639
The Water Features adds diversity and interest to the park.	36	3	5	4.50	0.561

Source: Authors (2024)

Section C: Ranking of existing features at Elmina Lakeside Park in promoting social interaction

The ranking analysis reveals that Environmental Art is rated the most effective in encouraging social interaction, with a mean score of 1.89 and a standard deviation of 1.116, emphasising its high priority among respondents due to its natural and interactive qualities, which likely create inviting spaces for connection. Water Features rank second, with a mean of 2.25 and a standard deviation of 1.628, reflecting their perceived importance as dynamic and visually appealing elements that attract groups and facilitate interaction. Freestanding Structures rank third with a mean of 2.53, suggesting their moderate contribution to social engagement, possibly due to their versatility and ability to act as focal points for gatherings. Murals and Wall Art rank last, with the highest mean score of 2.78, indicating that they are perceived as the least effective in fostering social interaction. This is likely due to their static and observational nature, which may not actively encourage group activities. While Water Features scored higher in aesthetics due to dynamic visual and sensory engagement, Environmental Art (boulders and rocks) ranked highest for social interaction because of its informal, tactile usability. These natural configurations function as low-pressure physical "affordances" or social props which providing natural resting/seating hubs where visitors easily linger, pause, and engage in comfortable face-to-face community dialogue. Unlike active water sports which dictate linear physical movement, environmental elements foster organic, unstructured communal clustering. These findings underscore the value of incorporating natural, interactive, and engaging features, such as environmental art and Water Features, to promote social interaction within the space effectively. In addition, Table 9 displays photographs of the existing public art typologies at Elmina Lakeside Park that promote social interaction. These images are ordered based on their descriptive evaluation mean rankings from Table 8.

Table 8. Ranking of existing features at Elmina Lakeside Park in Promoting Social Interactions

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Freestanding Structure	36	1	5	2.53	1.748
Murals and Wall Art	36	1	4	2.78	0.989
Environmental Art	36	1	5	1.89	1.116
Water Features	36	1	5	2.25	1.628

Source: Authors (2024)

Table 9: Ranking of Existing Public Art Typologies at Elmina Lakeside Park in Promoting Social Interactions

No. of Rank	Public Art Typologies	Remarks
1	 Fig. 8. Environmental Art, ranked first in promoting social interaction (Authors, 2024)	Environmental Art is rated the most effective in encouraging social interaction
2	 Fig. 9. Water Features, ranked second in promoting social interaction (Authors, 2024)	Water Features ranked second reflecting their perceived importance as dynamic and visually appealing elements that attract groups and facilitate interaction.
3	 Fig. 10. Freestanding Structure, ranked third in promoting social interaction (Authors, 2024)	Freestanding Structures ranked third suggesting their moderate contribution to social engagement, possibly due to their versatility and ability to act as focal points for gatherings.

No. of Rank	Public Art Typologies	Remarks
4		Murals and Wall Art are ranked last due to their static and observational nature, which may not actively encourage group activities.

Fig. 11. Murals and Wall Art, ranked last in promoting social interaction (Authors, 2024)

Source: Authors (2024)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study reveals recommendations to enhance social interaction and engagement through public art at Elmina Lakeside Park. First, interactive and usable elements, such as the water features, emerged as the most effective installations for fostering engagement. Building on this success, additional interactive features, such as splash zones, stepping-stone pathways, or playful water sculptures, should be introduced to further draw visitors. Freestanding structures, which serve well as visual backdrops, can be optimised for greater interaction by integrating functional elements, such as shaded seating, climbing structures, or interactive photo booths. Murals and wall art, while appreciated for their aesthetics, were primarily passive attractions. Adding augmented reality (AR) Alternatively, interactive storytelling components to these artworks can revitalise their appeal and attract a broader audience.

Environmental art, such as boulders and rock installations, is underutilised and could be transformed into interactive sculptures, climbing rocks, or play areas to encourage active use. Adding greenery and nature-inspired designs around public art would enhance the park’s ambience and visual appeal. Regular events, such as art workshops, guided tours, or festivals, can boost engagement, as activities like paddle boating have proven effective in drawing visitors. To maximise accessibility and interaction, interactive installations should be centrally located, while murals and passive features should line walking paths. Regular feedback from visitors should be gathered to improve existing features and plan future installations, ensuring the park continues to meet their needs. These recommendations aim to create a vibrant, inclusive space that fosters social interaction and enhances the visitor experience.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings from both the site observation and survey highlight the pivotal role of interactive and engaging public art in fostering social interaction at Elmina Lakeside Park. Water features, freestanding structures, murals, and environmental art each contribute uniquely to the park’s overall ambience, with interactive elements like water features proving to be the most effective in attracting and engaging visitors. Passive elements, such as murals and environmental art, enhance the visual appeal and provide functional

value, but could benefit from increased interactivity to maximise their potential. The analysis underscores the importance of designing public art that strikes a balance between aesthetics, functionality, and interactivity, thereby catering to diverse visitor preferences. By incorporating greenery, nature-inspired designs, and interactive features, the park can continue to enhance visitor engagement and create a vibrant community space. While this study provides valuable exploratory insights into public art engagement at Elmina Lakeside Mall, it is important to acknowledge the limitation of the small sample size ($n = 36$). Consequently, these findings possess specific statistical boundaries, and caution should be exercised before generalising these results to broader geographic locations or different urban commercial contexts. This establishes clear statistical boundaries and the 20% margin of error, meaning these findings serve primarily as an exploratory look into a specific biophilic commercial space and should not be broadly generalised to other geographic urban environments without further validation.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors agree that this research was conducted in the absence of any self-benefits, commercial or financial conflicts and declare the absence of conflicting interests with the funders.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Nur Syazana Jamrus conducted the research and prepared the original draft of the manuscript. As the principal supervisor, Shaibatul' Islamiah Che Man conceptualised and designed the study, oversaw the overall research progress, made major improvements to the manuscript's core content during revisions, and provided final approval for submission. Nurhayati Abdul Malek reviewed and refined the paper by providing critical feedback. Amalina Mohd Fauzi participated in the review process, and Muhammad Noor edited the final manuscript.

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