

**Universiti Teknologi MARA**

**A Cross-Cultural Comparison on Preferences  
Towards Selected Urban Landscape  
Planting Compositions**

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## **A CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON ON PREFERENCES TOWARDS SELECTED URBAN LANDSCAPE PLANTING COMPOSITIONS**

### **Abstract**

A perception study with respect to urban landscape planting was carried out in Shah Alam city. The importance of such study has become increasingly essential due to the public's awareness on landscape planting around the city area.

The aim of this study is to explore and to compare the preferences of an urban multiracial community. There is a need to carry out such a study because urban planting in the city should reflect the multi-racial nature of a society. Firstly, the study tries to identify if there are any significant differences in preferences for landscape planting among the three major ethnic groups i.e. the Malays, the Chinese and the Indians. Secondly, the study compares the underlying perceptual categories of their respective preferences. Thirdly, the relationships between people's preferences and their demographic backgrounds are evaluated and subsequently investigated. Lastly, the study explores reasons for preferences among the groups. In trying to achieve objectives one, two and four, a comparison of results was made with the expert group as to evaluate the differences in preferences between the public and the experts.

Using the Likert-type scale, the respondents evaluated 66 photographs, which were arranged randomly. The photographs consisted of three categories of landscape planting namely open space planting, street planting and planting near buildings. The respondents were also asked to choose two photographs from each category i.e. one photograph that they liked most and one photograph they liked the least and subsequently to give reasons for their preferences.

The findings reveal that all groups rated street planting category the highest and open space planting the lowest. The experts rated both the above categories relatively higher than the public. The Malays rated a higher preference for street planting than the Chinese and the Indians. For planting near buildings, the Indians rated a higher preference than the Malays and the Chinese. The results of the factor analysis reveal that seven perceptual dimensions were found in the open space planting category and six perceptual dimensions were found for both street planting and planting near buildings. Some significant differences were noted among the ethnic groups for these dimensions. Overall results show that no significant differences were detected between the demographic variables of the public and the perceptual categories. Results on the reasons for preference indicate that high evaluation was given for landscape planting that has a combination of colours, proper maintenance and which can provide shade to the users and vice versa.

It is hoped that the findings would help to reduce the perceptual gap between the experts and the public and among the ethnic groups in landscape planting thus creating an environment that would be accepted by various groups of people in a multi-racial society.