

TYPES AND STYLES OF PAINTING PREFERRED BY A HOTEL IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Presently, the hospitality industry's development, particularly the hotel industry materialised in Malaysia, has equally improved the nation's art industry. These are a positive development, especially towards arts in Malaysia. Besides being made as a new market for the nation's art industry, it is also a solution for the survival issue among the fresh new artists in Malaysia. To establish the hospitality industry as a new market for the nation's art industry, a study towards the types and the styles of painting is needed. Therefore, the research objectives are to identify the types of painting often purchased by the hotel and analyse the painting styles, which have become the priority for Malaysia's hotel industry. This study was conducted on five selected hotels using a qualitative approach. Besides, this research also applied the exploratory method case study which the researcher act as an observer to assess the paintings purchased by the hotel. The outcome of this research will be made as a guideline,



especially for new artists to come up with a type and style of painting that meets the criteria of the hotels in Malaysia. The research also contributes to Malaysia's theoretical arts, considering that there is minimal research like this in Malaysia before.

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INTRODUCTION

It is well known that the issue of survival is widely explored, particularly in the Malaysian art world. Though this is not a new problem for most painters, it must be addressed for the nation's painting industry to continue to thrive. In a 2015 article published in *Berita Harian* titled "The Status of an Artist's Influencing the Art Market," written by Arifin (2015), he wrote Zakaria Ali stated in his lecture series titled "The Malay aesthetic, whether it exists or not," that young artist today must be bolder and more diligent in facing the consequences of unsold paintings in the market.

This indicates that scholars have yet to find a solution to the survival problem. Furthermore, the General Director of the National Art Gallery, Dato' Dr Mohamed Najib Ahmad Dawa, expressed similar issues during his keynote presentation at the Asia International Conference of Art and Design at the Institute of Arts and Culture Indonesia (ISBI) in Bandung.

This shows that the subject of survival is not something to be taken lightly. The art industry is becoming increasingly competitive due to the influx of new artists and university graduates each year. As a result, to balance this ecosystem, a solution must be positioned to keep the arts industry's development bright and dynamic, and thus it will evolve. According to Khairudin Nur Hanim, Beverly Young, Rahel Josep (2016), being an artist is difficult. Only those with a strong desire and a high level of dedication will be able to make a living as full-time artists.

This field has the potential to provide a good return (Allana Coulon, 2011; Clarke & Flaherty, 2002; Harun & Mat Zin, 2018; Marshall & Forrest,

2011; Velthuis, 2018). However, not all artists are fortunate enough to reap the benefits. On the contrary, many artists have stopped producing artwork due to economic factors and switched to a different career. This is supported by Baines and Wheelock (2003) and Towse (1994), who explain that many painters give up on pursuing a career as an artist because their artwork is not sold.

This is due to several factors. One of them is the reliance on individual art collectors in Malaysian art markets. While it is undeniable that these individual art collectors contribute to the development of the local art scene, they cannot service all the available artists' work. Furthermore, the personal art collector is more likely to collect only works by well-known artists. As a result, this issue is becoming a challenge, particularly for new artists who have just started their careers as artists.

This situation is a disaster for the nation's art industry's development. According to Baines and Wheelock (2003), this visual artist is a legacy connector to the country's cultural identity. As a result, if it is not preserved, the national cultural identity may fade away one day.

With this awareness, a concerted effort is needed to address the issue of artist survival. Exploring a new market for the art industry is one initiative that could help to solve this problem. The hotel industry appears to be an excellent place to start looking for a new market for this art form, particularly painting. Unfortunately, even though the hospitality industry has long been used as one of the arts field markets, it has never been regarded as a significant market.

Furthermore, Fillis (2010) suggests that an artist today must explore a new approach to art marketing, given that they are the proprietor or manager of their own business. This demonstrates that an artist cannot rely solely on the existing art market. At the same time, they must investigate a new market that will allow them to further their careers as artists. This effort is also intended to ensure that a career as an artist in Malaysia remains relevant and promising.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Painting Market

Like other sectors, the visual arts market looks to grow exponentially. This evolution is the outcome of socio-political stability, the response in the accumulation of money, and the phase of discovery and creativity in the art field (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Brooks, & Szántó, 2005).

Financial trends have now matured to the point where works of art, such as paintings, can be viewed as a valuable investment commodity (Gérard-Varet, 1995). Furthermore, Quesenberry and Sykes (2008) argued that art is a mature asset class that may be used efficiently as a hedge against inflation compared to the bond market and equity.

Furthermore, the development of painting is heavily reliant on marketing. However, marketing in the arts differs from marketing in other fields (McCarthy et al., 2005). The distinction between artwork purchasing events and other commodities is that these art purchasing events include social gatherings, public donations, and intellectual exchanges (Quesenberry & Sykes, 2008). Furthermore, Abbing (2004) stated that the value structure in the art market is two-sided and asymmetrical. Although the art market is about money and profit, it is not open to the public. This condition will impact an artist's career development to some extent. This is because, rather than elevating the value of art alone, the field of art will be viewed as a career that is unconcerned with money.

Looking back at the artistic activities that flourished in the past, most artists were sponsored either by individuals or authority institutions to produce the artwork (Hugh Honour, 2005; Mele, 2007). Starting from this patron activity, it has finally created a business in the field of art. Here we can see how significant the contribution of art patrons in the past was in the development of art (Mele, 2007).

In addition, Gérard-Varet (1995) also explained that business in the art field has existed for a long time and is one of the essential activities in economic development. This statement also shows that marketing in this

visual art has long been practised where individuals and corporate parties are among the leading patrons in funding, creating publicity, and managing the field of visual arts (Mele, 2007).

However, in these difficult circumstances, artists must be more proactive in marketing the paintings they produce. However, the role of intermediaries or art dealers in controlling sales and publicity remains critical (Mele, 2007).

Despite having contacts with art consumers, artists continue to rely on intermediaries to advertise and organise shows (McCarthy et al., 2005). This is since most intermediaries or gallery owners have close contact with art collectors and have a location or gallery where exhibitions and art auctions can be held. Because of this, artists must rely solely on these intermediaries to market their work.

However, not all artists will be able to exhibit their work in these venues (Hafizah Iszahanid, 2015). This is because most galleries will only select artwork from well-known artists because of their reputation and the fact that they already have regular collectors who buy their works (Quesenberry & Sykes, 2008). As a result of this environment, emerging artists continue to be marginalised and find it challenging to gain a footing in the national art scene.

This is the difficulty for most new painters, who require significant support from a variety of sources to pursue a career as an artist. Furthermore, the advent of numerous new artists has increased rivalry in the art market (Khayril Anwar Khairudin, 2016). As a result, there is a need for initiatives to develop new markets for this painting. Aside from giving emerging artists a chance to sell their work, it has the potential to expand the visual art industry.

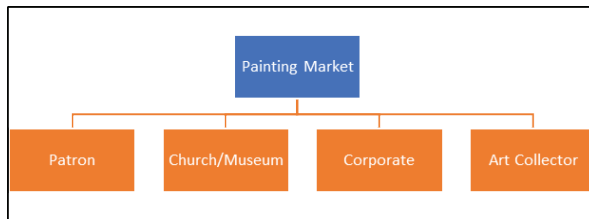


Figure 1. Painting Market.

Source: Author's data record

We can observe how the market for art, particularly visual arts, has evolved from then until now. The diagram above (Figure 1) may explain more about the visual arts market practised from then to now.

Although the art market has grown over time, there is still some concern about this visual art market in the future. As mentioned by K. F. McCarthy et al. (2005) and Pedroni and Sheppard (2013) on whether the demand for visual art will continue to grow in the future. This question may have arisen due to the emergence of many new artists due to the increasing demand for this visual art. If this problem is not addressed from the beginning, it may be a setback for developing this visual art in the future.

K. F. McCarthy et al. (2005) revealed that the functioning and organisational structure in the art market has altered in response to changes in demand, while describing the issues faced in the art market. As a result, artists must foresee changes in demand direction that will shape the ecological organisation of visual arts.

Hotel As a New Market for Painting in Malaysia

Generally, it is recognized that the hotel industry depends a lot on art to advertise their business. For example, Hammad (2016) and Lee (2011) noted that the atmosphere, services, facilities, décor, design, and local culture's brandings are vital for advertising the hotel to clients.

Forsgren and Franchetti (2004) also endorsed this position, adding that guests today have high expectations for the service and the hotel's surroundings. Therefore, to sustain these hotels' image and branding, each hotel needs to establish its character and originality. Also, art features, such as paintings, have become a significant component that might enhance a hotel's reputation (Forsgren & Franchetti, 2004).

Furthermore, Sereerat et al. (2015) suggested that a cultural aspect and art might boost the hotel business's profits. Her study has shown that the artworks might be the key attraction in advertising the hotel business.

It is equivalent to Braun's (2011) idea that highlighted arts aspects such as painting need to be presented at a hotel to enhance the ambience. The

ambience condition provides a reliable resource to stimulate the senses and client experiences (Dhiraj Thapa, 2007; Jones & Jam, 2016; Strannegård & Strannegård, 2012). Therefore, it is not surprising when many luxury hotels are willing to spend a considerable amount to guarantee their guests receive the most pleasing experience in their hotels (Heide & Gronhaug, 2008).

However, getting the painting ready for display is not an easy process. It needs to go through several screening and selection processes before painting can be displayed in each part of the hotel. In addition, every hotel has its requirements and theme specified for its hotels. Therefore, each artwork made should be according to a standard set by these hotels.

Therefore, to create the hospitality industry in Malaysia a new market for the art industry, research on the type and painting style that becomes a hotel priority must be done first. Then, it is necessary to develop a guideline for the artists to produce a painting that fulfils Malaysia's hotels' criteria. Therefore, this study aims to determine the types of painting that become a favourite of Malaysia's hotels. Other than that, the was to analyse the painting style that becomes a preference for Malaysian hotels. Hopefully, this study may be used as a reference for all the artists in Malaysia, particularly in making a painting that meets Malaysia hotels' needs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

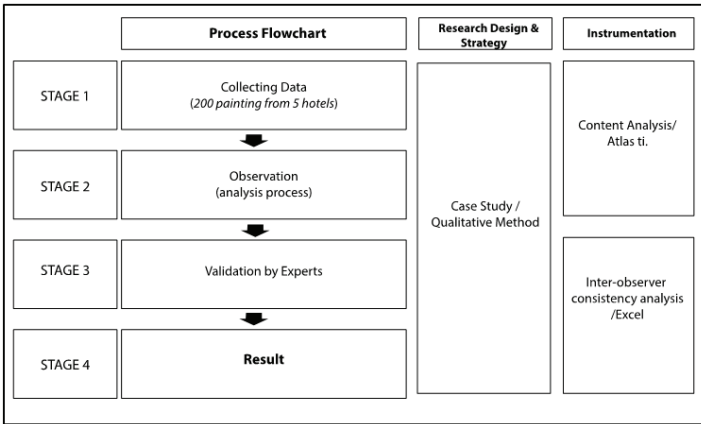
This research was conducted using a qualitative method that employs a case-study approach, as Yin (2009) stated. A case-study approach enables the researcher to conduct research empirically, evaluating phenomena in the actual world. Moreover, Zaidah Zainal (1997) also mentioned that the case-study technique allows the researcher to examine the data comprehensively in a specific setting.

In achieving the study's aims, research design has developed four main stages to acquire the outcome. As stated in Table 1 below, the first stage of this research is the process of gathering data. Five hotels were chosen for this research. However, the priority was given only to the paintings purchased by these hotels. From these five hotels 200 paintings had been successfully gathered. However, only 120 paintings fit the criteria as specified in this

research. Therefore, only these 120 paintings were used in this research.

The second level of this research was content analysis, whereby these gathered paintings would be studied one by one to determine the type or category and the style of these paintings. Elo and Kyngäs (2008) and Bryman (2016) emphasized that the content analysis process requires assessing language, phrase or message visually or, more specifically, the approach utilized to study a document. As mentioned above, only 120 paintings were analysed out of the 200 paintings following the standard criteria set.

Table 1. Process Flowchart



Source: Author

After the second level process was completed, the third stage must ensure that the data obtained were valid and reliable. It is said by Bryman (2016) that every study must go through a process of stability, internal reliability, and inter-observer consistency to make it reliable. Therefore, as many as two experts in this field have been selected to carry out this process. These two experts re-reviewed all the results given to all 120 paintings before confirming them. This process is known as inter-observer consistency analysis. Once this inter-observer consistency analysis process was completed, the results were used as a finding for this study.

FINDINGS

Figure 2 illustrates the results obtained from the analysis done on 120 pieces of paintings from the five selected hotels. The result in Figure 2 below demonstrates that there were six types of painting identified out of all 120 paintings that have been evaluated. These kinds of painting include abstract, landscape, portraiture, still life, real-life, and religion.

Besides, the results acquired also indicate that out of all the six types of painting the abstract type had the highest number which comes to the overall total of 87 pieces. This is followed by the landscape and the real-life type of painting with as many as 10 pieces for each type of painting. Meanwhile, portraiture type of painting recorded a total of 7 pieces to be the third-highest number of paintings followed by still life type of painting in fourth place with a total of 5 pieces. However, religious types of painting only recorded 1 piece alone from all the 120 pieces of analysed paintings. This placed the religious form of painting in sixth and last rank from all the types of paintings that were analysed.

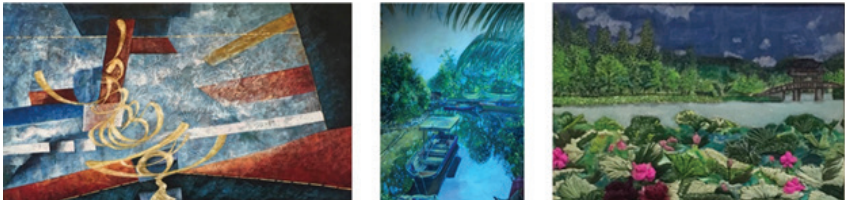


Figure 1. Type of Paintings (Abstract, Real Life & Landscape).

Source: Author

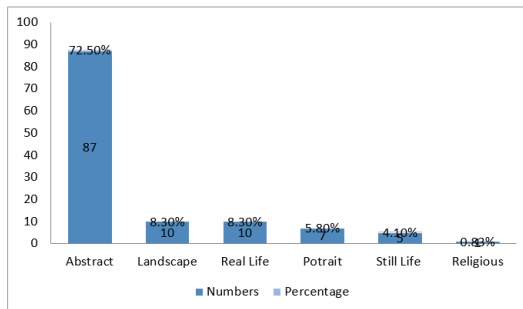


Figure 2. Result Analysis on the Types of Painting Used

Source: Author

The results obtained for the painting style most purchased by the five hotels surveyed can be seen in Figure 4 below. The results revealed that among 120 pieces of artwork that have been analysed, abstract style recorded the most total, that is as much as 57, which is 47.5 percent of the whole sum. This was followed by abstract expressionism style in second place with a recorded total of 25, which is 20.8 percent. Meanwhile, the realism style became the third most style with a recorded total of 13, which is 10.8 percent. Expressionism style then became the fourth most style with as much as 11, 9.13 percent.

Meanwhile, for impressionism style was the fifth most painting style, it recorded 5 works which are 4.16 percent. This was followed by contemporary style in the sixth spot with a total of 4 pieces which is 3.33 percent. This was followed by pop art style with a recorded total of just 3 pieces, which was 2.5 percent in the seventh overall ranking.

Finally, in the eighth position is surrealism style with a total recorded only 2 pieces which was 1.6 percent from all 120 paintings that had been analysed. It was evident that abstract style is the most often utilised style in all the five of the hotels.

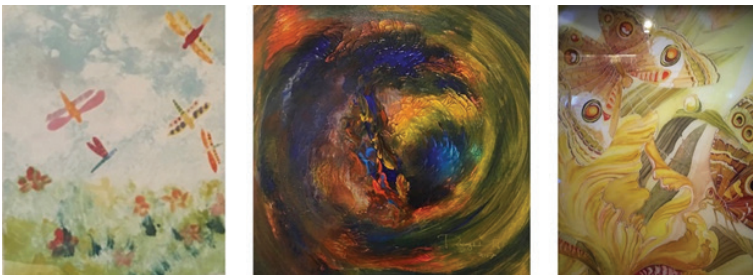


Figure 3. Painting Style (Abstract, Abstract Expressionist & Impressionist)

Source: Author

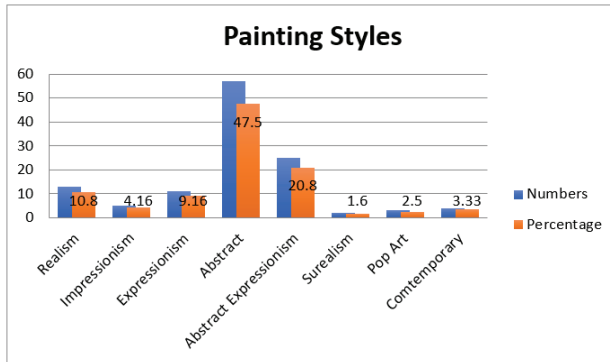


Figure 5. Result Analysis of Painting Styles Observed in the Five Hotels

Source: Author

CONCLUSION

It is important to emphasise that this study attempts to explore a new market for the art industry, mainly painting in Malaysia. Though the hospitality industry has long been one of the markets for the art industry, it has not been taken seriously. The lack of research on the necessity and relevance of the painting to the hotel industry has led to many of the proposed paintings being rejected by the hotels. This will, in some cases, affect the artists economically and mentally.

Therefore, the findings of this study may be used by the painters as a guide in producing paintings for Malaysian hotels. As explained above, the results obtained from this study clearly show that abstract painting is the most commonly purchased type of painting by the hotel industry in Malaysia. This may be due to the design factor of the interior design applied in each of the studied hotels, where it is seen to influence the type of painting used as interior decoration for each hotel. In addition, abstract style is also seen as the most used style among the 5 hotels that have been studied. This may also be because an abstract style of painting is easy to adapt and match to the modern furniture concepts and equipment used in each of these studied hotels. In addition, the choice of abstract style may also be due to factors of interest in this style that became popular in Malaysia in the mid-20th century (Mahmood, 2007). Thus, it is not surprising that this abstract painting style is a priority for the art enthusiast because of its

reputation as a famous painting style (Pihko et al., 2011).

Hence, through this research, it is hoped that it can be served as a guideline, especially for the new artists to produce a painting for hotel. In addition, this study also contributes to the research methodology in art as minimal study has been conducted using the approach. Therefore, the research method from the social sciences was taken up and used to answer this study's objective as suggested by Gani (2013).

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors contributed to the design of the research, the questionnaire, and the write-up. The on-line survey, data cleaning and tabulation was undertaken by researcher. All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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