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College of
Built Environment

Poster Book

IIIDBEE X 2023
20 JANUARY 2023
*International Invention, Innovation & Design Exposition
for Built Environment and Engineering 2023*

**College of Built Environment
UiTM Puncak Alam**
20 January 2023 | Friday

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The Sense of Place in Designing Coffee Shops in Malaysia



INTRODUCTION

WHAT?

Coffee shops are considered "third places" in urban environments, distinct from work and home, where people may gather, relax, and form connections. As coffee shops become more prevalent in urban environments, they serve as both work and leisure venues as well as places where people may socialize and potentially form communities.

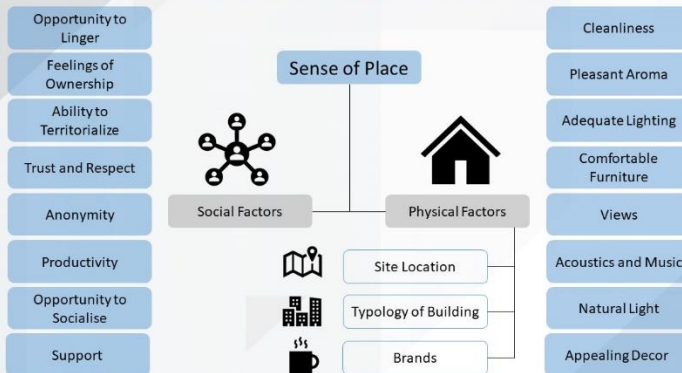
WHY?

The sense of place transforms a conventional environment into one with unique behaviour patterns and sensory qualities. It is influenced by individual and communal ideals, and it also impacts individual behaviour, social and cultural values and attitudes. According to their sense of place, people typically engage in social activities.

HOW?

In order to identify the sense of place of the coffee shops, three different typologies of building with the same brand has been studied to identify the relationship between the typologies of the coffee shops and the architectural design characteristics that can influence the users.

ISSUES/ PROBLEM STATEMENT



OBJECTIVES

This research aims to identify good ambience in three different typologies of coffee shops that influence an architectural response.



To identify the architectural design strategies in determining the sense of place of a coffee shop.

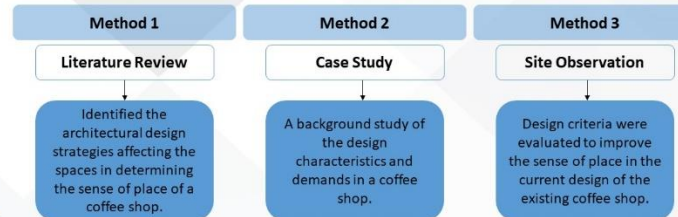


To study the design characteristics and demands that users seek in a coffee shop.



To define the design criteria for improving the good ambience of the existing coffee shop.

METHODOLOGY



FINDINGS

Design Characteristics that Affect Users	Typology of Coffee Shops		
	Stand Alone	Shophouse	Inside Shopping Mall
	Starbucks Setia Alam	Starbucks Wolo Hotel Bukit Bintang	Starbucks Tropicana Gardens Mall
Finishing Materials	Floor: Used polished tiles for low maintenance and high traffic area Wall: used clay bricks and wood for a relaxed and welcoming Ceiling: high ceiling to feel more spacious	Used the existing shophouses materials for interior and exterior to keep the value and blend in with the surroundings	Used the existing materials of the mall for the exterior and different materials for the interior to keep the brand's theme
Appealing Aroma	The normal ventilation system as the aroma circulates inside the shop and to the outdoor seating.	The ventilation system makes the aroma ventilates to the main entrance, as shared with the hotel.	The aroma ventilates to the mall to attract people and creates a pleasant smell inside the coffee shop.
Adequate Lighting	Using a glass wall at the entrance to allow natural lighting and warm ambient light as artificial lighting	Using double volume height at the front to allow natural lighting to the upper level and the back of the coffee shop	Most of the light is artificial, as the shops cannot get enough natural lighting.
Comfortable Furniture and Layout	Different types of furniture at different places as the shop have outdoor seating and bar seating.	The ground-level seating focuses on comfy and relaxation, while the first-floor seating focuses more on the working table.	All the indoor furniture is the same, while the outdoor uses steel for outdoor furniture.
Views	Use minimum glass walls as the shop is stand-alone and not focusing on the outside view.	Using ceiling height glass wall to capture the maximum view towards Jalan Bukit Bintang	Only using glass walls towards the outdoor seating to capture the view of the outdoor garden.
Appealing Acoustics	Mainly using the same acoustics material for interior	Using a different type of acoustics material as the upper floor needs more calm compared to the ground floor	Using acoustics materials along the attached walls to the mall as they need to control the noise

CONCLUSION

Although the research sheds light on three different coffee shops as potential places, it raises new questions as well. For example, this research used the same brand, but the typologies of the coffee shop influenced the different design characteristics of each shop. The key findings showed that the top six design considerations included: cleanliness, appealing aroma, adequate lighting, comfortable furniture and layout, views, and appealing acoustics. This research shows that the typologies of coffee shops were found to have unique site characteristics that related to the physical design characteristics and influenced the sense of place of the coffee shops to the users. In conclusion, design characteristics also influence the users as they affect the ambience of the coffee shops, although within the same brand but with different typologies of buildings and give users different experiences and perspectives.