

Cinemagoing Culture Through The Malaysian Settings of The Cinema One Stop Centre

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ABSTRACT

Malaysian cinema-going culture has undergone significant changes with the emergence of the One Stop Centre (OSC) concept. This study argues that the One Stop Centre concept, which is used practically everywhere in Klang Valley, keeps Malaysia's cinemagoing culture strong in the modern era. It also argues that this is because people's tastes in movies vary depending on whether they watch them in person or on the internet. Additionally, the flexibility and freedom of choosing where to watch a movie at a One Stop Centre also impact an individual's enjoyment of movies. This study seeks to identify the concept of the One Stop Centre and analyse what has made it popular and still relevant today. This research will use qualitative research as the primary method to collect data and observations on the findings. Besides that, this paper will interview focus groups of cinema-goers in Klang Valley, specifically 1 Utama Shopping Centre, to obtain deep insight from respondents regarding cinema-going in the contemporary era. Data and results obtained from respondents are expected to help this study ascertain the impact of the One Stop Centre concept on contemporary Malaysian cinema-going culture and how it has made cinema-going more accessible and enjoyable for everyone. This research expects to contribute to the studies of Malaysian cinema, especially cinema-going culture and understanding of the Malaysian audience in the future.

Keywords: Cinemagoing, Malaysian Cinema, Film Exhibition, Film Consumption, Audiences.

INTRODUCTION

Going to the cinema has always been an experience that everyone will go through at least once in their lifetime for Malaysians. It is a very wonderful experience for everyone to go through in their life. Cinema-viewing culture has vastly expanded and evolved into an array of newer approaches. With the digitisation of the cinematic experience and the conception of online streaming services, the experience of film viewing has changed. One of which, influenced by these evolutions, is the film exhibition; which can easily be understood as the way an audience watches movies publicly and the business of selling movies. This culture has seen the most changes in the industry so far.

It also has created cinema chains in the film industry, especially in the United States which was then followed by other countries. These cinema chains give cinema-goers an experience of a film such as selling foods and condiments, merchandise and advertising surrounding a cinema or cineplex. Cinema chains also control how a film is programmed, promoted, and presented to the cinema-goers.

In this study, I argue that the cinema-going culture in contemporary Malaysia remains strong through the concept of the One Stop Centre, applied to almost everywhere in the Klang Valley, regardless of the increasing popularity of online movie streaming platforms.

Going to the cinema has been the earliest way for the audience to consume a movie. It started with a building of its own, equipped with seats and a ticket counter for the audience. Food stalls and other entertainment lots surrounded the cinema building too. In the 1940s, the United States started the cineplex and multiplex which is a building with multiple big screens showing movies and giving the audience choice of what they want to watch (Kuhn & Westwell, 2012). Some parts of the multiplex or cineplex, also provide other entertainment such as arcades, food stalls, and shops. The business model became famous and spread all over the globe, including Malaysia.

Nowadays, there are numerous options available for watching movies. You can either go to a traditional cinema located in a nearby shopping mall or opt for your preferred movie streaming platform. Each option offers a distinct viewing experience and impact on the audience. With the widespread COVID-19 pandemic, online movie streaming platforms have become the preferred choice for almost everyone when it comes to watching movies.

In the present times, even though online movie streaming platforms continue to be widely used and appreciated, the traditional cinema experience remains significant. People still flock to cinemas to enjoy the latest releases on the large screen, even after the pandemic has come to an end.

Film viewing habits have undergone significant transformations along with advancements in technology. Traditionally, audiences would watch movies on the big screen in cinemas. However, with the advent of the digital era, alternative modes of film consumption have emerged. These include watching movies on television at home, portable devices, smartphones, and even in-flight entertainment systems during long-haul flights when internet access may be restricted.

Aveyard and Moran (2013), in the introduction chapter of "Watching Film: New Perspectives on Movie-Going, Exhibition and Reception" talk about how film consumption has been changing from time to time. They also note the popularity of watching movies outside the cinema such as DVD and television. While the earlier can now be seen as less popular, I have observed the rising popularity of online movie-

streaming platforms in Malaysia especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many other factors make an individual watch a film like the cinema itself and also as a social activity.

I am attracted to study more about the cinemagoing culture after I saw the rise of online movie streaming platforms in Malaysia that have caught everyone's eyes and watched the companies compete with each other for customers. My observation of the public cinemagoing culture and film viewing before and after the COVID-19 pandemic also sparked my interest to study on these topics.

Cinema-going culture has been an integral part of Malaysian entertainment for decades. Back in the day, shops had their lots and buildings. Everything is not being put under one roof, but more to a commercial centre in a town or city where everything is nearby. For example, a cinema building is located along the street neighbouring with clothes and food shops. Rather than now, everything is put under one roof. Even with the rise of streaming services and home theatres, cinemas have had to adapt to stay relevant. It has been done by opening cineplex in shopping malls, equipped with services and entertainment like food, shopping, and other activities and thus, creating a One Stop Centre (OSC) for entertainment.

Hence, in my proposed One Stop Centre (OSC) concept, I can see that it helps the cineplex in Malaysia to sustain itself, especially in Klang Valley after the pandemic. The facilities, shops, amenities, public transport, and abundance of food and beverage choices for everyone make it an attraction and help the cineplex to sustain and maintain its existence in the Klang Valley.

The Malaysian cinema-going culture has undergone significant threats in recent years, especially with the rampant digitisation of the viewing culture and holistic entertainment approach. The emergence of the One Stop Centre concept in shopping malls started in the 1970s, with the country's first mall in Ampang, called Ampang Park (Aida & Yusof, 2011).

The concept of One Stop Centre aims to provide a comprehensive entertainment experience for all types of cinema-goers by offering a range of services and facilities under one roof. Typically, these centres come in the form of malls with an abundance of facilities, be it entertainment, shopping and food. Jon Goss (1993) explained in his article why a shopping mall has these facilities because among the intentions of building them are as a civic, spatial, and significant space for visitors.

This motivates the developers to create a space for the visitors to come and appeal to them, looking as if it is public while being run privately and for profit. Spatial strategies have been implemented in building the shopping mall so that the visitor will systematically explore the place according to how the developer wants it.

In Malaysia, there are several major cinema chains like Golden Screen Cinemas, TGV Cinemas, MBO Cinemas and Lotus Five Star. Most of these cinema chains are in shopping malls and they are equipped with screening and audio technologies that give a good experience for the audience. The One Stop Centre concept that I want to propose in my study has revolutionised the way Malaysians consume movies, providing them with a more convenient and enjoyable experience.

Malaysian film exhibitions have become more diverse and inclusive in this contemporary era, catering to a wider audience. The One Stop Centre concept has played a crucial role in this transformation by creating an environment that is welcoming to all.

Cinemas now offer more than just movies, providing convenience and accessibility for a broader audience. With parking and nearby public transport, cineplexes cater to

diverse individuals. Located in popular areas and malls, they serve as One Stop Center, remaining competitive in Malaysia's film industry. By offering a range of activities, cinemas attract audiences seeking complete entertainment experiences. Moving on, my research will seek how One Stop Centre (OSC) stay relevant amidst the abundance of online movie streaming platforms and I will also fulfil the objective of my study of identifying the concept of One Stop Centre, and analyse what has made such a concept once popular and still relevant today. Aside from that, this paper will discuss the findings on the One Stop Centre (OSC) concept. This study will document the impact of the One Stop Centre concept on Malaysian cinema-going in the contemporary and how it has contributed to making it more accessible and enjoyable for everyone.

CINEMAGOING CULTURE IN WORLD AND MALAYSIA

Film Audience and Cinemagoing Culture outside Malaysia – United Kingdom, New Zealand and the Philippines

Reading books outside of Malaysia, which is from the United Kingdom for my research helps me to look at how they research audiences in their country. In a chapter in a book by Richard Charlton and Paul Butler entitled "Measuring Cinema Audiences", Raymond Kent's *Measuring Media Audiences*, discusses how to collect data on cinema audiences in the United Kingdom.

Parties interested in researching cinema audiences are advertising agencies appointed by cinemas, cinema exhibitors, and distributors. Usually, they measure the admission, composition of the audience, films watched by the audience, qualitative research, "film tracking", which is a service to spark interest to watch films at that time, and location analysis to open a new cinema for possible audiences.

Cinemas have been a very attractive place for everyone to come since the 1940s, especially by being a socialising spot. Cinemas have been a useful advertising tool rather than any type of media at that time due to their reach towards young audiences with high income. Collecting data on the audience is much simpler due to ticket sales collection that can be retrieved through cinemas and weekly calls to cinemas to update on admission to their cinemas.

Advertising agencies have access to confidential data of cinemas about admissions, due to cinema interest in selling advertising space to the agencies. Several factors that have influenced attendance at cinemas in the United Kingdom are the release of box office films, school holidays, television programs, and weather conditions.

In finding out more about the audience that goes to the cinema, surveys have been done by questioning the audience on their frequency, recency and films to find out on their frequency of visiting cinemas. Research on audiences based on the films that they watched has also been done to gain data on the age and types of the audience of films that they watch.

Apart from audiences, advertising is also one of the sectors that are researched to study the effectiveness of cinemas for the agencies to place their advertisement. However, this study merely focuses on the data collection in the United Kingdom; the location that I would like to focus on is Malaysia due to the study proposed. Taking inspiration and information from the studies conducted in the United Kingdom, I would

like to implement aspects of it into the surveys I would like to distribute in collecting information from the Malaysian film audience.

In *Audiences: Defining and Researching Screen Entertainment Reception* by Ian Christie (2012), a chapter entitled "What Do We Really Know About Film Audiences?" in the book discusses on United Kingdom's studies on the film industry. Since 1917, the film industry has been researching academically and commercially. In 2009, studies were conducted by the UK Film Council to find out what film "means" to the mass audience.

The "means" is measured by how films shape and contribute to the United Kingdom's culture. Studies have discovered how films have an impact on their audience after some time just like music and literature, and individuality in the audience responding to films. In looking at how films can contribute to culture through an anthropology view, films are seen on how they are represented and the impact that they have made on the whole country and all of the United Kingdom.

Audiences were studied on their identification with the film for being represented as British or not. Studies on audiences include their consumption, media, and how it has influenced them. It was found that most audiences consume films on television and DVDs, while the least were through mobile devices and onboard planes during flights. The frequency of watching was mostly at least once a month on television, on DVDs and in cinemas. Watching films in cinemas has become a rising interest among UK citizens and has become a culture more than going out to the countryside, enjoying other art forms, and religious activities. Besides film categorisation in the survey was different from genres used in film discourses, it has shown that most audiences felt that films were artistic and some felt that it was educational.

It shows that films made for mass audiences are still perceived by audiences individually according to their background and understanding. The study shows that certain films connect to the audience because they can relate to the historical context and know about other cultures around them. The study shows that most audiences can identify themselves with the last British films that they have watched.

Some also thought that UK films need to be much more realistic and real to life. Films that have psychological and emotional impacts are usually repeated by the audience due to the effects on them. Digitalisation has also helped audiences to consume films more rapidly and are participating in the implementation of higher technological advances in filmmaking.

It is concluded that films have been part of the cultural value in the UK and mobile viewing of films can help to thrive further. However, much like the study from before, this study has been focused mostly on the United Kingdom's creative industry and its local audience. It lacks insight into other countries such as Malaysia, but through this study, I can see how the audiences in another country respond and deduce that similar reactions could occur with our Malaysian local audiences as well.

Geoff Lealand's (2013) chapter, "A Nation of Film-goers: Audiences, Exhibition and Distribution in New Zealand," provides a detailed analysis of the country's film culture. The book identifies three main audiences: Gen Y, X, and Boomer, with Gen Y potentially posing a threat to film distribution and exhibition due to their internet access and access to free online movies. New Zealand's audiences are largely supported by younger and older generations, who respond well to award-winning and mainstream

Hollywood films. The country also has a classic cinema, a multiplex located in a shopping mall, and some older cinemas that have been restored.

The New Zealand Cinema Census in 2011 revealed that the younger generation, particularly Gen Y and X, enjoys cinema visits, largely due to online surveys. The Kiwis prefer multiplex cinemas over art-house theatres and prefer films from outside New Zealand due to a perceived lack of interest and quality. The availability of DVD players and legal and illegal online movie streaming has made film viewing outside of cinemas more acceptable. While not as recent as the book, Lealand's chapter offers valuable insights into the cinema culture in an Asian country.

A doctorate research paper by Jasmine Nadua Trice (2009) reveals that pirated DVDs are popular among the people of Manila, despite the cinemagoing culture being popular in the Philippines due to expensive theatre tickets, a drop in quality in the local commercial film industry, and the rise of independent cinema. DVDs enter the country through Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Indonesia before being copied and distributed to the whole country. Cinephiles buy mainstream Hollywood titles fast and commit themselves to finding rare films.

In Metro-Manila, shopping malls have become a part of their cinemagoing culture, with multiplexes ranging from lower-income to high-income shopping malls and residential complexes. An annual festival called The Bagong Agos is held every week after the Metro-Manila Film Festival, celebrating local commercial films that are blocked from being shown on all multiplexes.

The Philippines has become a thing like the United States, with shopping malls located in urban areas and four out of ten of the world's largest shopping malls. However, cinema attendance in the Philippines does decrease due to people living further from their workplace, easier access to watch at home via DVDs, and piracy issues. Cinemagoer behaviour in the Philippines includes watching movies repeatedly without paying more, using mobile phones while watching, constantly going in and out of the hall, and talking throughout a movie. Higher-income individuals have a hidden desire to watch locally produced films at home, either buying DVDs from the market or going to cinemas when they are not available.

This doctorate research provides insight into cinema culture in the Philippines, highlighting the socio-political differences and the emergence of shopping malls similar to Malaysia.

Malaysian Film Audience and Cinemagoing Culture

Abdul Wahab Hamzah's chapter on Audien: Sikap dan Harapan Audien Filem Malaysia in *Sinema dan Penonton di Malaysia* (2003) highlights the influence of social, cultural, ideology, arts and trade, economy, cinema, and audience on the film and audience. Hollywood has effectively utilised these factors to establish its global presence, promoting American culture and boosting the economy. However, the films produced often lack aesthetics and moral value, creating an imbalance in the Malaysian film industry. However, the Malaysian audience is not a fan of these directors and prefers to choose their films.

To maintain the success of the Malaysian film industry, film education should focus on high aesthetics and cultural presence. Middle Cinema, like in India, can help create a

balance in the industry. However, there is a need for a deeper understanding of why the audience overlooks local films. The article focuses on the commercialization of Hollywood films in Malaysia but does not address genres, narratives, and actors.

With the digitisation of film we see today, the films of the past are often overlooked, especially the experience one may have felt during the time, as Van de Heide (2002) admits that the film-viewing experience back then was different. Socially, everyone in 1994 still enjoyed watching P. Ramlee films and celebrates it. It was played in public transportation, especially on buses, everyone sang the songs from the movies and even spoke the character's dialogue. Most films did not have subtitles as they are in 'Bahasa Melayu', and the audience is native to the language.

The audiences of films at that time were segregated according to their ethnicity, as Van der Heide (2002) observed when he was watching *To Live* (1994) by Zhang Yimou in Malacca. The audience was mostly Chinese and they responded well to the film he felt that even though he had a better understanding and reading of the film than most of the audience, he could not relate to their 'Chinese-ness'.

For the reader's context, 'Chinese-ness' refers to "the film's social rituals of gambling, eating, marriage arrangements and funeral ceremonies as 'local knowledge.'" He felt isolated and it limited his ability as an analyst. While watching Wong Kar-wai's *Chungking Express* (1994) in Kuala Lumpur, he also found that talking on the phone while in the cinema hall was accepted at that time. He also watched *Femina* (1993) in March 1994 in a cinema in Kuala Lumpur with his translator, the film was also without subtitles. It is also noted that Malaysia is a multiracial country that consists of more than a few ethnicities that are grouped into the Malays and natives, Chinese, and Indians.

Research on cinema-going culture and audiences in Malaysia has been done by academicians to learn more about the local audience. One of them is by Wan Aida Wan Yahaya (2006), who studied the local audience opinion on epic films, in her study is *Puteri Gunung Ledang* (2004). One of her objectives is to identify the influence of Malay epic films towards the Malaysian audience and their socio-demography. She suggests that there is a need for the Malaysian film industry to keep producing epic films as they reflect our country's historical, traditional, and cultural values and will be supported by Malaysian cinema-goers. Her data on Malaysian cinema-goers shows that we have a very supporting audience that will support the Malaysian film industry from time to time.

Hizral Tazzif Hisham (2015) proposes a Malaysian film industry ecosystem model, focusing on audience behaviour, suggesting further study on social media film promotions, and addressing high-budget films that fail in the industry. In this doctorate research, he seeks to find out the challenges that are faced by the industry players, the efficiency of government policies regarding the industry, the impact of Western films in the country, and the audience selection of films. His extensive research found that the Malaysian audience, especially the Malay audience, will watch anything that they like to release their stress. His respondents also stated that Malaysian films are lacking in producing their films in certain aspects that make them unattractive compared to Hollywood. But just like Wan Aida's research, the Malaysian cinema-goers will still support the Malaysian film industry through time. He suggests that

further study on the audience is needed to know the cinema-goer's correlation between age and income.

Changsong (2019) researches cinema attendance and cinema-going audiences in Malaysia, specifically in Klang Valley, to discover upcoming trends in popular Malaysian cinema. Among his findings are the correlation between income and frequency of going to cinemas and their patterns of watching movies at the cinema. He seeks to see the Malaysian cinema-going behaviour and the government policies in maintaining Malaysian cinema. Then he found out that Malaysian cinema-goers are selective in what they are watching, especially the actors and storyline. It is understood that cinema ticket prices also become one of the factors for cinema-goers.

A scientific approach to research by Kit and Chuan (2012) explores the younger Malaysian preference between watching Hollywood and local films in Klang Valley by using the uses and gratification theory. Data from 100 respondents have been collected to determine which films the respondents were inclined to. Their findings conclude that the younger generation in Malaysia prefers Hollywood rather than local films due to its advanced technology, special effects, pictures, acting, plots, and stars that are more satisfying to them. Later, Suhaimi Salleh and Noraini Abdullah (2014) found that income, accessibility to watch movies, religious beliefs, and perception of going to cinema influence an individual's cinema-going and film-viewing habits. Their respondent focuses on film-viewers in Kuantan showing that a lower-income person goes to the cinema regularly than a higher income, and they are gratified emotionally. The ethnic Malay will be going to the cinemas less as their age increases as it looks inappropriate for an older Malay Muslim in their research.

Frymus's (2022) study reveals that cinemas will be present in every urban area in Peninsular Malaysia, with 368 cinemas in the mid-1970s. Kuala Lumpur, with 30 cinemas, has a diverse entertainment scene that attracts various ethnicities, genders, ages, and classes. The majority of cinemas are located along Bukit Bintang and Chow Kit. Ethnic areas typically feature Indian films, but modern cinemas are more inclusive, offering concerts, live football, private screenings, and movie launches. Smaller cinemas in smaller towns often cater to specific groups based on genres or languages, but not as many as before.

There is a gap in recent academic research on contemporary Malaysian cinema-going culture and film exhibitions. Referencing Frymus' 2022 study, which focused on the 1970s in Kuala Lumpur, and Changsong's 2019 study. These studies provide detailed insights into Malaysian cinema-going culture, but they lack regular studies and address the latest industry issues. I aim to address this gap by focusing on the contemporary era and considering the latest issues in Malaysian academia.

ONE STOP CENTRE

The definition of the significant keyword should be given for further understanding. The concept of "One-Stop-Centre" or OSC, and "cinema-going culture" will be further defined in this section. One-Stop Centre or OSC is a combination of the term "One Stop", defined by Cambridge Dictionary (2023) as "... used to describe activities that all happen in a single place, or to refer to places where this happens" and the word "centre" which means "... a place or building, especially one where a particular activity happens". Therefore, in my study, the One-Stop Centre (OSC) concept is defined as

a place or building, particularly a shopping mall with at least a cineplex contained in the building – as a large part of this study is researching the cinema-going culture – and would include activities, services, amenities, and accessibilities within the place, and become a centre of attraction for many. There is no lack of such centres in Malaysia, as the erection of such buildings has become more commonplace compared to. Meanwhile, “cinema-going culture” is recognised as the act of “going to watch” a film at the cinema, or mostly cineplex in today’s time of individual specialised buildings and spaces.

The culture that came about from this act by many had become one of the staples of the entertainment industry as the cinemas could be seen as an accessible commodity, available to the many, especially in times when movies were a poor man’s entertainment compared to the works of literature that were far and few for the rich. However, cinema-going was not a simple form of illiterate entertainment as times changed, and it has now dominated not only the public spaces but also the inclusion of art-heavy creations that give a sense of exclusivity. Yet, through it all, it remains a beloved form of indulgence by ordinary people. Decades ago, despite the arguments against the popularisation of the film medium, Ian Christie steadfastly defended that the reasons for cinemagoing were for the “... warmth, comfort, somewhere to sleep and pass the time, to meet and make new friends, and a place for a date,” (2012, p.13). Christie also adds that cinemagoing has been a topic for research by scholars since the 1940s, where studies have been done notably in the area. Cinema-going also has been a perspective that has helped researchers to know more about a particular social group; for instance, Rosenzweig and Waller’s studies of the working class in America into observing the American entertainment industry and helped the two in giving a “... political, socioeconomic, and cultural context,” for them to research on (Thissen, 2012). The audiences’ opinions on the evolution and the relevancy of such things as the continued existence of cineplexes, OSCs and online streaming services are essential as they are a large part of why these services’ flourishes and falls are highly contingent on audience interest. Thus, the choices I have made regarding the approaches and methodology to study this topic further become dependent on their active participation, and the answers they give will further give seeds of knowledge to research this topic within this paper.

This study explores the One-Stop Centre (OSC) concept, which combines cinemagoing culture with shopping malls with cineplex locations, restaurants, amenities, and public services. The concept includes parking lots, toilets, Muslim prayer spaces, wheelchair rental, valet parking, and public services like train stations, bus stops, and taxi stands. The methodology will be used to study cinemagoing culture's relevance in contemporary Malaysia.

ONE STOP CENTRE AND CINEPLEX

Film and cinema-going culture have long changed from the older smaller venues to the drive-ins movies and buildings specifically catered to the film-viewing culture such as cineplexes and old-fashioned movie theatres. Whilst these methods of cinema viewing have improved, especially with the digitisation of the industry, One Stop Centres and cineplexes remain the most popular and relevant forms of physical entertainment culture in Malaysia.

To understand this relevancy, I went to the cineplexes near me to observe. Many audience members and consumers frequent malls, some during specific times of the day, some during events, and others during the evenings, weekends, and holidays; from an observational standpoint, many of these groups of people are often families. In my case, during the process of gathering respondents, most of the potential respondents were mothers during the evenings, when they would bring their children to cineplexes after school.

The concept of One Stop Centres revolves around the idea that it is meant to serve as a place where many activities and conveniences are collected for the ease of the consumers. It appeals to all walks of life, some of which are decisions taken with family consumerism in mind; these places attract parental figures who may find it difficult to afford more expensive toys regularly and would like to exchange them with experience. Thus, One Stop Centres would install playpens or stores appealing to children. From my observation, malls such as Setia City Mall come equipped with a small playground and a large park, all for the convenience of families to come and spend their time longer there. Activities and recreational-theme outlets are also available in shopping malls like 1Utama Shopping Centre where visitors can come and play activities such as mountain climbing, baseball and futsal. This consumerist aspect of One Stop Centres can also be seen targeting the youth and adult age groups besides families. By spending more time in shopping malls like these, many of the visitors are then stopping by multitudes of stores without worry when services such as toilets and prayer rooms are close by. As stated by Gita Viswanath (2007), the shopping complex serves as an exclusive and secure place for people to spend their money. In India, much of the shopping malls serve as a spot to indulge in consumerism. In Klang Valley, the same situation is much more similar to the Philippines rather than India because the public is not segregated according to their income and class.

Malaysia and the Philippines also share the same attribute of being a car-centric city. Half of my respondents stated they use public transport to One Stop Centres, and some drove instead. Per the answers given by respondents, the location of the One Stop Centre, being near public transport and providing parking spaces have been helpful to them due to the ease of logistics as they can switch between the two. The public transport connectivity in Klang Valley helps the cinemagoers in choosing their locations for film viewing. For instance, 'respondent A' who relies heavily on public transport noted that "I go to everywhere I want depending on my schedules and what is showing". The convenience of having public transport that is connected to shopping malls, especially in Klang Valley, allows viewers to frequent large cinema chains and cineplexes that are connected to shopping malls such as 1Utama Shopping Centre, Mid Valley Megamall, MyTown Shopping Centre and Sunway Velocity. These shopping malls are connected directly to public rail transportation and are also equipped with convenient and roofed parking spaces for visitors who drive instead.

The urban planning that has been executed by local authorities and central government to cater to the location of One Stop Centres and public transport shows how significant the targeted area in the city in attracting the population, some densely mixed with low to high-income classes due to Malaysia's lack of income segregation. The shopping malls these cineplexes are located in also serve as a socializing centre for visitors. A few respondents admitted that cineplexes are places for socialisation with friends. Usually, most youths will watch movies at least twice a month, while the working class will have added extra expenditure due to their disposable income. Interestingly, students in India prefer to go to single-screen cinema to watch a film rather than multiplex because it is much more enjoyable and participatory (Viswanath, 2007). In contrast, my respondents, while not having any experience of going to single-screen cinemas, still do the same thing as the Indian students. Film viewing often evokes a communal feeling; some of the respondents note that they enjoy seeing others' reactions, as it gives them a better experience because "... everyone is in the same headspace, going through the journey together. It is much better than watching alone on a laptop." However, cinema-going is not only reserved for communal activities; 'respondent B' admitted that he enjoys watching around three to four movies a week, and chooses the cinema chains based on the availability of time and places that he wishes, "A less crowded would be the Aurum theatre", as he highlights about less crowds going there so he can enjoy the movie much better.

Since the beginning of the existence of shopping malls, most of them have a layout that makes a person walk through the entire building towards the designated place that ones wish or wander around the shopping mall. The existence of a cineplex, especially in a One Stop Centre makes a cinemagoer and non-cinemagoer to become vulnerable to the marketing of cinema chains regarding the movies in the One Stop Centre or anything related to cineplex and movies by the cinema chain owners. For cinemagoers, they might notice the cineplex advertisement of upcoming films while for the non-cinemagoers, the advertisement of what movie is playing can catch their attention and consider spending their time with also having a lot of other options of things to do. In 1Utama Shopping Centre there are two cinema chains which are TGV Cinemas and GSC where people can choose whichever they prefer according to the availability of showtimes and tickets. If they need to wait for a while, they can do other activities while waiting such as karaoke, bowling, or even going to the saloon. These actions have made people notice the existence of both cinema chains at the One Stop Centre and being part of activities that can be done.

Conducive and convenient space is also one of the reasons why OSCs and cineplexes appeal to the masses. The emergence of shopping malls with everything under one roof including multiplexes, foodcourts, large brand stores national or international, and gaming courts contrasted greatly with the older ways of cinema-going. Nowadays, it is much more spacious, secure, air-conditioned, and clean, and promotes consumerism better. Besides going to the cinema, the audiences are now exposed to the appeals of consumerism such as consuming the shopping mall spaces, and advertisements posted around these malls. When it comes to multiplexes, most of the audiences go there due to their cleanliness, comfortable seats, and good sound quality. 'Respondent C' describes that the environment of cineplexes made him want to go there rather than stream movies online. He enjoys the process of buying the tickets, smelling and buying popcorn and the scent of cinema hall carpets when he arrives. It adds to his cinemagoing experience.

Overall, One Stop Centres can be considered a site of contemporary cultural and economic hotspots. As observed by Hanson (2013), the multiplex has a big role in stimulating the culture and commercial activity in an area. Cineplex and shopping centres have encouraged people to flock in to spend their time. The existence of fast food chains and options to do activities have shaped cinemagoing culture in Great Britain. The same could be said about the cinemagoing culture in Malaysia, alongside the emergence of these OSCs.

The convenience that One Stop Centres provide has made it one of the most convenient ways for people to enjoy the cinemagoing culture in Malaysia, especially in the Klang Valley. Due to the locations of the One Stop Centres near towns, and little segregation of low to high-income groups, almost everyone can enjoy it except those living in the suburbs with no access to public transportation, except for their private vehicles. Even though One Stop Centres can be seen as another tool of consumerism, it does provide better options other than online movie streaming platforms and a much more fulfilling experience as social beings.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the Malaysian cinema culture has experienced immense growth from what it was in the past. The goal of this study was to comprehend the shifts that have taken place in the Malaysian cinema culture and through these shifts, we can better understand the culture behind cinema-going. The information allows for the prediction of future audiences' wants. In addition, by learning more about this subject, we can enhance national cinema exhibition and consumption while also sustaining the industry better.

One Stop Centres, as discussed in this paper, stands starkly against the backdrop of older Malaysian cinema culture— it exists in shopping malls and is an accoutrement rather than the main focus of these malls. These OSCs rose in popularity, mostly due to the digital age as well as the increase in economic growth and capitalist ventures. Cinemas became part of this growth and went from smaller, more film-centric venues to the large cinema franchises it is today, with most malls equipping a cineplex to attract more customers and visitors. This ease of service and the convenience it posed to society made it so OSCs prospered as a business venture, subsequently perhaps plummeting the value of traditional exhibition venues. OSCs can be considered exploitative in their efforts, as they use aspects of family consumerism and the population of varying income classes as part of their business demographic. However, as exploitative as these OSCs come across as, it can be difficult to dispute when they serve as a communal and social space for many, offering comfort for those seeking these spaces. Nevertheless, this communal and social aspect can also be twisted into serving the economic and capitalist agenda of these businesses, capitalising on human consumerism and social needs to affix paying customers to frequent their establishment under the guise of convenience.

The Malaysian cinema-going culture has also changed due to the introduction and subsequent increase of online streaming platforms, entertaining them in the comfort of their own home. There were multitudes of factors influencing the successful penetration of online movie streaming platforms into the Malaysian market, most notably during the pandemic lockdown. Initially, these platforms underperformed in Malaysia, in part reflecting the strong dominance of cable television in Malaysia at the time, especially Astro which was available in most households. Even without Astro, most Malaysians relied on free government channels, such as TV1 and TV2. The idea

of enjoying movies and shows from the comfort of home did not gain massive traction until the pandemic hit, causing many to turn to available online movie streaming platforms. The time taken for the online movie streaming platforms to have a solid market base in this country shows how strong our cinemagoing culture is. This is reflected in the studies by local scholars that our cinemagoers will always make watching movies their go-to option whenever they are outside as it is considered a form of entertainment and to expend free time. This also speaks to the possibility of Malaysian cinemagoer's innate desire for experiences and entertainment, one that is beneficial for the consistent development and increase of OSCs. Cinemagoing culture in Malaysia is still active and the existence of online movie streaming platforms plays a good role in allowing competition between each other.

There is potential in the future of One Stop Centres; cinemagoers would not need to worry about the extinction of the cineplex and the convenience surrounding it. In Malaysia, stand-alone cinemas are becoming the next artefacts in the Malaysian cinema space and soon, future generations of Malaysians will learn about the standing cinema or forget about it. One Stop Centres instead might be an ideal concept for town planners to expand the connectivity of towns with public transportation, allowing for the economic and cultural growth from the establishment of more OSCs. We might see a future where towns are filled with shopping malls similar to that of NU Sentral and 1Utama Shopping Centre. These shopping centres, an epitome of One Stop Centres, host a large number of conveniences and services befitting that of a hyper-modern and technologically advanced culture. This is parallel to the former Malaysian prime minister's idea of 'Greater K.L.' with the attempts to improve upon infrastructure and modern buildings. However, this also poses a threat to the independent ecosystem established in Malaysia and its entertainment industry, seen first-hand by the slow decline of stand-alone cinema buildings with the rise of more modernised buildings such as shopping centres. One Stop Centres, however economically beneficial it may be, can ultimately lead to the downfall and removal of older cinema halls or spaces. Despite this, from a neutral perspective, this change would have needed to happen due to Malaysia's cultural shift, not only in the entertainment and film viewing culture but also in the changes into a modernised civilisation.

This research, however, proved to have its brand of challenges and limitations. Observations of audience behaviour and consumer trends at cineplex, taking into consideration the demographic and time in which they come by, highlight the importance of having an inclusive One Stop Centre almost everywhere in the country. The existing concept has welcomed everyone to One Stop Centres and this trend should be continued. It will entice more people to become cinemagoers and help to sustain the industry as a whole.

In conclusion, the longevity of Malaysia's cinemagoing culture has benefited from the introduction of the One Stop Centre concept through retail malls. Positive comments from respondents on going to the One Stop Centre for films indicate that it is pertinent. On the other hand, watching a movie on a different device allows viewers to watch it anywhere they choose, but it does not provide the same surround experience. Without the One Stop Centre, Malaysian cinemagoing culture might have some similarities with the Philippines. There will be a need for independent cinema to be established and an active pirated DVD market. Even though we do have a pirated DVD market, they have lost popularity over the past years. The Malaysian cinemagoing culture has benefited greatly from the modernisation and innovation in

the country's film exhibition. There also have been no pertinent issues relating to cinemagoing nowadays.

The process of focus groups has faced some limitations in which the time constraint that I have and the lack of cooperation by participants before starting the focus groups. I also did not manage to get a well-balanced representation of gender and ethnicity in the focus group that I held. Most of the respondents are of younger age group, male and from Malay ethnic. The lack of representation of older age groups, females and other ethnicities is lacking in this study. A few themes have been found after transcribing the respondent's answers and I found out their film viewing habits, and the relation between cinemagoing culture, the One Stop Centre (OSC) concept and the online movie streaming platform.

This study has contributed to the understanding of contemporary Malaysian audience preferences and behaviours that can help cinema chains and industry players. By trying to discover the background of Malaysian cinemagoing culture, audience behaviour, and technology and innovation in the Malaysian film industry, this study will help improve film exhibition and consumption in Malaysia. It also tries to highlight the importance of cinemagoing culture in Malaysia and aims to preserve the knowledge, data, and insights related to it. The lack of regular studies regarding cinemagoing in Malaysia has also been filled with this study exploring a part of it. Understanding the One Stop Centre concept and its impact on cinemagoing culture will ensure the longevity and sustainability of the activity in the future. Finally, this study can benefit not only the Malaysian film industry but also the academia and everyone related to the topic.

I would also like to recommend a bigger scale of research regarding the topic of contemporary cinemagoing culture in Malaysia. A longer duration of research on the topic will help to provide more intensive and deeper data collection and analysis. The respondents pool also varies in the study hence giving a much inclusive understanding of the topic. Collaboration with industry players, such as cinema chains to provide data or insights will make the findings much more relevant and can apply to the Malaysian film industry, especially the cinemagoing culture. By incorporating these suggestions, researchers can conduct a much more comprehensive, inclusive, relevant industry, and deeper understanding towards the topic.

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