

The Tourism Value of Archaeological Site as Being Perceived by The Local Visitors at Gua Pasoh, Negeri Sembilan

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 18 December 2024

Revised 23 March 2025

Accepted 27 Jun 2025

Online first

Published 31 July 2025

Keywords:

Archeotourism

Heritage Tourism

Visitor Behaviour

Visitor Perception

Sustainable Tourism

Heritage Conservation

DOI:

10.24191/bej.v22iSI.5462

ABSTRACT

Archaeological sites offer a significant part in cultural heritage preservation while also aiding in tourism growth. Gua Pasoh, in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, is historically and archaeologically significant, yet it remains underdeveloped as a tourist attraction. This study assesses Gua Pasoh's perceived tourism value by assessing visitor attitudes and expectations, as well as measuring its attractiveness using the Fishbein Model. The research objectives are: one (1) to determine the role of archaeological tourism in visitors' decisions to visit Gua Pasoh, two (2) to evaluate how well the site meets visitor expectations, three (3) to measure its attractiveness value through the Fishbein Model, and four (4) to identify variables influencing visitors' perceptions of the site. Visitors enjoy Gua Pasoh's historical significance and natural beauty, but its tourism potential is limited by inadequate infrastructure, weak promotional efforts, and environmental issues. The study emphasises the importance of information accessibility, better amenities, and sustainable tourism activities in improving tourist experiences and site recognition. Furthermore, participation with the local population and blending of historical protection with tourism initiatives are critical for long-term site viability. This research adds to the discussion of archaeological tourism by offering insights into tourist perceptions and demonstrating the practical application of the Fishbein Model for determining beauty. It emphasises the necessity of striking a balance between heritage preservation and tourism development to ensure that Gua Pasoh continues to be a valuable cultural treasure for future generations.

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<https://doi.org/10.24191/bej.v22iSI.5462>

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is one of the world's fastest industries, generating a significant quantity of revenue and creating additional employment opportunities in a variety of areas. It is one of the most remarkable examples of a social or economic event. Tourism, a cultural, social, and economic phenomenon, is defined as people travelling to places or destinations outside of their usual setting for either leisure or business reasons. These people are known as tourists (visitors or excursionists; citizens or non-residents), and the term tourism refers to the activities they engage in, some of which involve tourism-related expenses. (UNTWO, n.d).

Gua Pasoh, in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, is an important archaeological site with historical and cultural value. The limestone cave has provided rich archaeological data that sheds insight on prehistoric human activity in the area. Artefacts from food leftovers such as snail shells which shown and proving that site were inhabited by human during early years. Besides their attractions as an archaeological site, Gua Pasoh also rich with its own beautiful nature surroundings which full of unique flora and faunas. The content and form of the cave that has been formed for thousands of years also plays an important role as an attraction to learn more about cave science. In addition to the knowledge of limestone caves, which are very important as a geological feature for the local area. Furthermore, what makes Gua Pasoh very interesting is when the attraction is about the limestone cave with a green view around Gua Pasoh itself. This has made Gua Pasoh look like an 'island' surrounded by greenery.

Tourism: An Overview

According to Camilleri (2018), Gua Pasoh presents a very beautiful view and is also very good for gaining more extensive knowledge about flora, fauna and archaeology. Because of that, this Gua Pasoh is very suitable for visitors regardless of age. Various activities that can be done there. For example, can cross the trail area while looking at the view from a high area. Visitors can also do various traditional local activities with local villagers who are always ready to receive guests. Not to forget the main attraction is the archaeological site in Gua Pasoh which is very interesting to visitors which can make them very interested and can forget stressful things and just focus on gaining new knowledge, appreciating the scenery, and having fun through exploring Gua Pasoh directly.

Archaeology-based tourism, which emphasizes the historical and cultural significance of heritage sites, is gaining increasing attention in the tourism sector. Gua Pasoh, as one of these archaeological destinations, continues to attract public interest from those eager to experience the atmosphere of a historical site firsthand. According to Ross et al. (2019), archaeological sites are considered essential elements in this form of tourism, as they represent tangible aspects of our archaeological heritage. By highlighting and showing the importance and advantages of Gua Pasoh, will be able to attract more visitors who may not know about the archaeological area and have never experienced the archaeological site is also one of many types of tourism. This allows visitors to feel more appreciative of the history and culture of a place and can indirectly promise an interesting place.

Along with the development of technology nowadays, there are various systems and ways to attract visitors to go to a place. Examples are interactive exhibitions, guided archaeological tours that can also provide exposure and 2 ways communications, various educational programs that can also show Gua Pasoh in a more complete and interesting way. Hopefully with the diversity in conveying knowledge and information in a certain place, it will attract more people to understand archaeology while traveling and can also attract visitors to visit again in the future. by upgrading and improving the Gua Pasoh area as an archaeological tourism area, will indirectly attract many people to enjoy the beauty of the environment together.

Gua Pasoh as Tourism Place

Gua Pasoh has a variety of unique attractions that are very attractive to visitors. visitors can do various activities at Gua Pasoh for example such as hiking, sightseeing to admire the beauty cape, and indirectly participate and see various cultures from the local residents. Archaeological tourism in Gua Pasoh is also the main attraction for visitors to Gua Pasoh. this indirectly can also help the local population in terms of economy.

Archaeological tourism is a burgeoning aspect of the wider tourism sector, attracting a specialised audience eager to comprehend the historical and cultural importance of ancient places. Notwithstanding its novelty, the growth potential in this domain is considerable, as an increasing number of travellers recognise the educational significance and distinctive experiences provided by archaeological sites such as Gua Pasoh. By showcasing its archaeological past, Gua Pasoh can engage a wider audience, including individuals who may not have previously regarded archaeology as a tourism incentive. This transition can enhance appreciation for history while promoting sustainable tourism practices that advantage both tourists and the local community. Gua Pasoh possesses the potential to become a prominent centre for archaeological tourism, encouraging visitors to discover its historical artefacts and enhancing their comprehension of the region's cultural context.

Understanding Attitude

As defined by Jasuli (2018), attitude refers to a person's continuous good or negative assessments, perceptual sentiments, and behavioural characteristics towards specific items or ideas. Attitude in buying behaviours refers to an individual's thoughts or experiences with a good or service that are influenced by the individual's past experiences of making purchases, utilising, experience, points of view, and more. A person might have a bad or favourable impression of the goods or services. Individuals' preferences are determined by their attitude, which is a psychological aspect of their personality. (BBAmantra, 2019).

A person's perspective concerning the good's features, which varies depending on the concept and judgement of the item's qualities. There are also multiple considerations that determine what best illustrates one's interest in buying a product, particularly external aspects, which can be shown through a person influence of someone else (subjective norm) on the behaviour of choices made, such as family members, co-workers, peers, and the suppliers. (Ramdhani et al., 2012).

Influencing Factor

The tourism sector is a crucial global economic engine, with historically and culturally significant places being pivotal in drawing people. Critical determinants affecting destination selection encompass the site's reputation, accessibility of recreational amenities, and notable monuments (Castro et al., 2015). Tourist attractions are typically classified into primary qualities, including natural landscapes and historical landmarks, and ancillary factors, such as accessibility and tourist facilities.

User-generated content (UGC) on social media significantly influences the tourism industry in the digital era. UGC is something that is very important for influencing visitors' expectations, decision making, and also the level of satisfaction before, during, and after knowing the reviews of previous visitors who have been to the place (Kaosiri et al., 2017). This is very important for a person before deciding to visit a place. It not only helps upcoming visitors to know more about a place, but it can also help to show the characteristics of a place whether it is suitable or not with the will of the place to be visited. All this can be

obtained from doing research about the place through social media, websites, blogs and so on by reading the experiences of previous visitors.

Employing tactics that leverage the use of UGC comprehensively and efficiently can also improve destination marketing and management initiatives. Which indirectly allows a tourism destination to engage more effectively with a specific audience interested in cultural and historical research. This corresponds to a sustainable tourism strategy that seeks to harmonise development with cultural conservation and environmental protection.

Post Visit Experiences and Satisfaction

Based on recent research that outlines the important functions of social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TripAdvisor, Google Review, and others that allow people to write and exchange travel experiences and information among tourists. These platforms not only facilitate communication among users but also significantly improve the overall travel experience. People can continue to see and read reviews from related websites to find out more information about a place. Kim & Fesenmaier (2017) assert that sharing personal experiences can increase the importance of tourism experiences, fostering a sense of community among tourists.

The notion of tourism satisfaction is important in evaluating the level of enjoyment and satisfaction experienced by tourists during and after their trip. This is very important because it can directly affect the feeling of going to a place such as repeat visits and encouraging word-of-mouth recommendations. When tourists are satisfied with their experience, they are more likely to revisit and endorse the location to others, thus increasing the effectiveness and sustainability of the tourism operation as a whole. When visitors really enjoy a completed visit, it not only enriches the individual experience but also fosters the tourism destination's lasting success, which requires operators to prioritise methods to increase visitor engagement and enjoyment. As the tourism industry evolves, understanding and leveraging the influence of social media on the visitor experience will be critical to improving tourism satisfaction and fostering future growth.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

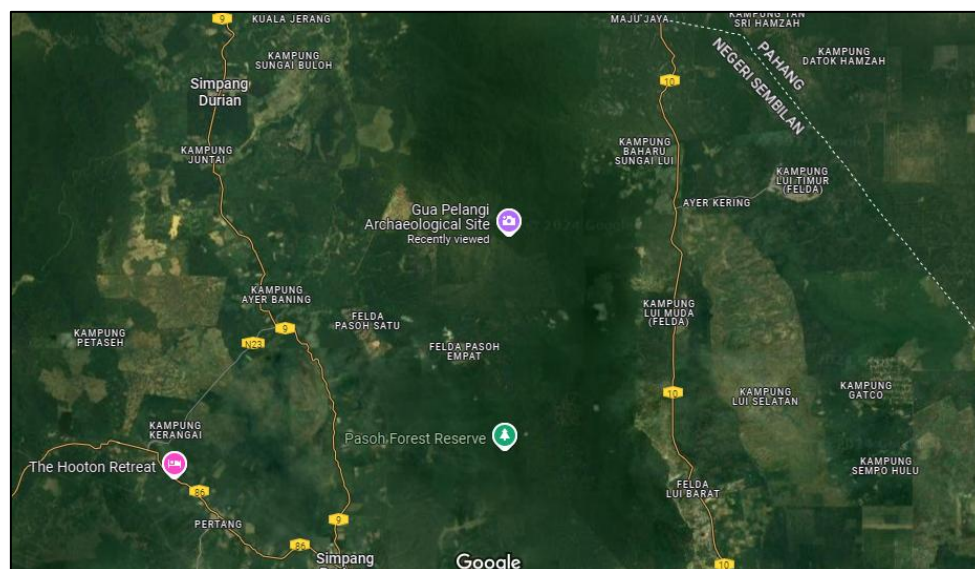


Fig. 1. Google Maps of Gua Pasoh

Source: Google Maps (2024)

Gua Pelangi is situated in the southern Malaysian Peninsula, within the Pasoh Forest Reserve in Simbang Pertang, Jelebu District. The site acquired archaeological importance after excavation activities conducted by Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) commenced two years ago. These endeavours revealed relics suggesting human activity roughly 14,000 years ago, providing insights on Malaysia's ancient history. Renowned for its biodiversity and cultural importance, Gua Pelangi is often frequented by tourists in pursuit of natural splendour and historical richness. The adjacent community, especially from Felda Pasoh 4, contributes to the preservation and dissemination of local heritage. This diverse location provides opportunities for archaeological investigation, hiking, and cultural education, establishing it as a distinctive attraction within the region's burgeoning archeotourism sector.

The first prehistoric site discovered on the southern peninsula is Gua Pelangi (BorneoPost, 2017). Officially, the Department of National Heritage, a division of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, is in charge of the region. The caves are also open to visitors, although security guards must keep an eye on them. Mokhtar added that Gua Pelangi has developed into a popular archaeo-tourism destination and has the potential to become a historic landmark. He suggested that the museum's staff should have a live gallery where they might recreate the prehistoric inhabitants' way of life for the enjoyment of guests.

Gua Pasoh has been one of the tourist destinations impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Accessibility to Gua Pasoh was additionally limited as a result of the lockdown measures, making it against the law for anyone to enter the property. To draw in more tourists, the ATOA organisation is currently making aggressive attempts to re-establish and advertise Gua Pasoh as a travel destination. A variety of improvements have been made to encourage people to come, such as advertising packages, basic facilities, recreational goods and services, and other aspects.

Impact of COVID-19 Towards Gua Pasoh

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 where the government required all citizens to stay at home and not go anywhere without a permit from the government, the tourism industry in Malaysia, not only in Malaysia, but also in other areas around the world has also been affected by the enforcement of mandatory closures in Malaysia has had a very negative impact which is evident in various industries. Affected sectors include local and international tourism, involving both domestic and foreign tourists.

Among the various tourist spots throughout Malaysia, Gua Pasoh is one of the tourist destinations affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The establishment of a closure procedure restricts access to the Gua Pasoh, thus prohibiting entry to the premises. After the end of the lockdown, the local residents and the organisations involved worked hard to re-organise the place, actively trying to relaunch and promote Gua Pasoh as a destination that attracts more visitors. Various improvements have been introduced to encourage users to frequent the site, including promotional packages, essential amenities, recreational offers, and additional features.

Data Collection

The data collection for this study employed a comprehensive methodology, incorporating surveys and interviews to obtain insights into the significance of Gua Pasoh as an archaeological tourism destination. The survey engaged 252 participants and was administered via two primary methods: online and in-person distribution. The questionnaire was accessible to visitors at Gua Pasoh either the online survey link or by direct distribution on-site during certain days. The survey comprised seven components, designated components A to G, addressing all principal research inquiries concerning tourists' impressions and expectations of Gua Pasoh. Apart from the survey, interviews with local residents, as well as visitors who were at Gua Pasoh during the day of the site visit were also conducted. This is important to document the cultural and historical significance of the place from the point of view of the local people. Furthermore, it can indirectly know how they feel after visiting Gua Pasoh. This dual approach to data collection facilitates a more thorough understanding of the elements that influence a site's value as a heritage attraction, including visitor experience and community perspectives. This methodology enabled the collection of quantitative data via surveys and qualitative data through interviews, so offering a comprehensive foundation for evaluating the tourism potential and appeal of Gua Pasoh.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic

Table 1. Demographic Profile

Items	Categories	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender Valid = 252 Missing = 0	Male	97	38.5
	Female	155	61.5
Age Valid = 252 Missing = 0	Below 18 years old	7	2.8
	18 to 30 years old	148	58.7
	31 to 45 years old	61	24.2
	Above 45 years old	36	14.3

Nationality			
Valid = 252	Malaysian	252	100
Missing = 0			
	Negeri Sembilan	104	41.3
	Johor	7	2.8
	Kedah	4	1.6
	Kelantan	11	4.4
	Kuala Lumpur	32	12.7
	Melaka	2	0.8
Residency	Pahang	22	8.7
Valid = 252	Pulau Pinang	14	5.6
Missing 0	Putrajaya	1	0.4
	Sabah	3	1.2
	Sarawak	3	1.2
	Selangor	38	15.1
	Perak	10	4.0
	Perlis	1	0.4
	Student	39	15.5
	Self Employed	51	20.2
Type of Employment	Unemployed	17	6.7
Valid = 252	Retired	14	5.6
Missing = 0	Government Sector Employee	37	14.7
	Private Sector Employee	94	37.3
	Vacation	52	20.6
Reason Visiting Gua Pasoh	Visiting Archaeological Sites	69	27.4
Valid = 251	Educational Purpose	120	47.6
Missing = 1	Recreational Purpose	3	1.2
	Locals	7	2.8
Frequency Visit to Gua Pasoh (in a year)	Less than 2 times	202	80.2
Valid = 252	3 to 5 times	18	7.1
Missing = 0	More than 5 times	32	12.7
Duration of stay in Gua Pasoh	Less than 1 night	170	67.5
Valid = 252	2 nights	54	21.4
Missing = 0	More than 2 nights	28	11.1
Number of Visitor Per Visit	Alone	21	8.3
Valid = 252	A pair	31	12.3

Missing = 0	A small group (5 to 10 people)	117	46.4
	A big group (More than 10 people)	83	32.9
How did visitors know about Gua Pasoh	Friends' recommendations	98	38.9
	Social media	113	44.8
Valid = 252			
Missing = 1	Locals	41	16.3

Source: Authors (2023)

The questionnaire survey obtained 252 replies, providing useful information about visitor demographics, motivations, and perceptions of Gua Pasoh. A considerable number of responses (61.5%) were female, with 38.5% male. The majority of visitors were between the ages of 18 and 30 (58.7%), followed by those aged 31 to 45 (24.2%), indicating that younger people are more interested in discovering Gua Pasoh. Furthermore, all responses were Malaysian, indicating a chance to attract international visitors in the future. Notably, social media (44.8%) and word-of-mouth recommendations (38.9%) were the leading sources of awareness, highlighting the importance of digital marketing in promoting the site.

The findings suggest that archaeological tourism has a major impact on visitor decision-making. Nearly 47.6% of respondents came for educational reasons, while 27.4% were motivated by an interest in archaeology. Most participants thought that Gua Pasoh is a significant place that requires more attention. A Kruskal-Wallis test found a strong correlation ($p < 0.001$) between awareness of archaeotourism and decision to visit Gua Pasoh. This highlights the need for increased visibility and tailored promotional initiatives.

However, visitors' expectations were only partially satisfied. While participants recognised the historical value and natural beauty of Gua Pasoh, they also expressed concerns about accessibility, infrastructure, and site management. The poll found that 80.2% of respondents had only visited the site once or twice, indicating low visitor retention. Furthermore, while biodiversity and conservation efforts were appreciated, they did not have a significant impact on return visits ($p = 0.156$). This research implies that conservation alone is insufficient to entice repeat visitors, and that a more engaging tourism experience is necessary.

The Fishbein Model found that historical importance, accessibility, and the presence of tourism facilities had the greatest influence on visitor views of Gua Pasoh. However, general archaeological knowledge and overall visitor satisfaction with present features had no significant impact on their likelihood of returning to the site ($p > 0.05$). This shows that expanding interactive experiences and visitor facilities might be more effective at increasing site appeal and visitor numbers.

Several elements were discovered that contribute to Gua Pasoh's perceived tourism value. The study indicated that efficient marketing methods and enhanced accessibility had a high positive link with visitor interest ($p < 0.01$). Respondents valued environmental conservation, but it was not the key reason of return trips. Instead, tourists expressed a need for more structured tourism options, such as improved facilities, clearer signage, guided tours, and interactive exhibitions.

Several major recommendations have been made as a result of these findings. First, marketing and awareness initiatives should be broadened to boost visibility via social media, influencer relationships, and digital content techniques. Second, enhancing accessibility and infrastructure—such as road conditions,

transportation alternatives, and visitor amenities—would greatly improve the tourism experience. Third, offering guided tours, storytelling sessions, and archaeological workshops could increase visitor engagement and make the site more appealing to repeat visitors. Furthermore, while sustainability measures are critical, including them into community-led tourist activities may raise awareness while assuring long-term preservation. Finally, incorporating the local population in tourism-related activities would develop a sense of ownership while also providing economic benefits and contributing to the site's conservation.

These findings are consistent with the study's goal of promoting the tourism potential of Gua Pasoh by addressing major obstacles such as awareness, accessibility, and visitor engagement. By applying the recommended measures, Gua Pasoh has the potential to become a sustainable and well-known archaeotourism site, ensuring its preservation for future generations and increasing its attraction to both local and international visitors.

Reliability Statistics

Table 2. Cronbach's Alpha

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on Standardised Items	N of items
0.967	0.969	42

Source: Authors (2023)

The reliability analysis performed in this study produced a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.967, indicating outstanding internal consistency among the 42 questionnaire items. These findings not only enhance the methodological rigour of the research but also provide a thorough assessment of visitor experiences, guiding recommendations for the sustainable management of this archaeological site.

Kruskal-Wallis test result and interpretation

Table 3. Kruskal-Wallis test result and interpretation

Variable	H-Statistic	p-value	Interpretation
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES ($p < 0.05$)			
Factors Influencing Decision to Revisit			
Gua Pasoh is worth visiting	18.419	<.001	The decision of visitors to return is heavily influenced by their opinion of Gua Pasoh's value.
Surrounding of Gua Pasoh should be protected	10.173	.006	Returning visitors are more likely to share the belief that the environment should be protected.
More advertisements are needed to attract visitors	11.168	.004	Advertisements are essential for influencing visitors' decisions to return.
The natural landscape is attractive and interesting	9.153	.010	Those who enjoy the beauty of nature are more likely to come back.
Accessibility of Gua Pasoh	10.162	.006	The possibility of repeat visits increases with easier access to the site.

Historical and archaeological significance	11.862	.003	Visitors are more likely to return if they feel that the site has historical significance.
Availability of facilities and accommodations	7.747	.021	The decision of visitors to return is positively impacted by improved amenities.
Experiences gained from visiting the site	12.002	.002	Visitors that have a positive experience are more likely to return.
NON-SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES ($p > 0.05$)			
Factors That Do Not Impact Decision to Revisit			
General knowledge of archaeology	3.029	.220	Knowledge of archaeology beforehand has little influence on returning decisions.
Interest in archaeological sites	3.411	.018	The probability of returning is not significantly impacted by one's level of interest in archaeology.
Biodiversity and preservation importance	3.714	.156	Returning visits are not significantly influenced by the significance of biodiversity.
Satisfaction with services and guides	3.101	.212	The willingness to return is not much impacted by visitor satisfaction with services.

Source: Authors (2023)

The Kruskal-Wallis test found that visitors are more likely to return to Gua Pasoh if they believe the site is valuable, accessible, historically significant, and well-promoted. Furthermore, the natural beauty, attractions, and available amenities encourage them to return. However, general interest in archaeology, biodiversity concerns, and service satisfaction do not have a substantial impact on revisit intentions. This shows that, while visitors may value these qualities, they are not the primary motivations for returning. To boost recurring visitors, efforts should be directed towards improving site accessibility, enriching user experiences, and developing stronger marketing methods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Interaction with Local Communities

The local people are a very important asset to realise harmony and good relations among visitors who come to the Gua Pasoh area. The active participation of the local community is essential to create a reciprocal relationship that enhances both the economic prosperity of the local population and the cultural depth of the visitors' experience at Gua Pasoh. Working with the management of Gua Pasoh allows people to showcase their unique cultural history, artisan crafts and traditional culinary products. These relationships offer an additional source of income for the community while enhancing the experience of visitors seeking authentic cultural engagement.

Apart from that, improving accommodation alternatives and expanding the variety of activities that can be done around Gua Pasoh can also significantly increase the enthusiasm and engagement of visitors. For example, expanding accommodation options—could start from homestays with a 'village' or traditional concept can indirectly serve an immersive cultural experience to a sustainable lodge—can accommodate

diverse tourist tastes, promote extended visits and enhance regional exploration. Furthermore, supporting local handicrafts, including textiles, ceramics, or traditional art forms, made by the villagers around Gua Pasoh can also promote local culture and may also engage visitors looking for unique souvenirs that embody local culture.

In addition, showcasing agricultural products, such as organic fruits and vegetables or traditional farming methods, can offer educational opportunities for tourists visiting Gua Pasoh, which will also increase their understanding of the region's agricultural heritage. Providing small-scale workshops or showing demonstrations can effectively attract tourists, allowing them to participate in hands-on experiences while supporting local artisans and farmers. This is very effective in helping to boost the local economy and foster cultural exchange, creating a dynamic and sustainable tourism environment that benefits all stakeholders. Through joint initiatives, Gua Pasoh can become a paradigm of community-driven tourism that respects cultural authenticity and prioritises the well-being of its residents.

Enhancing the Marketing and Promotion

Based on this modern day and age, marketing using social media and digital marketing methods is important and very suitable to be used to attract public interest to attract and engage the audience. By targeting a specific audience with a strong interest in archaeotourism, Gua Pasoh can significantly increase its broad exposure and reach. This approach facilitates focused outreach and helps a tourism area highlight its distinctive features, including its rich cultural history and archaeological significance.

With the efforts of UCG, Gua Pasoh can attract more people to go to Gua Pasoh. This is because direct narration from someone who has been to a place will make other people become and feel more interested in experiencing the experience for themselves. Furthermore, using networks such as Instagram, Facebook and TikTok can increase engagement with audiences, allowing them to spread their experiences and perspectives. UCG can amplify this effect, as visitors share their experiences, thus influencing their peers.

In addition, according to the current distribution of time, an influencer is also someone who is very important to attract people's interest about a topic or place. Some blogger or influencers also can joint efforts to work together with Gua Pasoh and help to promote Gua Pasoh as archeotourism place. This can help Gua Pasoh to be seen as an attractive place within the influences' lenses. By developing a digital marketing plan that integrates these components, Gua Pasoh may engage a wider audience, increase knowledge of its archaeological assets, and ultimately encourage more individuals to visit the site and experience it for themselves. The social media involvement of these influencers, YouTubers, or bloggers will indirectly increase visitor attendance and foster a network of supporters dedicated to preserving and promoting the unique cultural heritage of Gua Pasoh.

Enhancing Visitors Experiences

Augmenting the quantity of guided tours through new narrative strategies can markedly elevate tourist engagement and satisfaction. Tour guides may craft tales that resonate with visitors, fostering immersive experiences that enable guests to engage more profoundly with Gua Pasoh's cultural and historical significance. This method not only educates tourists about the archaeological significance of the place but also elicits emotions and cultivates a sense of belonging and reverence for the shared heritage.

There are various types of narrative techniques such as interactive dialogue, various visual-based presentations, and not to be missed, live demonstrations. All this allows visitors to feel closer and more attractive in the eyes of visitors while learning and adding knowledge about the place. The goal to be

achieved is to improve and nurture the spirit of tourism in tourists and to leave a strong emotional impact on the memories of tourists. With all this, can indirectly attract their interest and give them the best and interesting experience. They may also better understand and remember the historical and cultural values found in Gua Pasoh thus fostering a closer relationship with the site.

This intensified interaction can result in favourable word-of-mouth promotion, motivating visitors to disseminate their experiences and potentially drawing new audiences. By emphasising inventive storytelling in guided tours, Gua Pasoh can boost its attractiveness as an archeotourism destination while also aiding in the conservation and safeguarding of its priceless cultural legacy for future generations.

Advocating and Sustainable Practices

Efficient management practices are crucial for the enduring preservation of Gua Pasoh, guaranteeing that this distinctive archaeological site stays unspoiled for future generations to investigate and value. It is essential to implement solutions that effectively reduce environmental harm while maintaining the archaeological integrity of the site. This entails meticulous planning and regulation of tourist access to avert erosion and degradation, alongside the formulation of sustainable practices that harmonise with the requirements of both the environment and the local people.

Furthermore, engaging local stakeholders in the conservation process helps cultivate a sense of ownership and accountability towards the site, thereby augmenting community involvement and support. Educational and awareness initiatives are essential in enlightening visitors about the importance of Gua Pasoh, promoting responsible tourism that honours the site and its environment.

Moreover, consistent monitoring and evaluation of the site's circumstances would provide the early identification of potential risks, enabling prompt responses that safeguard its archaeological and ecological significance. By prioritising these comprehensive management techniques, Gua Pasoh can maintain its relevance and accessibility, cultivating a legacy of cultural appreciation and environmental responsibility for future generations. This proactive strategy will safeguard the site while augmenting its value as an educational and tourist resource, benefiting both the local community and the wider archaeological discourse.

Cooperation Among Stakeholders

Stricter rules are increasingly essential to protect the archaeological site from overdevelopment and commercialisation that could compromise its integrity. The intricate balance between fostering tourism and safeguarding the site's historical importance necessitates a thorough strategy. Successful archeotourism requires active collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including local communities, tourism operators, governmental entities, and researchers. Each of these entities plays a vital part in the administration and safeguarding of Gua Pasoh.

Forming strong partnership among the stakeholders and higher authorities enhances site management and promotion while ensuring the inclusion of varied perspectives and insights in the decision-making process. Local communities can offer essential knowledge regarding the cultural value and history of the site, whereas tourist companies can provide insights into visitor experiences and preferences. Government authorities and stakeholders can facilitate conservation efforts by enforcing regulations and supplying essential resources, while researchers can provide scholarly insights that augment comprehension of the site's archaeological significance. All these collaborations will give and bring about good outcomes and are very beneficial to all parties.

Furthermore, promoting transparent communication and cooperation among various stakeholders might yield new solutions that honour the site's heritage while maximising the economic advantages of tourism. By emphasising collaborative contributions and mutual accountability, Gua Pasoh can preserve its position as a leading archeotourism site, guaranteeing its role as a source of cultural pride and education for future generations. Ultimately, this collaborative approach will increase the site's sustainability and enrich the visitor experience, promoting respect for the rich history embodied in Gua Pasoh.

CONCLUSION

This research seeks to evaluate the tourism value of the archaeological sites at Gua Pasoh, Negeri Sembilan, as viewed by local visitors. This study aims to enhance understanding of visitor habits, choices, and the relevance they assign to the site by gathering data through questionnaires and interviews done during site visits. The findings suggest that Gua Pasoh possesses significant potential to engage a broader audience, enhancing recognition of its historical and cultural significance.

This research emphasises the importance of improving tourist experiences while promoting the maintenance and protection of Gua Pasoh as a significant archeotourism site. Significant difficulties pertaining to environmental sustainability and cultural preservation necessitate thorough strategies, legislative backing, and active engagement among governmental authorities, local communities, and stakeholders.

Future study should investigate the enduring impacts of archeotourism on the local population and the conservation of archaeological sites, yielding insights that might guide policy and practice. When implemented with a planned and environmentally conscious approach, archeotourism has substantial potential to cultivate an intense respect for our historical heritage, guaranteeing that future generations can value and learn from the past.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This author expresses heartfelt appreciation to Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) Shah Alam and the College of Built Environment (CBE) for their indispensable assistance and providing facilities for this research. The support and resources offered by these institutions were essential for the effective execution of this study, and their dedication to promoting academic research is greatly appreciated.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Ainna Syifaa Abu Khari led the study, authored the manuscript, formulated the primary research topic, and contributed the conceptual framework. Nor Hanisah Mohd Hashim facilitated the research development, managed the progress of the study, reviewed, and refined the manuscript, and provided approval for submission.

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