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Art and Expression

ART + COMMUNITY

**SOCIAL
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INTRODUCTION

ARTE: Art and Expression is a biannual book chapter, published under collaboration of Department of Fine Arts, Faculty of Art & Design, UiTM Perak Branch with Galeri Al-Biruni under the supervision of Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia. 'ARTE' is an amalgamation of english word 'Art', and malay word, specifically Perak slang 'Ate' which translate as conversation starter. 'ARTE' uses the concept of book chapter that platform art enthusiasts to express their inner-creativity in the form of literacy conjecture

VISION

Art and expression as aspiration towards stylistic and artistic practices

MISSION

- To enhance the culture of research and academic publication among academician and artist for international recognition
- To promote intellectual, cultural and knowledge sharing through artistic expression
- To celebrate the diversity and differences in arts practices thus creating and intellectual platform for artist to express their interest in art

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THE IMPACTS OF MURAL ARTS ON TOURISM AMONG MILLENNIAL GENERATION

a chapter by

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Abstract

Tourism industry is known as one of the largest industries that contributed to the economic growth in Malaysia. In 2019, around 86.1 billion Ringgit Malaysia was contributed from the tourism sector (Tourism Malaysia, 2019). The number of tourists was constantly increasing over the nine consecutive years since 2011. There are many contributing factors that lead to the increasing number of tourists in Malaysia. The uniqueness and diversification of culture, arts and heritage were one of contributable factors. In Melaka, mural arts can easily be found in the old buildings, schools, universities and many other structures. It becomes one of the attractive spots for the tourists to take photographs whilst travelling around the town. This paper aims to discover the impacts of mural arts on the tourism industry based on the previous works of literature and findings on the local tourist spots in Malaysia. In addition, this paper also examines how millennial generation appreciated and perceived mural arts in the tourism industry.

Introduction

In social media, the word “OOTD” is no longer a jargon term used among the millennial (Gen Y) and Gen Z. According to the study conducted by Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak (2000), they have categorized generations into four cohorts that are known as veteran generation (those people born between 1922 and 1943), baby boomers (those people born between 1943 and 1960), Generation X (those people born between 1960 and 1980) and millennial (those born between 1980 and 2000). OOTD refers to “outfit of the day” that is used extensively amongst the young generation in their personal space known as Instagram, Facebook or even in the application of TikTok.

One of the most preferable backgrounds to light up the OOTD is a mural. Mural is one of the attractive arts that has been given attention by the visitors to photograph their OOTD.

Mural Arts in Malaysia

A mural can be described as any piece of graphic artwork that is painted or applied to a wall, ceiling or other permanent substrate. With reference to Erickson (2015), mural arts can be regarded as a public art involving sculptures and decorative facades which enhance the appearance of the environment. Surprisingly, it is not only being used as one of the measures to reduce crime risk but also used to instil a sense of pride and ‘ownership’ in the community. Mural can be classified into several types. They can be classified into politics, socio-cultural, aesthetics, economy, or education for children and adults. Gazali (2017), in his study, has emphasized the effectiveness of mural arts in conveying messages to the people. Murals can be considered as one of the powerful tools that act as communicative media to deliver aspirations to public spaces.

In Malaysia, Melaka represents one of the cultural-tourism destinations and also well-known of its historical city. It has been recognized by the UNESCO as World Heritage City in 2008 other than Penang. The diversification of culture, arts and heritage were known as some of the push and pull factors that motivate local and international tourists to visit Melaka. Pull factors can be referred as motivation that attract an individual to visit a place meanwhile, push factors can be described as the forces acting to motivate the individual to explain his desire to (Baniya & Paudel, 2016). Many interesting mural arts with different themes and subjects can be found along the Melaka 3D Street Art, Melaka River

Walk as well as old buildings and structures in Banda Hilir. The colourful, humorous, political and other types of murals made this streets and buildings more variant and outstanding.

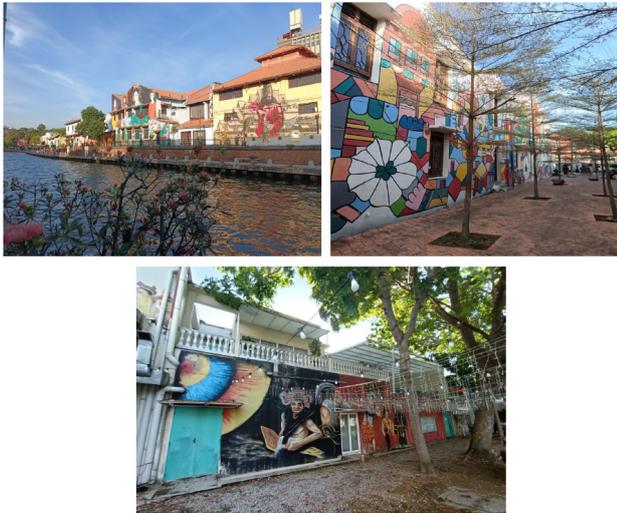


Figure 1: Mural Arts in Melaka

Note: Pictures taken by the author using the author's personal equipment
(Source: Author, 2022)

Mural arts and social media

The significance of mural arts can be seen in various ways. It is not a beauty highlight per se, but it creates a value-added to the structure or building. For instance, there are several places in Malaysia that have been listed and highlighted as the best mural artworks in Malaysia. Along with active promotional activities on social media, the positive impacts can be seen in the public responses as it becomes one of the tourist attraction spots in those areas. For instance, it was highlighted as “Bucket List: 10 Instagram-Worthy Murals & Street Art in Kuala Lumpur” (Grace, J., 2019), “The Best Mural Artworks in Malaysia” (Wai, L. Y., 2017), or even in the local newspaper as “6 cities with the best street art and murals in Malaysia” (Chin, C., 2022). Active sharing of the post (with mural arts as the background) on the social media by the bloggers and celebrities for instance has an indirect impact on the followers. In some cases, the post went viral on the internet as it reaches a wide audience. For example, the use of the hashtag (#mural) has reached 12,447,809 posts on Instagram. This number of users indicates the positive acceptance amongst the social media users.

Does mural arts have a significant impact on the tourism industry?

As written by De Miguel Molina, Maria. and Skinner, J. (2019), mural artworks are becoming an effective tool of cultural–tourism as it opens the room for the economic developments of the local community such as the establishment of restaurants, cultural centres and activities as well as tourist accommodation. In reference to a paper entitled “George Town’s Street Mural Art and Tourism Impact” which was carried out by Liang, C. (2017), he stated that the tourist found the street mural art interesting and integrated well with the open public space, providing appropriate meaning and local culture to the area. Based on the observation involving “Children on Bicycle Art”, of 824 Asian tourists, 58% were posing and taking photographs with the subject matter. This percentage indicates a positive acceptance amongst the tourist with regard to mural arts. The appreciation of the arts was shown through the act of taking photographs of the mural artworks. One of the positive impacts that can be seen in the tourism industry is the establishment of art galleries such as the interactive museum, 3D Art Gallery, Tunnel Museum, and Trick Art Museum.

Promoting Tourism among Millennials

Millennials or also known as Generation Y are the Internet generation and the largest users of social media (Kilian, Hennigs, & Langner, 2012). They are also the traveller-loving generation than any other generation. Millennials have a greater desire to travel more frequently (Dabija, Bejan, & Tipi, 2018) for pleasure and a break from work stress. They use social media for obtaining and sharing information about places to visit. Cited in Javed, Tučková & Jibril (2020), when millennials are sharing travel stories, videos and photos on social media, it significantly influences other young tourists’ travelling behaviour and their decision making about travel destinations. According to Maria-Irina and Istudor (2013), the youth travellers trust the information shared on social media more than the available reading content like brochures from travel companies while they survey for a holiday. They tend to appreciate more of other travellers’ posts and comments about their real travel experiences. This is also

concurrent with the study finding by Werenowska & Rzepka (2020) where information shared on social media have influenced more than 90% of Gen Y travel decisions. Among the information shared on social media that influences tourist destination travel choices are history and culture. In a survey on millennials' travel statistics and trends, the majority of millennials are looking for places with cultural importance as the ground for travelling. Art and cultural experiences portrayed by the murals displayed on building walls are crucial for any travel destination to prosper. Murals have become some of the most crowd-pleasing landmarks when travelling. When millennials have snapped photos of these public art walls and posted them on social media, both murals and social media become the tourism advertisement and it is just an excellent way of promoting tourism.

Conclusion

Traditionally, mural arts have been perceived as the act of vandalism by some people. Nevertheless, along with the advent of technology in many aspects, it has shifted the perception of the mural arts among the public. The freelance artists were called to participate in the community projects and received high commission upon accomplishment of their artworks. The impacts of mural arts in the tourism industry can be found in the number of tourists, the establishment of art galleries and the tourist interest in visiting and taking photograph with the mural artworks especially among the young generation. This study would benefit the tourism and art industries in upholding the public arts as part of promotional initiative. Social media can be used as an influential medium in promoting the tourism industry due to the large number of users among Generation Y or Millennial. In conclusion, mural arts have been well accepted by many as it gives positive impacts to the parties involved in the tourism industry.

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Saya yang menjalankan amanah,

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