A photograph of a wooden boardwalk bridge spanning a river. The bridge is made of weathered wooden planks and has a simple railing. Above the bridge, several strings of small, dark, spherical lights are strung across the path. The river is calm, and the background is filled with lush green trees under a blue sky with light clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

THE EMERGING TRENDS OF TOURISM AND TRAVEL IN MALAYSIA

EDITOR
NUR SHUHADAH MOHD
MAZNI SAAD

KULLIYAH OF LANGUAGES AND MANAGEMENT

THE EMERGING TRENDS OF
TOURISM AND TRAVEL IN
M A L A Y S I A

THE EMERGING TRENDS OF TOURISM AND TRAVEL IN **M A L A Y S I A**

In collaboration with



Edited by

Nur Shuhadah Mohd
Mazni Saad

KULLIYAH OF LANGUAGES AND MANAGEMENT

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Kulliyah of Languages & Management (KLM)

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Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

THE EMERGING TRENDS IN TOURISM AND TRAVEL MALAYSIA / Edited by

Nur Shuhadah Mohd, Mazni Saad.

Mode of access: Internet

eISBN 978-967-2771-09-8

1. Tourism--Research--Malaysia.

2. Tourists--Research--Malaysia.

3. Hospitality--Religious aspects--Islam--Research.

4. Government publications--Malaysia.

5. Electronic books.

I. Nur Shuhadah Mohd. II. Mazni Saad.

338.4791595

e ISBN 978-967-2771-09-8



THE EMERGING TRENDS IN
TOURISM AND TRAVEL
MALAYSIA

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Published by

Kulliyyah of Languages & Management (KLM)
International Islamic University Malaysia,
Edu Hub Pagoh

In collaboration with

Tourism Educators Association of Malaysia (TEAM)
Shah Alam, Selangor

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PREFACE

The Emerging Trend of Tourism and Travel in Malaysia is established as peer-reviewed book chapter. This book consists of applied research in the context of Tourism and Hospitality in areas such as policy, planning, development, performance, strategy, management, operations, marketing and consumer behaviour. The idea of this research book was inspired by the Dean of Kulliyah of Languages and Management (KLM) as part of the Kulliyah's strategic direction to implement Sejahtera Academic Framework in order to inculcate research culture among all KLM academic staff. Hence, the Department of Tourism took up the initiative where all her staff including part-timers contributed at least one paper for this effort. Ten manuscripts were selected for publishing following a series of screenings and reviews. This book provides all academic staff at departmental level with equal opportunities to share their research findings while improving their research skills.

Mazni Saad

Editor-in-Chief

2022

Tourists Experience on Islamic Architecture and its Influence on Destination Loyalty

Nur Amalin Mohd Kamaruzaman¹

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This paper investigates tourists' experience from the encounter with Islamic architecture and how it influences the formation of loyalty towards the visited destination, focusing on Islamic architecture in Putrajaya.

Methods/Design/approach: This study employed a convenient sampling approach targeting domestic tourists in Malaysia. Self-administered online questionnaires were distributed through social media platforms, including Whatsapp, Telegram, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. The distribution of questionnaires on Facebook was done through social groups, such as 'Kaki Cuti', 'Bercuti di Negara sendiri', 'Jom Melancong'. A total of 265 samples were collected and data were analysed through descriptive analysis and statistical tests.

Findings: The findings shows that aesthetic experience, emotional experience, and engaging experience are significant predictors of destination loyalty, with aesthetic experience as the strongest predictor. This means tourists experienced strong visual aesthetic stimulation in engaging with Islamic architecture, which resulted in significant influence on destination loyalty. Tourists also experience a significant level of emotional stimulation due to the special connection of religious bonds.

Implication/Limitations: This study focused only on the perspective of domestic tourists due to the current scenario of COVID-19 pandemic. Future research is to look into the perspective of international tourists on Islamic architecture in Malaysia.

Keywords: Architecture Tourism, Islamic Architecture, Tourists Experience, Destination Loyalty

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INTRODUCTION

Attractive signature architecture creates a one-of-a-kind aesthetic that improves the perception and image of a tourism destination. Destinations with recognisable and distinctive architecture have grown in popularity, particularly among architecture and history lovers, who are drawn to travel to self-witness the beauty of buildings and monuments. Between 1997 and 2014, architecture tourism, also known as 'architourism,' became a new trend in the tourism industry when individuals travelled around to see iconic building structures and monuments as works of art (Nash, 2015). Buildings are believed to provide joy, peace, amazement, remembrance, melancholy, and more to these folks, and architecture is supposed to provide them with a variety of sensations, meanings, and experiences. This is because, within architecture, it embodied the hidden essence of society, politics, history, and culture of a place (Izadi Najafabadi et al., 2019).

Architecture has grown in popularity and has a significant role in the growth of tourism destinations. Thus, tourism authorities or practitioners must develop strategies to preserve and upgrade architectural sites that support local residents and visitors. This is consistent with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11, which emphasises the importance of city planning and management practices to provide people with a comfortable, safe, and resilient environment. Additionally, this aim emphasises the importance of cities as centres for philosophies, commerce, tradition, and community development, enabling people to progress socially and economically (Yabanci, 2022). Regarding architourism, it can create numerous employment and business opportunities for the local community while offering positive and meaningful experiences for visitors through their interaction with the architecture and social surroundings such as tour guides (Scerri et al., 2019).

The concept of architectural value in tourism is very much concentrated on the placemaking of the city area (Abdul Rahman et al., 2021). As some city areas are rich with culture and heritage, iconic historical and architectural buildings and monuments can easily capture visitors' attention and trigger curiosity and engagement. In Malaysia, several researches highlighted the importance of the architectural value of historical and traditional monuments and buildings in providing a form of unspoken cultural symbol and identity capable of rejuvenating a dull city area (Abdul Rahman et al., 2018; Cheong et al., 2021). Not only significant for physical buildings, but the architectural value of interior space also plays a huge role in educating visitors on the socio-cultural character displayed (Maharimi & Mohd Razali, 2021).

From the perspective of urban tourism, a city can often offer diverse experiences to meet the varied preferences of city visitors due to its cultural, historical, and political richness. Diverse experience offering would attract the interest of city lovers, contribute to a satisfying tourist experience, and make the place more appealing and viable for potential visits to experience the other diverse niches offered. A positive experience is a significant factor in tourist satisfaction. When tourists are happy, they are more likely to exhibit positive behavioural responses that result in revisit intention or destination loyalty. Positive, unique experience gained from destination interaction would instil value in the whole travel journey (Qu & Kangli, 2017). In this case, the distinctive value would be gained from meaningful interaction with the architecture. This experience was generally classified into three dimensions by past researches, aesthetic experience; emotional experience; engaging experience (Turki & Amara, 2017; Vukadinovic, 2011; Willson & McIntosh, 2007).

It is generally known that destination loyalty is contributed by combining different experiences encountered upon environmental interaction. As architecture is often associated with aesthetic value, the aspect of experience stimulation from tourists' architectural encounters is vital to be explored. Despite the importance of understanding experience formation, clarification on tourists' experience specifically for architecture tourism is crucial for better development of the tourism industry (Qu & Kangli, 2017), especially from an economic perspective. Increased destination loyalty among tourists may indirectly lead to more significant economic benefits to the region (Bhat & Darzi, 2018). Thus, it is critical to define the idea of destination loyalty by examining the most meaningful tourist experience that motivates tourists to return to the same destination (Sangpikul, 2018). For this case, it is not only to unveil how architectural features influence experience formation but also to know how this different stimulation may lead to loyalty towards a destination. By gaining a deeper understanding of tourists' experiences at architectural sites, this study would fill a void in understanding tourists' experience stimulation from architectural interaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Islamic Architecture

Architecture is generally defined as the art of designing buildings and intertwined with human local cultural values (Yusof, 2011). It is closely connected to the act of modifying the current natural environment to suit the need for human well-being and comfort. The designing process often encompasses several stages, such as town planning, urban design, and landscape architecture (Yılmaz et al., 2018).

Islamic architecture, in the meantime, consists of the combination of Islamic values into the architectural elements of buildings and monuments. Grounded by the Islamic principles within Al-Quran and As-Sunnah, Islamic architecture often incorporated the mentioned principles throughout the designing and development process (Yusof, 2011). The emergence of Islamic architecture ignited from the combining thought of physical and spiritual values to create functional spaces in line with Islamic teachings (Mahmoud & Elbelkasy, 2016; Shafaei & Mohamed, 2015). In other words, Islamic architecture is a comprehensive expression that incorporates functional, physical, and religious needs. Based on the Islamic Tawhid worldview, any structure constructed is not only intended to meet human needs but also to aid, stimulate, develop, and strengthen Muslim's faith and facilitate the execution of ibadah. This thus elevates Muslims to a higher dignity than the rest of creation and living honourably as Allah's Khalifah (Yusof, 2011).

With time, due to the spread of Islamic teaching worldwide, Islamic architecture has come to be broadly described as building constructed in Muslim countries that incorporates architectural aspects connected with Islam and traditional Islamic architecture, such as minarets, arches, and domes (Mahmoud & Elbelkasy, 2016; Yusof, 2011). Islamic architecture is generally distinguishable from several unique characteristics, especially the colours, concepts and ornamentations (Itewi, 2007). For instance, Itewi (2007) indicated the square, circle, and triangle are widely applied designs in Islamic architecture details because they correspond to mental notions. Additionally, it is highlighted that Islamic architecture is centred on the concepts of unity, balance, and harmony, which are regarded as the foundations of Islamic principles. These concepts are visualised through the central points structure such as Kaaba or fountain that can be seen in many mosque aisles.

Despite the underlying solid spiritual concept, Islamic architecture is mainly designed and detailed in a way that satisfies both aesthetic and practical requirements. The contemporary Islamic architectural style is characterised by prominent ornamental elements such as Arabic calligraphy carved on walls and stones, oriels, Muqarnasat (hive-shaped motifs), and sculptures (Itewi, 2007). As for Islamic architecture in Putrajaya, these characteristics are visible in many governmental buildings, public spaces and community mosques. Most of the buildings and monuments with Central Asian and Middle Eastern architectural appearance can be identified as having the Islamic architecture value. Those buildings include Putra Mosque, Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin Mosque, The Place of Justice and Moroccan Pavilion in Putrajaya (Mohd-Rasdi et al., 2020).

Tourists Experience Development and Destination Loyalty

Tourists travel for a variety of motivations. Due to the subjective nature of the tourist experience, each tourist has a different level of travel satisfaction and feels a distinct sense of attachment to the place visited. Therefore, it is critical to grasp the experiential perspective of the tourist, as it is a significant component in determining destination loyalty (Rahman, 2014). Tourist experience refers to the interaction between the individual tourist and the tourism system from all different angles of perspective, including physical, social, environmental, psychological, etc. (Larsen, 2007; Mossberg, 2007). For an interaction to be registered as a significant experience in a tourist's mind, the encounter between the individual and the system must be regarded as essential (Larsen, 2007). This process is highly associated with the psychological phenomenon of the individual itself. In this regards, sensory stimulation is the key to the psychological process and the way tourist response is depends on its interception with the phenomena such as personality traits, affective state, attitude, value system etc. (Cohen, 1979; Larsen, 2007).

The psychological nature of tourist experience makes it susceptible to positive and negative experience development, depending on the quality of stimulation received upon the travel encounter. Regardless of the uneasily predictable tourists experience, what concerns them most is the magnitude of its impact on tourists' loyalty towards the destination. Besides bringing economic benefits to the destination, loyalty is an exact indicator of the quality of the destination experience offering, which reflects tourist travel satisfaction (Bosque & Martín, 2008; C. G. Chi, 2012). Especially in the dynamic and competitive environment with a variety of travel destinations to be chosen, securing tourists' loyalty is highly challenging. The destination manager could only ensure it by understanding tourist expectations of travel experience and offering more than expected (Gursoy et al., 2014).

O'Dell (2007) argued that experiences are intangible, subjective, continuous and highly personal phenomena. The word 'experience' itself can be defined as the daily experience and the evaluated experience that depends on reflection and prescribed meaning (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010). Another study revealed hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement and knowledge as the main components of the tourist experience (Kim, Woo, & Uysal, 2015). Tourist experiences can generate benefits, such as positive "psychological outcomes" and "the ultimate value that people place on what they believe they have gained from participation in a certain leisure activity" (Schänzel & McIntosh, 2000, p. 37).

Senses play a significant role in tourist experience development, especially during tourists' encounters with the physical environment. Specifically for attractions with visual value, such as arts, customs, and heritage,

tourists often anticipate the uniqueness and authenticity of the subjects. Viewers expect the genuineness of the visuals, which gives value to the site (Rames et al., 2021), including the authenticity and genuineness of architectural value. Architecture relies on decoration and ornamentation and embeds the native customs such as carving, painting, tales, and associated with folk everyday life (Yi et al., 2018). Not only that it provides a sense of validity by the viewers on the authenticity of the architecture, its origination, but also the stories behind it can be used as emotional and knowledge stimulation (Rames et al., 2021; Willson & McIntosh, 2007; Yi et al., 2018). This means the appreciation of unique architecture does not stop at its aesthetic value, but it can be extended to emotional connection and engaging experience (Willson & McIntosh, 2007). These are the value, if being presented effectively, would draw the viewers back to rerun the entire classical architectural journey. It is mainly because a strong psychological connection to the destination signifies tourists' attitudinal loyalty (Han et al., 2011; Jeong & Kim, 2019).

Aesthetic Experience

Aesthetic experience is referred to as appreciating the beauty, artistic value and nature of a subject such as art, design, landscape, architecture etc. (Breiby & Slåtten, 2018). Specifically in this study, it is referring to the value of Islamic architecture. From a tourism perspective, aesthetic experience is associated with tourist gaze, involving the process of tourist experiencing the pleasant aesthetic environment that captures tourist attention (Willson & McIntosh, 2007). Though tourists would mutually agree on the presence of aesthetic value within architecture, the way the individual tourist perceives and experience it sometimes may differ significantly due to the different personal and cultural perspective (Bhat & Darzi, 2018; Güzel, 2014; Willson & McIntosh, 2007). For Islamic architecture, Muslim visitors might experience stronger internal is it internal or spiritual connections due to their religious background. In contrast, non-Muslims might appreciate the buildings due to their visually pleasing and unique design. As architecture is an art by itself, visitors often regard it as the main attracting factor that motivates visitation to the architectural site. At the same time, for some, the excitement comes from the idea that architecture represent the spirit of a city that unique and only to be found at that specific place (Vukadinovic, 2011).

Experience of visual value was believed to significantly influence tourist loyalty as it elevates the level of travel satisfaction. Places with appealing visual elements give tourists a more satisfactory experience, leading to positive post-travel behaviour, including stronger revisit intention (Breiby & Slåtten, 2018). The aesthetic value portrayed from unique architecture able to capture a broader public interest leads to the development of a stronger sense of place (Scerri et al., 2019). It can also maximise the economic benefits by optimising the utilisation of old and abandoned buildings for economic generation (Scerri et al., 2019). Other than leading to travel satisfaction, this form of visual stimulation would contribute towards immediate attachment of the visited place, as it commonly consistent with what is expected by tourists before the visit (Yeh et al., 2012). The aesthetic visual value stimulates tourist senses significantly and gives a sense of enjoyment to have a first-hand experience of the architecture, hence motivating tourist loyalty either in the form of revisit intention or spreading word-of-mouth (Jeong & Kim, 2019). In other words, the aesthetic experience felt by tourists from architecture encounter affected tourists travel satisfaction and loyalty due to the authenticity of the artistic value presented (Genc & Gulertekin Genc, 2022). Thus, following the discussion made, the below hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Aesthetic experience influences tourists' destination loyalty.

Emotional Experience

As architecture represents the culture and value of a particular social community, its encounter would quickly form an emotional connection with the viewers, especially when there are cultural similarities. The emotional experience can be referred to as the experience that enriches personal meaning in a diverse perspective. Emotional experience is defined as experience closely related to physical, intellectual or spiritual commitment that gives emotional implication upon consumption (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Turki & Amara, 2017; Vukadinovic, 2011). Some researchers argue that emotional connection on heritage-related architecture due to the lack of feeling and soul in the modern design, thus with the encounters of architecture from a past civilisation, it fills in the gaps in the present life and serve a sense of belonging (Scruton, 2013; Tannock, 1995; Willis, 1999). Cultural and heritage-related architecture conveys nostalgic experiences that carry personal reflections, allowing viewers to reminisce personal memories, either associated with the culture or the place itself (Willson & McIntosh, 2007). Likewise, Islamic architecture carries spiritual values within the ornament, carves and calligraphy design. Muslim tourists that visit Islamic architecture site often experience emotional connection as the design evoke a sense of admiration and closeness to God (Chye et al., 2017; Farahdel, 2011; Turki & Amara, 2017).

By establishing a personal connection, tourists' enjoyment of travel destination does not only confine to the satisfaction of physical encounters but also includes emotional satisfaction. For 'emotional tourist' that travels with the motivation of gaining meaningful emotional values and life experiences, the satisfaction of emotional stimulation is vital in achieving travel satisfaction (López-Guzmán et al., 2019). It is a travel that motivated by the yearning of past events or memories that the individuals have never experienced, and this experience can be clearly differentiated from the other either in the context of pleasure, entertainment, curiosity or stimulation (Lv et al., 2020; Serra-Cantalops et al., 2018; Yeh et al., 2012). Through the cultural and personal connection between the architecture and the individual tourists, it would draw to stronger post-travel memories and contribute to loyalty to the place (Larsen, 2007). Equally, individual emotional experience in the sense of religious affiliation significantly affects destination loyalty by developing a stronger place dependence among tourists that visit places associated with their faith (Patwardhan, Ribeiro, Woosnam, et al., 2020). With the significant value engraved within the architecture, the emotional stimulation is the antecedent to tourist on-site and post-travel response and behaviour, including travel satisfaction, revisit intention and spreading word-of-mouth (Ruiz-Mafe et al., 2016). Tourists who encounter historical buildings and monuments develop a more profound sense of emotion, leading to a higher level of satisfaction and loyalty. This is mainly due to cultural recognition and obligation to preserve the architecture and historical site related to human history and civilisation (López-Guzmán et al., 2019). Accordingly, with the above discussion, hypothesis number two is proposed:

H2: Emotional experience influences tourists' destination loyalty.

Engaging Experience

Engaging experience is referred to as any form of stimulation that allows someone to understand better and discover the physical, social, and environmental surroundings of the destination (Turki & Amara, 2017). The engagement enables tourists to immerse and involve themselves in the context, either through instilling knowledge development, behavioural awareness, or emotional empathy. With the engaging experience, tourists could respond and interact accordingly at the destination, and most importantly, ensure tourists are

mindful and have constant interest and curiosity towards the subject (Moscardo, 1998). Engaging experience often in an educational perspective, especially for cultural and heritage-related sites. The informative guiding and story-telling, the recreational sightseeing, the first-hand involvement are the activities that lead to tourists' sensory stimulation and better destination engagement (Vukadinovic, 2011; Willson & McIntosh, 2007). For some, the new knowledge and exploration were regarded as the experience of self-discovery and self-development that offer tourists a new perspective upon travel to a destination (Souza et al., 2020). Not merely creating excitement, but this engaging experience gives actual value to the trip made. As it is related to sensory stimulation, engaging experience is distinctive and customised based on individual tourists' responses (Verleye, 2015), which is different based on time and place.

Besides fulfilling personal interests and preferences, tourists often seek new knowledge and experience upon travel. Knowledge factor is one of the main travel motivations among some tourists that bring a different purpose and meaning to the travel made when satisfaction is achieved (Nguyen & Cheung, 2016). With more knowledge and experiential consumption during travel, tourists are perceived to be more satisfied and more loyal to the destination (C. F. Chen et al., 2016; Nguyen & Cheung, 2016). The reality is that tourists seek knowledge and intellectual enrichment in selecting travel destinations, including revisiting past destinations (Turki & Amara, 2017). As the heritage and cultural tourism site are embedded with a meaningful social, cultural and artistic value, tourists tend to have a deeper connection with the tangible and intangible elements. Visitor engagement at these categories of destination is higher to unveil the cultural meaning and therefore trigger satisfaction and loyalty of the place (Alrawadieh et al., 2019). A destination with a higher level of engagement resulted in tourists higher level of cultural context and understanding, thus leading towards memorable tourism experience and loyalty (H. Chen & Rahman, 2018). With the engagement and experience co-creation offered by certain destinations, the meaningful value gained from the positive experience influences tourists' decision-making process (Gursoy et al., 2014). The memories of the wonderful, engaging experience may psychologically persuade tourists to re-experience the travel excitement (Larsen, 2007). With the discussion made, hypothesis number three is therefore proposed:

H3: Engaging experience influences tourists' destination loyalty.

Figure 1 Proposed conceptual framework of tourists experience and destination loyalty at Islamic architectural destination

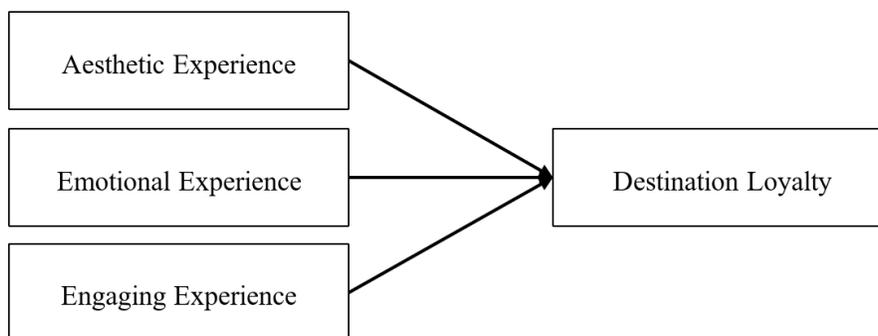


Figure 1: Research framework

Islamic Architecture in Putrajaya

Putrajaya's architectural construction is listed as Malaysia's largest project and one of the largest in South-East Asia, with a final cost of approximately US\$8.1 billion (RM33.29 billion) (Kaur, 2019). From one perspective, the government has invested a substantial sum of money in the development of Putrajaya, including the architectural design of all important buildings within the area. Yet, it is believed that the buildings' utilisation has not been optimised and explored to their maximum potential for tourism-related purposes, especially in attracting new and returning domestic and international visitors (Abdul Aziz et al., 2016).

Islamic architecture is among the preferred architecture to be looked into during travel, either among Muslim or non-Muslim travellers. Many countries, especially those in the Middle East, saw a surge in visitors to Islamic architectural sites. For instance, Abu Dhabi's Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque received approximately 6.6 million visitors in 2019, including 879049 visitors from India, 704680 from China, 234849 from Russia, and 193234 from Germany (Moghavvemi et al., 2021).

Putrajaya's role as the administrative centre for Malaysia makes it a popular architectural spot either for local or international tourists due to the magnificent architecture of government buildings that embeds Islamic elements. Despite a low record of tourists arrival in Putrajaya, as reported by the Department of Statistics Malaysia, some of the buildings and attraction within Putrajaya are identified as 'Instagram-worthy' spots, due to the architectural uniqueness. Putrajaya's architecture is reported to be custom-designed with a blend of Malay and Arab elements, offering visitors a multicultural experience. Additionally, Putrajaya is dubbed the architectural expression of Malaysia due to its "Malaysian-Islamic" architectural characteristics (Joni et al., 2016; Mohd-Ali, 2007).

The annual domestic tourist's arrival in Putrajaya increased significantly from 2009 until 2019 (refer to Figure 1). However, despite the administrative role of Putrajaya and its renowned Islamic architecture, Putrajaya received an insignificant amount of domestic tourist arrival annually in comparison to the other state. In 2020, Putrajaya was the state with the second-lowest domestic tourists' arrival, as shown in Table 1. This scenario is probably due to the size of its land area and the diversity of activities offered.

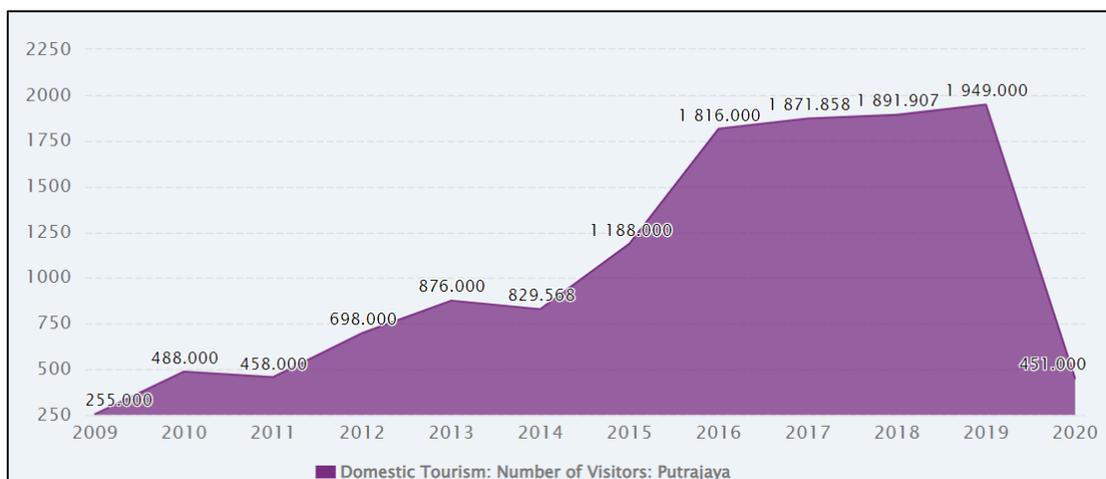


Figure 2. Putrajaya domestic tourists arrival in 2009 until 2020 by Department of Statistics Malaysia.

Table 1. Domestic tourists arrival by states in 2020 by Department of Statistics Malaysia.

States	No of domestic tourists arrival ('000)
Pahang	5,214.50
Perak	4,890.60
Selangor	4,693.20
Johor	3,988.60
Kuala Lumpur	3,684.50
Kedah	3,486.90
Kelantan	3,318.30
Melaka	2,859.50
N. Sembilan	2,848.20
P. Pinang	2,749.60
Terengganu	2,670.10
Sarawak	2,627.00
Sabah	2,456.40
Perlis	410.9
Putrajaya	283.6
Labuan	76.8

Understanding the scenario in Putrajaya and its significant increase of domestic tourist arrival annually, it is relevant to have a good look at visitors' architectural experience there. With the distinctive emotional impact received from tourists' encounters with the architecture, it is critical to study the quality of tourists' experience from this encounter, specifically for architectural buildings and monuments in Putrajaya, to understand their satisfaction loyalty further. Not only that it is crucial for an in-depth understanding of tourists' experience development, but simultaneously beneficial to aid in future product creation, tourism promotion, and marketing activities that significantly enhance the number of tourists and motivate revisitation to Putrajaya.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

Acknowledging and optimising the public trend sharing their experience in social media, this research employed an online questionnaire survey as its survey strategy in approaching the respondents. In this regard, the selection of respondents was narrowed down to domestic tourists that engage in social media. A total of 265 respondents participated in this research.

Measurement Instruments

As this study employed an online survey strategy, a self-administered structured questionnaire approach was adopted in the design process of the questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of multiple-choice and 5-point Likert scale questions, with one (1) as strongly disagree to five (5) as strongly agree. The questionnaire was structured into three (3) main sections; 1) tourist profile and travel behaviour, 2) tourists

experience, and 3) destination loyalty. Section 2 tourists experience was further divided into three parts; 1) aesthetic experience, 2) emotional experience, and 3) engaging experience.

The first section captured tourist profile and travel behaviour consisting of six questions, with three regarding social profile; gender, marital status, age, and occupation. Meanwhile, the remaining were related to travel behaviour; frequency of visitation and places visited. This section is critical in examining the Putrajaya tourists market motivated by the Islamic architecture concept. All of the questions were in the form of multiple choice answers.

Tourists' experience in section two consists of the three different aspects of the experience were evaluated; (1) aesthetic experience, (2) emotional experience and engaging experience, (3) stimulated from the Islamic architecture engagement. The assessments of all the experiences were adopted from past researches, aesthetic experience consists of seven measurement items (Bhat & Darzi, 2018; Güzel, 2014; Turki & Amara, 2017), emotional experience consists of eight items (Chye et al., 2017; Farahdel, 2011; Nguyen & Cheung, 2016; Turki & Amara, 2017), and engaging experience consists of eight items (Qu & Kangli, 2017; Turki & Amara, 2017). The items in this section were measured using a five-point Likert scale with one (1) indicating 'strongly disagree' to five (5) indicating 'strongly agree'.

The last section focused on assessing destination loyalty looked into assessing tourists' revisit intention and recommendation intention. These assessments evaluated tourists' desire to revisit Putrajaya and their willingness to recommend it to family and friends. In this section, six items were adopted from past researches to assess respondents' loyalty towards Putrajaya (Bhat & Darzi, 2018; C. G. Q. Chi & Qu, 2008; Jeong & Kim, 2019; A. K. Kim & Brown, 2012; Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Similar to the previous section, this section was measured using a five-point Likert scale. One (1) indicated 'strongly disagree' to five (5) indicated 'strongly agree'.

Sampling Technique and Procedure

The sample for this research was selected through a convenient sampling technique. The questionnaire surveys were distributed online, and respondents voluntarily participated in the survey. Individuals that have visited Putrajaya was set as the sample criteria for this research. These criteria were written in the survey instruction and respondents were self-select based on their consideration of the criteria fulfilment.

The execution of the online survey was done through several commonly used social media platforms, mainly 'Facebook', 'Instagram', 'Twitter', 'Whatsapp' and 'Telegram'. The questionnaire survey link was posted as a status on the researcher's related social media accounts together with a brief explanation of the survey and an attachment of a cover letter. This allowed the potential respondents to participate in the research voluntarily. Specifically for 'Facebook', the questionnaire was posted as a status in several public social groups. It is an online community-oriented social media platform. The online community groups include 'Kaki Cuti', 'Bercuti di Negara Sendiri', 'Jom Melancong', 'Putrajaya and Cyberjaya community' and 'Putrajaya and Cyberjaya Business Community'.

The potential respondents were also approached directly and invited to participate in the survey to increase the response rate further. Individuals and members of the groups who posted status related to visitation to Putrajaya in any social media platforms mentioned were approached through a private messaging system

to answer the questionnaire. Through this effort, potential respondents were more aware of the research. They were being approached personally and encouraged to respond to the survey.

Reliability analysis

A pilot survey was conducted on 15 respondents to test the questionnaire structure as well as to run a reliability test on the constructs. It was recommended by (Sheatsley, 1983) to run a test survey on at least 12 to 50 people prior to performing full-scale distribution. Cronbach's alpha was employed to test the internal consistency of the measurement items for variables aesthetic experience, emotional experience, engaging experience and destination loyalty. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha value for aesthetic experience was .74 (seven items), the emotional experience was .86 (eight items), the engaging experience was .80 (eight items), and destination loyalty was .75 (six items) (refer Table 2). Depending on the nature of the scale, Cronbach's alpha value is commonly recommended to be .7 and above (Pallant, 2005). Therefore, all of the constructs used in this study are reliable.

Table 2. Cronbach's alpha value for constructs reliability test

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	Items
Aesthetic experience	.74	7
Emotional experience	.86	8
Engaging experience	.80	8
Destination loyalty	.75	6

Data Analysis

Multiple linear regression was the method of data analysis employed in testing the hypotheses. The regression was runned to test the predicting capacity of aesthetic experience, emotional experience, and engaging experience on destination loyalty based on the respondents encounter of Islamic architecture. The relationship was verified through the coefficient of tourist experiences and destination loyalty

RESULTS

Respondents' demographic profile

The total number of respondents who participated in this research was 265. Table 3 below displays the statistics of respondents' profiles and travel behaviour.

Of the 265 respondents, 74.3% were females and 25.7% were males. The majority were below 50 with the highest frequency in the age group of 20 to 29 years old (84.5%) and only 3.4% were 50 years and above. Respondents mainly were single individuals, 78.5% and the rest 21.5% were married. As the respondents were mainly aged below 30, it is relevant that most of them were still students (67.9%), while the rest consisted of employed individuals (27.2%), unemployed (3.0%), and retirees (1.9%).

Looking at respondents' travel behaviour, the majority has visited Putrajaya more than three times (71.3%), which makes them the frequent visitors of Putrajaya. For the visited attraction, Putra Mosque (82.6%), Dataran Putra (81.9%), Moroccan Pavilion (71.3%), Tuanku Mizan Mosque (66.8%) and The Palace of

Justice (50.2%) were among the most visited places in Putrajaya out of the total eight Islamic architecture-related attraction listed in the questionnaire. The remaining attractions were visited by less than 50 per cent of the respondents.

Table 3: Respondents profile and travel behaviour

DEMOGRAPHY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Gender		
Female	197	74.3
Male	68	25.7
<i>Total</i>	265	100
Age Group		
<19	6	2.3
20 - 29	224	84.5
30 - 39	13	4.9
40 - 49	13	4.9
50 >	9	3.4
<i>Total</i>	265	100
Marital Status		
Single	208	78.5
Married	57	21.5
<i>Total</i>	265	100
Employment		
Employed	72	27.2
Unemployed	8	3.0
Retired	5	1.9
Student	180	67.9
<i>Total</i>	265	100
BEHAVIOUR	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Frequency of visitation		
Once	16	6.0
2 - 3 times	60	22.6
> 3 times	189	71.3
<i>Total</i>	265	100
Places visited		
Putra Mosque	219	82.6
Dataran Putra	217	81.9
Moroccan Pavilion	189	71.3
Tuanku Mizan Mosque	177	66.8
The Palace of Justice	133	50.2
Perdana Putra	94	35.5
Tabung Haji Complex	37	14.0
Nasyul Quran Complex	22	8.3

Level of Experience on Islamic Architecture in Putrajaya

In having a brief understanding of respondents' experience on engagement with Islamic architecture in Putrajaya, descriptive analysis was done to look into the mean value for each item under the three experiences measured. Table 4 below shows the mean score for aesthetic experience, emotional experience and engaging experience.

Table 4: Descriptive analysis of mean value for respondents' experience

Variables	Items	Mean	S. D	Overall mean
Aesthetic experience	<i>AE1</i> : I enjoyed seeing the Islamic architectural styles of buildings in Putrajaya	4.66	0.561	4.534
	<i>AE2</i> : I have positive experience with the beauty of the architecture of this place	4.57	0.624	
	<i>AE3</i> : The beauty of the architecture enhanced my travel experience	4.57	0.637	
	<i>AE4</i> : I am interested with the architecture of this place	4.56	0.613	
	<i>AE5</i> : I visited this place because the design is aesthetically pleasing	4.50	0.769	
	<i>AE6</i> : I visited this place because it has fascinating architecture	4.34	0.886	
	<i>AE7</i> : I think Putrajaya represents the national "Islamic" identity of architecture	4.31	0.872	
Emotional experience	<i>EE1</i> : This place has stimulated my positive emotions	4.43	0.741	4.064
	<i>EE2</i> : The architecture invokes a sense of awe in me	4.40	0.773	
	<i>EE3</i> : I did something meaningful during my visit to this place	4.18	0.941	
	<i>EE4</i> : I am interested in visiting Islamic architectural sites as it reflects my faith	4.12	1.04	
	<i>EE5</i> : I experienced a sense of being close to God when visiting Islamic architectural sites	4.09	1.071	
	<i>EE6</i> : I am very attached to this place	3.86	1.166	
	<i>EE7</i> : This place reminds me of personal memories	3.79	1.209	
	<i>EE8</i> : I have a special connection with this place	3.63	1.157	
Engaging experience	<i>EgE1</i> : I gained knowledge or information in this kind of place	4.17	0.832	3.713
	<i>EgE2</i> : I experienced something new from my visit to this place	4.16	0.83	
	<i>EgE3</i> : I visited this place for recreational purpose	3.96	1.033	
	<i>EgE4</i> : I feel a sense of welcoming with people around this place	3.88	1.005	
	<i>EgE5</i> : This place allows me to make interaction with new people	3.59	1.07	
	<i>EgE6</i> : I learned new skills from my visit to this place in Putrajaya	3.38	1.162	
	<i>EgE7</i> : I built a friendship(s) from my visit to this place	3.28	1.285	
	<i>EgE8</i> : I got so involved with the activities that I forgot anything else	3.28	1.243	

Results in Table 4 shows that upon engagement with Islamic architecture-related attractions in Putrajaya, respondents gain a stronger aesthetic experience and emotional experience, with an overall mean value of

4.534 and 4.064, respectively. The engaging experience was less felt by respondents with only a 3.713 mean value.

Looking specifically into an aesthetic experience, respondents collectively agreed that they enjoyed the beauty of Islamic architecture in Putrajaya, with all of the items valued 4.31 and above. While for the emotional experience, respondents agreed that Islamic architecture sparks spiritual senses, yet has a varied opinion on the engagement's ability to instil personal attachment, shown by the mean scale below 4 of measurement items *EE6*, *EE7* and *EE8*. The engaging experience was weak in the mentioned attractions, either in the form of physical or social engagement. Despite being excited about the visual experience obtained, these places do not offer a satisfactory engagement, proven by the low mean value (below 4) of most measurement items (*EgE3* to *EgE8*).

Hypotheses Testing

In testing the hypotheses, a multiple linear regression was calculated to predict destination loyalty based on the tourist aesthetic experience, emotional experience, and engaging experience upon the encounter of Islamic architecture. A significant regression equation was found ($F(3, 261) = 68.533, p < .000$), with an R^2 of .441 (refer Table 5).

Table 5: Coefficients of Tourist Experiences and Destination Loyalty

Hypotheses	Beta	t-value	Sig.	VIF	Decision
H ₁ : Aesthetic experience > Destination Loyalty	.328***	4.497	.000	1.786	Accept
H ₂ : Emotional experience > Destination Loyalty	.222***	3.571	.000	2.640	Accept
H ₃ : Engaging experience > Destination Loyalty	.193***	3.605	.000	1.858	Accept

*Note: F-value: 68.533***; R² = .441; Adjusted R² = .434; p-value < 0.001****

H₁ proposed that aesthetic experience from Islamic architecture influence tourist loyalty towards destination. The result of the test indicated aesthetic experience positively and significantly influenced loyalty with a p -value .000 ($\beta = .328, p < .05$). Thus, from the result H₁ is accepted. Similarly, in H₂, it was proposed that emotional experience influence tourist destination loyalty. From the result, emotional experience also positively and significantly influenced loyalty, with a p -value of .000 ($\beta = .222, p < .05$). Hence, H₂ was accepted. Finally, for H₃, it proposed there is a significant influence of engaging experience on destination loyalty. The result of p -value .000 ($\beta = .193, p < .05$) proven the positive and significant influence of engaging experience upon encountering Islamic architecture on tourist destination loyalty. H₃ was also being accepted.

All three experiences were concluded to be the significant predictors of destination loyalty, with aesthetic experience as the strongest predictor. These findings support all the hypotheses that agree that aesthetic experience, emotional experience, and engaging experience from Islamic architecture encounters significantly influence tourist destination loyalty, in this case loyalty towards Putrajaya. The summary of the coefficient of tourist experiences and destination loyalty is shown in Figure 2.

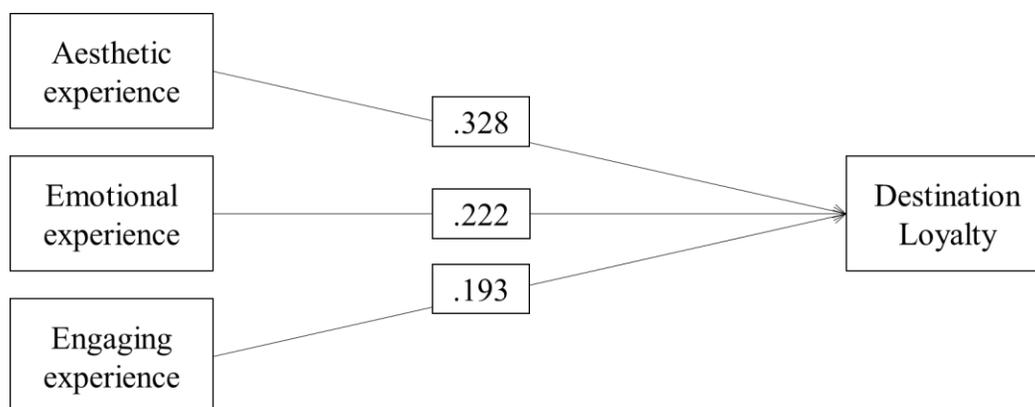


Figure 2: Summary of coefficients of tourist experiences and destination loyalty

STUDY DISCUSSION

This paper is directed to improve knowledge related to the impact of Islamic architectural encounters on different aspects of the tourist experience. Given that experience formation is psychological in nature and highly affected by tourist sensory stimulation, the paper also questions the extensive influence of tourist experiences from Islamic architecture encounter on destination loyalty. Hence this paper enlightens the relationships between different aspects of experience and loyalty and understanding the predictors of loyalty, specifically tourist loyalty towards Islamic architecture sites. It looked into three aspects of tourist experience; aesthetic experience, emotional experience, engaging experience; which are closely related to the formation of experience from stimulation of different senses (Turki & Amara, 2017; Vukadinovic, 2011; Willson & McIntosh, 2007).

The study employed a self-administered questionnaire survey with online social media as its distribution platform. As the Malaysian administrative centre with several Islamic concept buildings being constructed, Putrajaya was selected as the study area. Analyses show that majority of the respondents visited Islamic architectural sites due to the aesthetically pleasing design of the buildings, which enhanced their travel experience. In other words, visitation was made to Islamic architectural sites due to the aesthetic experience offered. This finding supports the idea that people travel to a place for aesthetic visuals offered by a place, and architecture value is one of the important aspects that form unique experience upon physical tourist encounter at destination (Bhat & Darzi, 2018; Güzel, 2014; Lv et al., 2020; Turki & Amara, 2017; Vukadinovic, 2011).

In addition, it was found that the value and meaning embedded and represented within the Islamic architecture are able to stimulate positive emotions within visitors upon physical and visual engagement with the buildings and monuments. For some, it may also reflect a sense of faith and attachment or closeness to the Supreme being. In simpler words, due to the spiritual values associated with the design, the visitors' emotional experience was stimulated. This is in line with statements from past research that highlighted that upon interaction with building with architectural value, tourists would gain emotional experience (Patwardhan, Ribeiro, Payini, et al., 2020; Patwardhan, Ribeiro, Woosnam, et al., 2020; Willson &

McIntosh, 2007), hence strengthen individuals attachment and loyalty towards the visited place (B. Kim & Chen, 2021).

This research also unveils that physical encounter with Islamic architectural buildings and monuments offers new knowledge and experience to visitors. The visually appealing architecture not only satisfies visitors' visual needs but also perceived as creating a conducive environment to perform recreational activities. Incoherent with the past research, educational elements during travel such as historical knowledge, exploring a new place, and recreational activities, would enable the tourist to immerse in engaging experience (Qu & Kangli, 2017; Willson & McIntosh, 2007). Nevertheless, despite the new experience and visual value offered, the stimulation is not enough to facilitate visitors in experiencing a sense of belonging to the place. Islamic architectural value per se is insufficient to ensure a strong engaging experience among the visitors. Nevertheless, visitors' significant level of engaging experience would highly contribute to destination loyalty. This requires the intervention of effective destination interpretation planning and design, which can prolong visitors' engaging experience by instilling curiosity and excitement throughout visitation.

The results from analyses supported the presence of positive influence of different tourist aspects of experiences from Islamic architectural encounters on destination loyalty (H1, H2, H3) and show aesthetic experience as the strongest predictor compared to emotional experience and engaging experience. Consistent with past studies which indicated aesthetic experience as the primary influence to loyalty (Bhat & Darzi, 2018; Breiby & Slåtten, 2018; Chiu et al., 2016; Jeong & Kim, 2019; Rahman, 2014; Willson & McIntosh, 2007; Yeh et al., 2012), unique and appealing visual value provide satisfaction to visitors and resulted in future revisit intention or simply said as loyalty (Willson & McIntosh, 2007).

As the encounter with architecture is grounded by recognising the local social and cultural value, tourists develop admiration, and salient memories of the destination visited. Not just remembering the memories, tourists' attachment and loyalty towards these socio-cultural related destinations are evident by the way they identify and associate themselves with the destination. Tourists of the same religion develop an emotional attachment to spiritual belief and faith, particularly in terms of the spiritual environment; therefore, they perceive the encounter to be more meaningful and develop loyalty in the form of appreciation (Patwardhan, Ribeiro, Woosnam, et al., 2020). For monuments and buildings with Islamic architecture such as mosques, the magnificent architecture and artistic design bring pleasure to the sensory and instil a sense of humbleness among tourists, especially Muslims (Moghavvemi et al., 2021). Hence, without any doubt, it can be summarised that Islamic architecture does lead towards a stronger destination loyalty due to its socio-cultural value and religious affiliation.

IMPLICATION AND CONCLUSION

The implication of this study is mainly the practical contribution of its finding that served better understanding of aspects of tourist experience that are stimulated upon encounter with architectural elements, and to what extent it is able to nurture destination loyalty. From this understanding, the destination management organisation (DMO), including the tourism authority and tourism businesses, are able to plan and develop more effective promotion and marketing strategies appropriately. Other than promoting the visual offering of the unique Islamic architecture available in Putrajaya, DMO should focus on highlighting

the knowledge and information that the place is able to be offered simultaneously. Citing back the findings from this study, aesthetic experience per se is not enough to nurture a sense of attachment, and it requires engaging experience that can be in the form of activities, knowledge development etc.

The abovementioned implication leads to the second practical implication, which provides insight for better destination planning and management. What to be highlighted is the importance of better design and planning of destination interpretation, such as digital information, information posters, exploration activities etc. With these efforts, visitors can experience the aesthetic value and appreciate the insight gained through the emotional and engaging experience. Nevertheless, aesthetic value is the key to the satisfactory experience for Islamic architectural sites, which is the antecedent to visitors' loyalty. Hence, inserting the preservation knowledge and effort as a part of simultaneous destination management and visitors' engagement activities would be effective in gaining visitors' satisfaction.

The outputs from this study have to be interpreted with caution because of the limitation in scope and sampling. Firstly, this study specifically focuses on the scenario of the Islamic architecture site in Putrajaya. Secondly, the study focused on domestic tourists as the target group mainly due to the least number of domestic tourists visiting Putrajaya compared to the other destination in Malaysia, despite it being a known destination with Islamic architectural monuments and buildings. The evaluation of destination loyalty was conducted on this target group as past researches shown that domestic tourists' loyalty to a destination required the establishment of a long-term relationship between the tourists and the destination, and often portrayed in the form of attitude instead of the desire to revisit, unless if the destination offers a significant amount of tourists involvement (Kwenye & Freimund, 2016; Mechinda et al., 2009; Xu et al., 2021). In addition, due to interstate travel restrictions during the COVID19 outbreak, sampling focused on domestic tourists as the target group.

The dimension of the study was only confined to assessing the aspects of experience that are closely related to visual stimulation. Therefore, future research is suggested looking into several Islamic architecture-related sites to better compare tourist experiences. It is also recommended to include the perspective of other tourist segments, such as international tourists from a different region, interstate tourists, and tourists from the surrounding community, better to see the differences in experience, especially the attachment. The researcher would also recommend the expansion of tourist experience scope, such as to include service experience, to have a more holistic and inclusive assessment of experience stimulation upon Islamic architecture encounter.

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THE EMERGING TRENDS OF TOURISM AND TRAVEL IN **MALAYSIA**

The Book on *The Emerging Trends of Tourism and Travel in Malaysia* provides practical materials on tourism and travel, based on current researches of the authors. The chapters have been arranged thematically from the broad area in tourism to specific niches. With the focus to highlight the recent research trends in Malaysia tourism industry, this book is expected to serve as reading materials for researches and students in the filed of travel and tourism.

This book is prepared as a collaborative project between the Department of Tourism, Kulliyyah of Languages and Management International Islamic University Malaysia and the Tourism Educators Association Malaysia, as an initiative to lift up quality research works done by the students and the academic staffs.

e ISBN 978-967-2771-09-8



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