

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CONSERVATION TOWARDS TOURISM INDUSTRY OF MALACCA

Team Members:

Norun Najjah Binti Ahmat Siti Rohana Binti Omar Prof.Madya. Dr. Hjh. Hanipah Binti Hussin Nor Azilah Binti Ahmad Noor Maslian Binti Othman@Abd Halip The significance of conservation towards tourism industry of Malacca / Norun Najjah Ahmat ... [et al.].

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE CONSERVATION TOWARDS TOURISM INDUSTRY OF MALACCA

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Abstract

This article is meant to examine the importance of heritage conservation and its impact towards the development of tourism industry; known as heritage tourism. However, the most important part is to find out the expectation from tourists who visit Malacca for historical experience. Malacca is famous for her historical attraction around the world that more than four million tourists has visited Malacca in 2004 and the number is increasing each year onward. In its endeavor to attract even more visitors to the states, Malacca has created new products as well as enhanced existing ones under the 12 subsectors of Malaccan Tourism. One important sector is related to Malacca as a historical states and this sub-sector has connection with the heritage preservation; the core factor of heritage tourism. It is found out that heritage tourism has become the primary reasons for visiting a location. They tend to stay longer, visits more places and spend more per day than other types of visitors. This impact is generated through heritage tourism but in order to ensure its continuity, preserving them is an obligation. The truth is that many countries attempt to preserve their cultural heritage because it is that gives them their identity. Truly, it gives Malacca its unique identity as historic states which create more auras through its motto" Visit Historical Malacca means visit Malaysia".

Key words: heritage conservation, tourism and Malacca

INTRODUCTION

It is ironic that lack of money is so often the main reason to deny the importance of preservation of historic heritage and at the same time the abundance of wealth too is not a good reason for preservation agenda. This clash between the aims of cultural preservation and the desire for modernization has become a serious issue in light of the steadily diminishing residues of heritage, particularly in the urban areas, and an increasing rejection of traditional values and the architecture that went with them by many classes of society. The effect of these clashes are now at their most severe in Africa and Asia, where until recently that even the pace of modernization is high, the strength of conservation also is gradually increasing.

The factors of these ckashes is due to contempoarary city administrators and regional and urban planner are loathe to become involevd in cultural preservation or the adaptive reuse of old building, neighbourhood or the city center. Firstly is the administrators because the pattern of land ownership, rehousing, fixed rents and the political ramification among the people are often daunting. Meanwhile, the architec and planner loath it because almost all their training is in the provision of new building, new suburb or new towns on virgin sites. Exactly that they have practically no training in ways of improving existing building or urban fabrics of old types. It shows that the gulf between the utopian ideologies of the new lanner and the practical common sense of old fabrics is big. Most of the architect and planners simply do not know how to make the adjustment since they are unable to percieve or unwilling to admit the very real values inherent in traditional pattern.

In reality, both the politician and the planners would generally prefer to clean an area in order to begin anew without all the attendant problem, complexities and unfamiliarities that urban and building consrvation involve. However, total clearing of an area itself entail political repercussion. Then, in order to avoid these, the politician and the planners are content with the modernization agenda would do alternatives; to remove the individual heritage building but oftenly, they the building is truncated so that a range of its room simply disappear completely and the facade is rebuilt near the center of its original plan. Even worse is that the inferior makshift facade replace the original ones. The effect of such modernization on the traditional fabrics is generally catastrophic, that these onument become isolated instead of part of continous urban fabric (Lewcock, R.B., 1990. 34-35).

In the case of Malacca, that kind of clashes between modernization and progress and keeping traditional element is still happening but lately the idea of conservation is gradually increasing. Thanks to the aim of the government to retain the unique title of Malacca as a historical country as tourist attraction. At the same time the confirmation of World Heritage Town given by UNESCO to Malacca together with Penang is a prior victory for the heritage conservation agenda. In reality, the clashes between the planner and the conservator the urban areas is minimizing because the state has divided the heritage areas into differents zones; where the red zone is restricted from any minor or major renovation withour prior permission from the city planner. Meanwhile the rest zones has certain regulation for kinds of renovation and modernization. However, beside all those strict regulations and restriction, the political agenda of progress and the reason of economic benefit are always in the winning side; that Dataran Pahlawan existed (Muhammad, A. 2005, p.1-3). In short, the heritage conservation is the main agenda of Malaccan government in order to maintain the status as a historical country and preserve the hishest status in the international stage, the World Heritage Town.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review will analyse the advantages and the disadvantages of heritage tourism to Malaccan tourism industry.

The idea of conservation is still relatively a new concept in Asia and Africa but it is significantly produce a great impact in the West since 19th century, where the idea of nasionalism started. Heritage conservation is normally related to the movement of nationalism. each society is proud of its past and seeks to show off the glorious performance of its anveestors. The display is not limited to architectural monument but inclused all cultural legacies like manuscripts, poetry, jewelry, musical instrumet and song and so on. In European Western societies, the concern for cultural rehabilition, restoration and conservation is based on a historical methodology dating from the 16th century when the humanist movement looked back to Greek and Roman legacies. Architecture, urban planning, sculpture, painting, law, philosophy, science, literature- all Greco-Roman civilization became the object of learning, imitation and conservation. The big idea is the identification of a dignified, respected and civilized nation to the world.

In the aspect identity of Malay origin Malaysia and their right in it is confirmed by the effort of studying the heritage conserved in the past. The pre-Islamic archeological remains found in various parts of the Straits of Malacca reegion represent every phase of the pre-Islamic period. The evidence show that there was continuity in the history of the people living along the Straits of Malacca. The changes were brought about by trade. All the archeological remains belonged to the present day Malay and other Bumiputera living in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatera. Therefore the Malays and other Bumiputera during the pre-Islamic era descended from the prehistoric ancestors did not come from outside the Strait of Malaccan region (Nik Abdul Rahman, 2004, p.1). In short, this statement is important to deny the non-Bumiputera's accusation that Malay has no right as the other race on this Malay land because all of them were outsiders. The heriateg preservation confirming the right of Malay as the original popultion in this area.

The idea of conservation is not alien to the Islamic perspective. It started immediately after the death of prophet Muhammad SAW. The companion of the Prophet were the living memories of the Quranic revaltion and his teachings (hadith). This means that conservation has been since the very beginning of Islamic history the primary concern of successive generations. Contnious endfevors led to the conservation of the Quran, the biography of the Prophet (sira nabawiyya), his teachins (hadith) and the teachins of the companions (sahaba). Thus historiography became an important literary activity: to write down all the facts related to the iauguration of the new religion became an important not only for Muslim but for all human kind. Ironically, Islam has started the idea but the Western has dominated the scientific and the technical development of conservation.

However, there is big difference between the Muslim concern for the religious past and the European humanists' inteterest in the Greco-Roman legacy: in the first case the perspective is theological and mainly metaphysical, in the second case, it is historical, based on the evidence of written or material document. There are important psychological and intellectual differences too for both sides. The problem of conservation for the contemporary Muslim societies is to approach the historical facts with an objective and scientific attitude. It is not an easy task as many precious parts of the vast cultural patrimony in Muslim world had been damaged, lost or disappear, and a large part of their architecturallegacy has deterioated or been destroyed, especially in the time of modern economy and its technology.

For all these reasons, the Muslim societies need new conceptual tools to address correctly the question of conservation; either in the aspect of technical or historical or an adequate terminology of cultural semiology¹ (Arkaoun, M. 1990. 25-26). In short, Islam has started the idea of conservation its own unique approach and identity that in the modern era, the muslim must not bow totally to the same approach of the West. We could use the scientific and technical approaches for the tangible legacies or non-religious untangible elements but not on the theological, scholastic and metaphysical arena.

¹ The science dealing with signs as fundamental elements of all cultural systems

In a way to find the reconcilition of heritage conservation between Islamic and the non-Islamic is possible because Islam is not againts that idea in total. The reality is that, a true preservation of religious heritage can only take place when both the tangible and intangible aspects of preservation are taken into account. In fact, it is the intangible spirit of religion that constitute the very vore of the religious heritage; this invisible root gives birth to the branches, leaves and fruits, the tangibles. The primary challenge is to reconcile between values of the religious community with the scientific requirement of the conservation community. In doing so, one has to keep in mind that the conservation requirement only deal with the body of a 'religious object' while the religious values and codes of conducts aim at preserving the spirit. Increasing awareness about issues such s liturgical and functional needs, competing needs of co-existing faiths and awareness of the growing secular pressure upon religious values could help in laying out a wise plan in preserving the tangible as well as the intangible.

Nevertheless, understanding trhe domain of sacred, religious and non-religious within the Islamic tradition will help in recognising the sensitive ares. It will also provide insight with respect to the choice of material for restoring them in accordance with the rules laid out by the legacies. Moreover, gaining knowledge of the traditional of the traditional worldviews, learning about the pure and impure substances, understanding the sensitivity of the religious community and their codes of conduct with references to the objects of religious reverenc, and benefiting from the local skill and technique, can help in developing better strategies in preservation of religious heritage in particulars (Zekrgoo, A.H, 2007, p.10-11).

Heritage conservation is important too because it could be carried out in the form of improvisation; the unplanned impulsive act of an unenscious- the mindless mindfulnessinvolving human capacities and resources to respond fluidly, in concert with emerging curcimtunces so as to behave in ways that appear spontaneously appropriate. It pervades in almost all varied disciplines and professions of human knowledge from footbal to poetry to even restoration. Philosphically, improvisation often focuses on bringing one's personal awareness'into the moment' and on developing a profound understanding for the action one is doing. How it is relating to the idea of conservation is that, since it evokes the power of awareness, the conservator must be intensly tuned into present circumtances, listening to the surrounding and to themselves, balancing tensions that arise between new possibilities and current opportunities. Rather than simply doing something new and different, improvisation is responding in manner that is uniquely appropriate for current conditions by connecting the past with future (Ameri, A. 2010. p. 1-3). In short, improvisation may help the conservator people to adjust the idea into a unique solution, which turn to a new tool or scientific and technical approach that benefit the field of conservation, whenever problems arise. It means that problems may not indicate the negative aspect only but may improvise into positive corner.

However, conservation is not enough for promoting tourism without proper marketing and package of attraction. The example is the Bujang Valley, a magnificant discovery of historical site that could attract more tourist to Kedah as what is happening to Angkor Wat of Cambodia and Candi Borobudu of Indonesia. Historical record state that the Bujang Valley civilization existed long before neighbouring empires such as Majapahit (1200 AD) and Sri Vijaya (700 AD). Earlier archelogical artifacts found at that valley are now hoiused at the Bujang Valley Archeological Museum in Merbok. The museum which opened in 1980, offers a trail of archeological history starting with relics like statues of Lord Ganesha and a bronze image of Lord Vishnu, to stone tablets of Pallavi script to Lord Buddha and Islam.

Outside the aircondition museum house is a complex of temples, which were found at the Merbok estuary, at the foothill of gunung Jerai. Criotics have often wondered why these temples had been removed from the original sites. The museum see busload of foreign tourist, especially during the summer holidays in the West. What they will see in the complex ground are just half-built temples as their wooden roofing have rotted and withered over the past 1000 years. On the summit of a small hill behind the museum stand Candi Bukit Batu Pahat said to have been built in the 7th century AD. Whar is lacking for a visitor is an imaginative replica of what any one of these temples or candi from 'Chandika' the name of Lord Siva's wife, looked like in its heydat. Sadly even the signboard explaining these remnant structures are also completely faded, an attitude perhaps of lackadaisical attitude to what could be money spinner as in Angkor Wat and Borobudur (Devan, 2010, p35).

METHODOLOGY

This exploratory study was a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques to measure if heritage tourism is the biggest attributes of Malaccan 12 products. A structured and non-structured questionnaire survey were used for the research. The heritage attributes ikon were measured using 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very disagree) to 5 (very agree). Meanwhile, the open-ended survey were used to analyse the satisfaction of the tourist on the effort of the State of Malacca in preserving her heritage. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed randomly at the tourist attraction places at Malacca City, especially at the heritage sites to visitors age 18 and above.

THE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In the beginning of this part, there will be a raw data analysis from the findings which are separated into five (5) parts; demography, respondents' travelling experiences, the opinion of respondents on the importance of heritage tourism and the relation of respondents' personal detail with their visit to Malacca. Then, there will be a dicussion explaining the expectation of the tourist from Malaccan states based on the findings' report.

The Findings

PART A: DEMOGRAPHY

The findings below show the amount of male respondents as 136 or 54.4% while the amount of female respondents is 114 or 45.6%. In total, there are 250 respondents.

Gender	Amount of respondents	Percentage
Male	136	54.4
Female	114	45.6
Total	250	100.0

The next findings below show the responses by respondents which consist of 141 single respondents or 5.4% and 109 or 43.6% married individuals.

Status	Amount of respondents	Percentage
Single	141	56.4
Married	109	43.6
Total	250	100.0

The table below shows the amount of respondents' children. 142 respondents or 56.8% are without any child, 22 respondents or 8.8% bear one child, 36 respondents or 14.4% have two children, 18 respondents or 7.2% have three children while 32 respondents or 12.8% have more than four children.

Amount of children	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
0	142	56.8
1	22	8.8
2	36	14.4
3	18	7.2
4 and above	32	12.8
Total	250	100.0

The following findings depict the average age of respondents. A big number of the respondents which is 103 or 41.2% are aged between 25 to 25 years old, 81 respondents or 32.4% aged 26 to 35, 39 respondents or 15.6% aged 36 to 45, 21 respondents or 8.4% aged 46 to 55 while another six respondents or 2.4% are senior citizens aged 56 years old and above.

Age	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
15-25	103	41.2
26-35	81	32.4
36-45	39	15.6
46-55	21	8.4
56 and above	6	2.4
Total	250	100.0

Next, the table shows the composition of the different races involved as respondents in this study. The most respondents are among Malays which amount to 208 or 83.2%, another 26 respondents or 10.4% are Indians, 12 respondents or 4.8% are Chinese while the rest four respondents or 1.6% consist of other races.

Race	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Malay	208	83.2
Indian	26	10.4
Chinese	12	4.8
Other races	4	1.6
Total	250	100.0

The following findings table the levels of education received by respondents. Nine or 3.6% of respondents are primary-school educated, 85 respondents or 34% went up to secondary school, 68 respondents or 27.2% own diploma certificate and the other 88 respondents or 35.2% possess bachelor's degree and above.

Education	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Primary school	9	3.6
Secondary school	85	34.0
Diploma	68	27.2
Bachelor's degree and above	88	35.2
Total	250	100.0

The next findings show the respondents' types of occupation. It is found that most of the respondents belong to the education field which figures to 39 respondents or 15.6%. The second highest, which is as many as 38 respondents or 15.2% work in the engineering field. This is followed by 28 respondents or 11.2% who work in the administration line, 21 respondents or 8.4% in creative arts, 14 respondents or 5.6% in economy, 12 respondents or 4.8% in agriculture, 11 respondents or 4.4% in science field, ten respondents or 4% each for both legal and medicine fields, seven respondents or 2.8% in finance, four or 1.6% in defence area while the other 56 or 22.4% work in other various fields.

Fields of Occupation	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Education	39	15.6
Engineering	38	15.2
Administration	28	11.2
Creative Arts	21	8.4
Economy	14	5.6
Agriculture	12	4.8
Science	11	4.4
Legal	10	4.0
Medicine	10	4.0
Finance	7	2.8
Defence	4	1.6
Others	56	22.4
Total	250	100.0

The following indicates the respondents' work sector. 111 respondents or 44.4% work in the government sector while 139 respondents or 55.6% belong to the private sector.

Sector	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Government	111	44.4
Private	139	55.6
Total	250	100.0

The table below shows the total income earned by respondents in their field of works. 66 respondents or 26.4% receive the income of less than RM1000, 126 respondents or 50.4% get RM1001 to RM2500, 47 respondents or 18.8% have the income of RM2501 to RM4000 whereas 11 respondents or 4.4% are paid more than RM4000.

Income	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Less than RM1000	66	26.4
RM1001-RM2500	126	50.4
RM2501-RM4000	47	18.8
More than RM4000	11	4.4
Total	250	100.0

The following findings display the respondents' state of origin.

State	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Melaka	67	26.8
Johor	26	10.4
Kedah	23	9.2
Selangor	21	8.4
Terengganu	21	8.4
Perak	18	7.2
Negeri Sembilan	13	5.2
Pulau Pinang	13	5.2
Pahang	12	4.8
Kelantan	11	4.4
Perlis	8	3.2
Kuala Lumpur	8	3.2
Sarawak	.5	2.0
Sabah	2	0.8
Putrajaya	2	0.8
Total	250	100.0

The findings show 245 respondents or 98% are of Malaysian nationality while the other 5 respondents or 2% are from other countries.

Nationality	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Malaysian	245	98.0
Others	5	2.0
Total	250	100.0

PART B: GENERAL TRAVELLING EXPERIENCE

The findings below show respondents' frequency of travelling experience. 138 or 55.2 % of the respondents go for travelling every year whereas for frequency of more than once a year is represented by 65 or 26% of the respondents. Other than that, 13 respondents or 5.2% of them have never got the opportunity to travel or only once in a lifetime. 10 respondents go for travelling every month while a minority of respondents, which is three or 1.2% has got the opportunity to do so every week.

Frequency of travelling experience	Amount of respondents	Percentage
Every year	138	55.2
More than once a year	65	26.0
Never been for tour	13	5.2
Once in a lifetime	13	5.2
Every month	10	4.0
Others	8	3.2
Every week	3	1.2
Total	250	100.0

Next, the table below depicts respondents' location for travel. A majority, which is 194 or 77.6% of the respondents travel locally, whereas another 49 respondents or 19.6% of them opt for both local and overseas travel. The rest, which is 7 or 2.8 respondents choose only overseas locations.

Location for Travel	Amount of respondents	Percentage
Travel locally	194	77.6
Travel both local and overseas	49	19.6
Travel overseas only	7	2.8
Total	250	100.0

The table below lists the states in Malaysia that have been visited by the respondents. The most visited state is Melaka with 215 or 86% of respondents. This is followed by the Selangor state, 165 respondents or 66%, Perak, 145 respondents atau 58%, Negeri Sembilan, 143 respondents or 57.2%, Kedah and Pulau Pinang, both with 140 respondents or 56% each, Johor, 134 respondents or 53.6%, Kuala Lumpur, 133 respondents or 53.2%, Pahang, 125 respondents or 50%, Putrajaya, 119 respondents or 47.6%, Terengganu, 118 respondents or 47.2%, Perlis, 100 respondents or 40%, Sabah, 45 respondents or 18% and finally the least visited state, Sarawak has 42 or 16.8% of respondents.

Malaysian states visited	Amount of respondents	Percentage
Melaka	215	86.0
Selangor	165	66.0
Perak	145	58.0
Negeri Sembilan	143	57.2
Kedah	140	56.0
Pulau Pinang	140	56.0
Johor	134	53.6
Kuala Lumpur	133	53.2
Pahang	125	50.0
Putrajaya	119	47.6
Terengganu	118	47.2
Perlis	100	40.0
Sarawak	45	18.0
Sabah	42	16.8

The next findings show overseas countries visited by the respondents. South East Asia tops the list with 53 or 21.2% of respondents, Far East Asia with 21 or 8.4%, Europe with 16 respondents or 6.4%, Australia, New Zealand and Middle East each represented by 11 respondents or 4.4%, East Europe with 10 respondents or 4%, North America with six respondents or 2.4%, Central Asia, five respondents or 2% while the least amount of respondents is South America which has four respondents or 1.6%.

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Overseas visited	Amount of respondents	Percentage
South East Asia	53	21.2
Far East Asia	21	8.4
Europe	16	6.4
Australia and New Zealand	11	4.4
Middle East	11	4.4
Asia Europe	10	4.0
North America	6	2.4
Central Asia	5	2.0
SouthAmerica	4	1.6

The next table depicts the types of places visited by respondents when travelling. Among the most favourite spots are shopping complex with 201 or 80.4%, historical sites with 179 respondents or 71.6%, entertainment spots with 123 respondents or 49.2% and 114 respondents or 45.6% opt for zoo as their travelling destination. Other places visited are nature attractions with 83 respondents or 33.2% and sports and recreational places with 50 respondents or 20%.

Type of place visited	Amount of respondents	Percentage
Shopping complex	201	80.4
Historical site	179	71.6
Entertainment spot	123	49.2
Zoo	114	45.6
Nature	83	33.2
Sports and Recreational Place	50	20.0

PART C: TRAVELLING EXPERIENCE AT MALACCA

The findings here show the frequency of respondents who visit Melaka. 76 respondents or 30.4% come to Melaka every year. Another 57 respondents or 22.8% make their visit once, 40 respondents or 16% have visited Melaka for more than once a year, 32 respondents or 12.8% managed to arrange weekly visits and 16 respondents or 6.4% have once a month frequency visit. On the other hand, there are still nine respondents or 3.6% who have never visited Melaka.

Frequency of Visit to Melaka	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Every year	76	30.4
Once in a lifetime	57	22.8
More than once in a year	40	16.0
Every week	32	12.8
Every month	16	6.4
Never visited Melaka	9	3.6
Others	20	8.0
Total	250	100.0

Next findings report the types of places in Melaka visited by respondents. Most of them, 185 respondents or 74% choose shopping complexes followed by 194 others who prefer to visit historical sites. A sum of respondents, 124 of them or 49.6% are attracted to go to the Melaka Zoo. Entertainment spots are also an option among 109 respondents or 43.6%. As many as 84 respondents or 33.6% do not miss the opportunity to visit places of nature while the other 68 or 27.2% prefer to go to sports and recreational places.

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Types of places visited	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Shopping complexes	185	74.0
Historical sites	194	77.6
Zoo	124	49.6
Entertainment places	109	43.6
nature	84	33.6
Sports and recreation	68	27.2

The following depicts the type of travel involving the respondents when visiting Melaka. A big number of them which involves 181 respondents or 72.4% come to Melaka with their families. Some 128 respondents or 51.2% opt for personal travel, 54 or 21.6% follow school trips, 36 or 14.4% join office trips and the other 16 respondents or 6.4% go through travel agencies.

Type of travel	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Family travel	181	72.4
Personal travel	128	51.2
School trip	54	21.6
Office trip	36	14.4
Travel agency trip	16	6.4

Next findings show the references used by respondents in visiting Melaka. Most of them are comfortable to refer to friends when travelling to Melaka. This amounts to 134 respondents or 53.4%. On the other hand, another 108 respondents or 43.2% do not use any point of reperence where they rather figure Melaka by themselves. Next, 80 respondents or 32% admit that they refer to family members and relatives when planning their trip to Melaka. It is also worth to note that some 50 respondents or 20% of them make use of new technology advancement which is the internet to get information about visiting Melaka. Another 40 respondents or 16% opt for tourist guidebooks while 33 respondents or 13.2% prefer to use Melaka Tourism Centre service. Some balance of 31 respondents or 12.4% use travel agencies.

Point of reference when visiting Melaka	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Friends	134	53.6
Self-reference	108	43.2
Family or relatives	80	32.0
Internet information system	50	20,0
Tourist guidelines	40	16.0
Melaka travel agency	33	13.2
Travel agency	31	12.4

The followings are reasons why respondents travel to Melaka. More than half of the total respondents which is 140 or 56% visit here because of historical sites attraction. Apart from that, 132 or 52.6% of them agree that they enjoy the shopping experience in Melaka. 87 respondents or 34.8% wish to experience Melaka as UNESCO World

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Heritage Site. Some 86 respondents or 34.4% come to Melaka to visit friends, 82 or 32.8% of them come to visit the Melaka Zoo and 70 or 28% of them come for entertainment. Some also come to visit family members and relatives, which is 49 or 19.6% of them.

Reasons for visiting Melaka	Amount of Respondents	Percentage
Visiting historical sites	140	56.0
Enjoying shopping experience	132	52.8
Melaka is a UNESCO World Heritage Site	87	34.8
Visiting friends	86	34.4
Visiting Melaka Zoo	82	32.8
Enjoying entertainment	70	28.0
Visiting relatives	49	19.6

PART D: The finding from the statements of the tourist which reflect the importance of historical places towards the development of Malaccan tourism industry.

According to the responses received, there are 44 respondents or 7.6% of them agree that visiting Malacca meant visiting the whole of Malaysia. Meanwhile 74 or 29.6 of them are totally agree of the previous statement. However, there are 41 respondents or 16.4% of them do not agree with it and supported by 44 tourist or 17.6% of them who are totally disagree with it.

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