

Awareness, function, theme, and collaborative governance of public's perception of Alor Gajah, Malacca art space

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Abstract

The urban landscapes of Malacca town in Malaysia boast a wide variety of public art pieces that serve to beautify and provide distinctive township identity. Despite the prevalence of public art, the impact on the urban landscape and how it shapes the public's perception have been scarcely disclosed. This study sought to fill these gaps by examining the public's perception of the existing public art in the town of Alor Gajah, Malacca. This survey study involved 271 respondents. Their perceptions were deductively themed into Awareness, Function, Theme, and Collaborative Governance. The findings accounts that the public is aware of the function and theme of public art in Alor Gajah town, but their perception of collaborative governance is lacking. Respondents perceived the public art installations as urban ornaments that could enhance the visual appeal of the town; however, poor design execution and subpar maintenance were found to contribute to low perceived governance. These findings suggest that public attitude towards existing public art is an important factor in supporting the Alor Gajah Municipal Council in managing and developing quality living conditions. While public art is a popular strategy to enhance the visual appeal and cultural significance of urban landscapes in Malacca, it is important to evaluate the public's perception of such installations and successes to achieve the intended purpose. These may ensure the public appreciation and thus instill a sense of proprietary, guardianship and honor.

Keywords: Alor Gajah Malacca, municipal council, public art, public perception, urban landscape

Introduction

Public art refers to art displayed in public areas, such as recreational parks, plazas, and streets, which are accessible to the public. It is often commissioned by municipal councils, individuals, and businesses to convey the nation's image and aspirations (Fleming, 2007). Public art comes in various forms, including sculptures, murals, mosaics, performances, and other artistic endeavors. The main function is to enhance the aesthetic and cultural value of urban landscapes and provide

a platform for creative expression and intercommunal dialogue. Public art also promotes urban renewal and sustainable development by intervening in urban landscapes (Liu, 2021). The significance of public art in urban landscapes can be seen in its ability to enhance the aesthetic value of the environment, form a sense of place, foster community engagement, and promote social change.

In Malaysia, public art has become synonymous with big cities as a means of improving the aesthetic appeal and cultural significance of urban landscapes. Cities like Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Johor Bahru have already gained recognition for their use of public art (Jasmi & Nik Mohamad, 2018). For instance, the Art in The City (AITC) open exhibition program held in Kuala Lumpur in October 2019 featured several public art pieces, including sculptures with the theme of the River of Life, aimed at educating the public about the environment and instilling a love of Kuala Lumpur (Cendana, 2019).

Public art installations are also becoming more prevalent in Malaysian small towns. Municipal councils in these areas have begun to value public art installations and use them to encourage people to explore the town and interact with each other. For example, the town of Tampin in Negeri Sembilan has embraced public art, particularly mural art, as part of its tourism project to attract tourists and encourage community engagement (Hamzah, 2021).

Most public art pieces installed in Alor Gajah town, Malacca serve as both a decorative element and a means of demarcating public spaces. Harun et al. (2021) noted that public art installations are ubiquitous in common urban areas in Malacca, such as roundabouts, public parks, and roadsides. Despite the efforts of the municipal council, some public art installations go unnoticed due to their unsatisfactory design and appearance. Furthermore, vandalism is a persistent problem. This exemplified by the destruction of sea turtle sculptures that were intended to improve and rebranding Pengkalan Balak, Malacca, as one of the sea turtle sanctuary beaches on west coast Malaysia (Malay Mail, 2021).

Malaysians have a limited understanding of the public art contributions to the urban landscape (Musni & Suran 2018). Thus, they tend to disregard it and vandalized several public art pieces in Putrajaya, for example, particularly those located in secluded areas. These culprits argued that these installations fail to accurately represent the site's concept or other human factors, and some individuals consider public art a waste of time or irrelevant to their daily lives (Musni & Suran, 2018). However, given the significance of public art in shaping the neighborhood and urban space, this view may be misguided.

To address this concern, this study aims to investigate the public's perception of the existing public art in Alor Gajah town, Malacca, Malaysia. The study has a specific focus on the dimensions of awareness, function, theme, and collaborative governance.

Literature review

Public art is beyond masterpieces. The concept of public art can be traced back to ancient times, where it was used as a means of communicating power, religious beliefs, and civic pride (Januchta-Szostak, 2010; Milne & Pojani, 2014). According to Badawi (2021), most sculptures, statues, and monuments were originally erected to commemorate and idolize deities, kings, and prominent public figures. A good example in this situation is the colossal Sphinx of Giza in Egypt, which symbolizes the highest being as a zoomorphic sculpture that is half man and half lion.

Nowadays, public art has evolved to become an essential component of urban space, with installations taking various forms, from sculptures, murals, and installations to performances and events (Januchta-Szostak, 2010). Fleming (2007) contends that public art installations are not constrained to a certain location and that they have various advantages for urban space.

One of the most significant functions of public art is the creation of a sense of place, where it becomes a symbol of a community's identity, history, and culture. According to Musni and Suran (2018), public art can foster a sense of belonging and attachment, thus contributing to the community's social capital. Meanwhile, Brennan (2019) argues that public art has the advantage of promoting community engagement and encouraging social interaction, leading to increased social cohesion and community pride.

Public art can help transform underutilized spaces into thriving cultural hotspots. Cercleux (2021) in his analysis of the urban space of Bucharest's in Romania, said that the city had benefited from public art initiatives during pandemic time. In contrast to gallery art, which is sometimes perceived as elite, the researchers observed a growing community acceptance for public art. For instance, the restoration of graffiti art which was painted in 2009 on the entrance of the Alhambra Summer Theatre has demonstrated that it has been recognized by the public as a form of conventional art and is no longer associated with causing harm to heritage buildings.

Although public art has numerous functions, it can also face several challenges. According to Hollinger (2011) these challenges include funding, how integrated the process is, and the interaction between the actual process, the policy, and the public. Another scholar argues that commissioning modern public art is problematic because of the significant amount of responsibility it entails (Wevill, 2018). For example, maintenance can be a challenge as public art installations require on-going maintenance and preservation to maintain their integrity and aesthetic appeal. Unfortunately, this could be a controversial situation where some could dispute whether the artwork is appropriate and relevant to the community.

Public perceptions can influence the success or failure of public arts. Therefore, it is crucial to consider public participation in the creation of public art. This participatory practice can be classified as collaborative governance, which refers to the involvement of the public and local government in the development of processes, policies, and procedures for managing and regulating public art projects within a community or city. According to Emerson et al. (2011), collaborative governance is the framework and process of public policy decision making and management that engages individuals in a positive way across boundaries. They argue that the need for collaborative governance arises due to numerous difficulties such as contradictory information, rapidly shifting environments, and complex interdependencies (Emerson et al., 2015). Public art, according to Dabène (2020), would typically encounter these challenges. For instance, many local authorities are unable to locate information about the name of the artist, theme, and purpose of the murals because of their sheer number. As a result, they were unable to develop a policy framework and were forced to renovate the wall. This problem, on the other hand, could be solved if local government officials reached out to the artistic community and collaborated (Dabène, 2020).

Public perceptions significantly impact the development of public policies (Novak-Leonard & Skaggs, 2017). Despite this, people outside the arts and culture industry often lack awareness of the role and contribution of artists, making it challenging for the arts and culture sector to keep up with new regulations and develop policies that promote artists' work in and with communities. For instance, a recent study of street art murals in Malaysia found a lack of awareness and misconceptions among locals, who associated street art with vandalism (Kamarudin & Nik

Aziz, 2022). This highlights the importance of raising public awareness of public art to foster greater appreciation, participation, and ultimately, more sustainable living spaces.

According to Mustaffa (2009), public art is not all about aesthetic reasons but also about social, political, and economic contexts. The authors argue that public art is a way to create a shared identity and narrative for a community. If public art is not well received, it can create a negative narrative that can affect the perception of the community and its values.

In another situation, Milne and Pojani (2014) found that the design themes of public art are key to ensure acceptance or rejection. In this case the design is constant and inextricably linked to the artwork itself, whereas location and time are more external factors and subject to change. They concluded that city councils should approve more public artworks that are appealing, proportionate scale, interactive, symbolically meaningful, while still valuing individuality, subjectivity, and originality.

Method

This is a quantitative approach study employing a survey method deductively to investigate the public's perception of the existing public art installations (mural art and sculpture art) in Alor Gajah town. Figure 1 below shows a mural and a sculpture that is evident in Alor Gajah, Malacca.

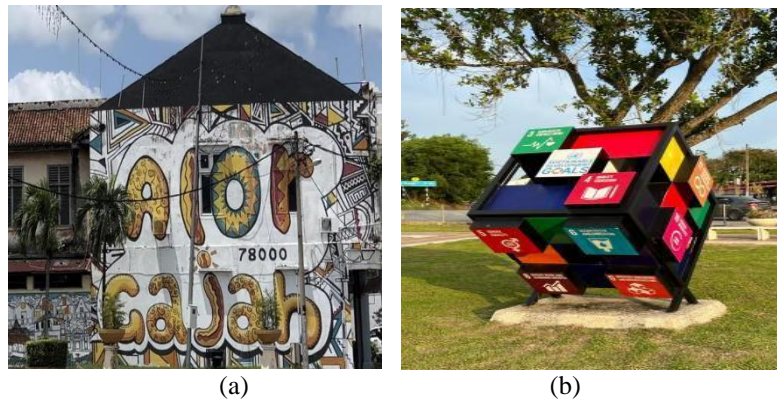


Figure 1. (a) Murals; (b) Sculpture

According to Bryman (2016), the survey method has several advantages, including the ability to collect data from large and diverse samples, the ease of data collection and analysis, and the ability to measure attitudes and behaviors that may be difficult to observe directly. However, survey methods also have limitations, including the potential for response bias, which can occur when respondents do not provide accurate or honest answers, or when some are more likely to respond to the survey than others. To mitigate these limitations, researchers may use various strategies, such as random sampling, pilot testing, and the use of reliable and valid survey instruments.

A questionnaire containing 28 questions was developed where respondents may rate via five tier Likert-scale (highly disagreed to highly agreed) with the following observed variables: 1. Perceived Awareness; 2. Perceived Function; 3. Perceived Theme; and 4. Perceived Governance. These themes were adopted as they are the most prominent matters discussed in literature

(Januchta-Szostak, 2010; Milne & Pojani, 2014; Novak-Leonard & Skaggs, 2017; Kamarudin & Nik Aziz, 2022) pertaining to public art sanctity.

To assess the validity and reliability of the instrument (questionnaire), as suggested by Kieser and Wassmer (1996), a pilot study was conducted on 20 respondents who were not part of the actual survey but were considered relevant due to their familiarity with the existing public art installations in Alor Gajah town. The actual survey had 271 respondents. The respondents were drawn from various levels of adult visitor groups who either lived in or were directly or indirectly related to the Alor Gajah study area. They were conveniently sampled and familiar of the Alor Gajah public arts.

Table 1. Question

Observed Variables	Questions
1. Perceived Awareness	Q1. I understand the meaning of public art. Q2. I can identify public art when I see it. Q3. I am aware of the role of public Art. Q4. The production of public art requires creativity. Q5. Public art should have meaning and purpose. Q6. Public art should be made temporary. Q7. Public art should be upgraded from time to time.
2. Perceived Function	Q8. The function of public art is not for decorative purposes only. Q9. Public art should not be placed in a remote location. Q10. Public art can create a positive impact on the town and neighborhood area. Q11. Public art can create a unique identity for the town and neighborhood area. Q12. Abstract and modern public art is more appealing.
3. Perceived Theme	Q13. The theme of public art should represent all ethnicities. Q14. The theme of public art should reflect the local history and culture of Alor Gajah. Q15. The theme of public art should be meaningful. Q16. Public art should have a purpose. Q17. Public art should use the design motifs of the human body and face. Q18. Public art should use the design motifs of the animal body and face Q19. Public art should use the design motif of flora. Q20. Public art should portray famous public figures. Q21. Public art should be big and tall. Q22. Public art should consider the public's opinion.
4. Perceived Governance	Q23. The town council is responsible for public Art in the town area Q24. The town council is responsible for producing ideas for public art. Q25. The town council prioritize the artistic aspect of Public Art in Malacca Q26. The town council always maintains the public Art. Q27. The town council is concerned about the quality of life in the town area. Q28. The town council's initiative for using public Art should be supported.

Reliability

In this study, a reliability analysis to assess internal consistency was adopted. The Cronbach Alpha test and scale is able to offer insight for each variable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). As suggested, Cronbach Alpha value of 0.7 and above is usually indicative of good internal consistency reliability.

Table 2. Result of Cronbach Alpha

Variables	Cronbach Alpha Pilot test (n=20)	Cronbach Alpha Actual survey (n=271)
1. Perceived Awareness	0.73	0.76
2. Perceived Function	0.72	0.85
3. Perceived Theme	0.83	0.84
4. Perceived Collaborative Governance	0.85	0.87

The high Cronbach alpha values which is greater than 0.7 for most variables (as shown in Table 2) indicated that the survey items are internally consistent and can be used as a reliable measure of public perception of public art in Alor Gajah town. The data of the study is descriptively analyzed via percentage count only. This is adequate to build sufficient elaboration and evoke discussion of the subject.

Results and discussion

The following are results from the examine themes of the local public perception towards public art in Alor Gajah Malacca, Malaysia installation based on Perceived Awareness, Perceived Function, Perceived Theme, and Perceived Collaborative Governance. The purpose is to suggest significant elements for potential public art presentations in Malaysia and procedure for such similar future effort. Introductorily, the demographic details are presented first for better generalization of findings.

Demographic profile of participants

The present study utilized data collected through questionnaires to examine the perceptions of 271 respondents (n=271) between the ages of 18 and 56 regarding existing public art installations. The sample consisted of 41.3% male and 58.7% female participants, who were predominantly Alor Gajah residents (62%). The respondents were employed in diverse fields, including the government sector (32.5%), private sector (18.5%), self-employed (8.9%), and university students (35.1%). Almost all of the respondents (96%) identified as Malay ethnicity. The subsequent sections of this report detail the descriptive analysis of the survey results.

Perceived awareness

Results in Table 3 present insight regarding the Perceived Awareness of public art installations in Alor Gajah town. In Q1, it shows that only half of the respondents (50.18%) highly agree to understanding the meaning of public art in general, whereas 14.06% disagree or highly disagree. Meanwhile, Q2 indicates that less than half (46.86%) of the respondents can recognize public artwork, and 6.65% disagree or highly disagree. Q3 shows that almost half (48.71%) of the respondents are aware of the existence of public art, while 4.80% disagree or highly disagree.

Q4 shows that the majority (69.74%) agrees or highly agrees that the production of public art requires creativity, while only 0.74% disagree or highly disagree. Q5 shows that the majority (65.31%) agrees or highly agrees that public art should have meaning and purpose, while only 0.74% disagree or highly disagree. Q6 indicates that the largest percentage of respondents (29.2%)

are not sure whether public art should be temporary or not, while 26.94% disagree or highly disagree. Q7 shows that the majority (62.73%) agrees or highly agrees that public art should be upgraded from time to time, while only 1.48% disagree or highly disagree.

Overall, the results suggest that while there is some level of awareness regarding public art, there is still room for improvement in terms of recognition and understanding of its meaning and purpose. This awareness, however, cannot be translated to social engagement as brought forward in Brennan (2019). More needs to be done to encourage such community achievement where community engagement, social interaction, social cohesion, and community pride via public arts in Malaysia is realized.

Table 3. Perceived awareness

Questions	% Highly Agree	% Disagree	% Not Sure	% Agree	% Highly Disagree
Q1. I understand the meaning of Public Art.	50.18	32.8	12.9	2.95	1.11
Q2. I can recognize public art.	46.86	33.2	13.3	4.80	1.85
Q3. I am aware of the role of Public Art.	48.71	34.7	11.8	4.06	0.74
Q4. The production of Public Art requires creativity.	69.74	21.0	8.5	0.74	0.00
Q5. Public Art should have meaning and purpose.	65.31	24.7	9.2	0.74	0.00
Q6. Public Art should be temporary.	23.62	20.3	29.2	14.02	12.92
Q7. Public Art should be upgraded from time to time.	62.73	24.4	11.4	1.11	0.37

Perceived function

Results in Table 4 provide insight regarding the Perceived Functions of public art installations in Alor Gajah town. The respondents were asked to provide their perception on five statements related to public art. Starting with Q8, which asked if the function of public art is limited only to decorative purposes, the data indicates that a large majority of respondents agree or highly agree (84.50%) that public art has a function beyond being decorative. Only 3.69% of respondents either disagree or highly disagree with this statement.

In Q9, 91.14% of respondents agree or strongly agree that public art should be placed in public places, while only 1.48% strongly disagree. Q10 asked if public art can create a positive impact on the town and neighborhood area. The data reveals that a large majority of respondents agree or highly agree (91.93%) with this statement, while only 2.22% of respondents highly disagree.

Q11 reveals that 95.2% of respondents agree or strongly agree that public art can help to create a distinct identity for the town and neighborhood, while only 1.11% strongly disagree. Finally, Q12 asked if abstract and modern public art is more appealing. The data reveals that 84.51% of respondents agree or highly agree with this statement, while only 4.06% of respondents highly disagree.

Overall, the data suggests that respondents perceive public art to have a function beyond being decorative and that it can have a positive impact on the town and neighborhood area. Respondents also believe that public art should be positioned in public spaces, and that abstract and modern public art is more appealing. This is aligned with findings of Januchta-Szostak (2010) where appreciation has become important to urban spaces. In time, these presentations can be

turned into performances. The percentage of respondents who are not sure or disagree with these statements is relatively low.

Table 4. Perceived function

Questions	% Highly Agree	% Disagree	% Not Sure	% Agree	% Highly Disagree
Q8. The function of Public Art is not for decorative only.	56.09	28.41	11.81	2.21	1.48
Q9. Public Art should not be placed in isolated public spaces.	63.10	28.04	7.38	1.11	0.37
Q10. Public art can create a positive impact on the town and neighborhood area.	66.42	25.09	7.01	1.11	0.37
Q11. Public art can create a unique identity for the town and neighborhood area.	66.79	28.41	3.69	0.74	0.37
Q12. Abstract and modern public art is more appealing.	56.83	27.68	11.44	3.32	0.74

Perceived themes

Results in Table 5 offer insight regarding the Perceived Theme of public art installations in Alor Gajah town. In Q13, it was evidential that most respondents (62.73%) strongly agree that public art should represent all ethnicities, with only 1.11% disagreeing. This suggests that inclusivity and representation of diversity in public art are highly valued by the community. Similarly, in Q14, 67.53% of respondents agree that public art should reflect the local history and culture of Malacca, while only 0.37% strongly disagree. This indicates that there is a preference for public art that is relevant and connected to the community's cultural heritage.

Q15 reveals that a significant number of respondents (67.53%) believe that public art should be meaningful, with only 1.11% in disagreement. This implies that public art should not only be aesthetically pleasing but should also have a deeper purpose or message. However, in Q16, there is less consensus on the importance of purpose in public art, with 31.73% strongly agreeing, 20.66% agreeing, and 16.97% strongly disagreeing or disagreeing.

In Q17, there is also a lack of consensus on the use of design motifs of human body and face in public art, with 31.73% strongly agreeing and 22.14% agreeing, but 18.45% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Religious connotation may sway their perception here. Conversely, in Q18, a majority (60.89%) agree that public art should use design motifs of animal body and face, with only 0.37% in disagreement. This suggests that animal motifs are popular among the respondents as a theme for public art. Similarly, in Q19, 52.77% of respondents agree that public art should use design motifs of flora, with 2.95% in disagreement, indicating that natural themes are also well-received by the community. However, in Q20, there is less agreement on the portrayal of famous public figures in public art, with 42.44% in disagreement or strong disagreement and 25.83% in agreement.

Q21 asked respondents about their agreement with the statement that public art should be big and tall. The results show that only 1.85% of the respondents highly disagree with this statement, while 3.32% disagree. On the other hand, 28.41% of the respondents agree that public art should be big and tall, while the majority, at 43.54%, highly agree with this statement. The remaining 22.88% of respondents are not sure about the size of public art. Q22, on the other hand, asks respondents about their agreement with the statement that public art should consider the public's opinion. The results show that only 3.69% of the respondents highly disagree with this

statement, while 5.17% disagree. A higher percentage of respondents, at 27.68%, agree that public art should consider the public's opinion. Most of the respondents, at 42.07%, highly agree with this statement. The remaining 21.40% of respondents are not sure whether public art should consider the public's opinion.

Overall, the data suggests that there is a strong preference for public art that reflects the local history and culture of Alor Gajah town and has a meaningful theme. Respondents also appear to appreciate public art that incorporates nature-inspired design motifs but are less fond of famous public figures. This suggests that Malaysian public arts do not serve as a medium for communicating power as seen in Januchta-Szostak, (2010); Badawi (2021) and Milne and Pojani (2014). However, there is also a need to consider diverse perspectives and preferences when designing and implementing public art projects, particularly in terms of the use of design motifs and the purpose of the art.

Table 5. Perceived theme

Questions	%	%	%	%	%
	Highly Agree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Highly Disagree
Q13. The theme of public art should represent all ethnicities.	62.73	26.20	9.96	1.11	0.00
Q14. The theme of public art should reflect the local history and culture of Alor Gajah..	67.53	22.88	7.75	1.48	0.37
Q15. The theme of public art should be meaningful.	67.53	24.35	7.01	1.11	0.00
Q16. Public art should have a purpose.	30.63	20.66	31.73	11.07	5.90
Q17. Public art should use the design motifs of the human body and face.	31.73	22.14	27.68	12.18	6.27
Q18. Public art should use the design motifs of the animal body and face	60.89	31.00	7.75	0.37	0.00
Q19. Public art should use the design motif of flora.	52.77	26.94	14.39	2.95	2.95
Q20. Public art should not portray famous public figures.	42.44	25.83	25.46	4.43	1.85
Q21. Public art should be big and tall.	43.54	28.41	22.88	3.32	1.85
Q22. Public art should consider the public's opinion.	42.07	27.68	21.40	5.17	3.69

Perceived collaborative governance

The results in Table 6 provide insight regarding the Perceived Collaborative Governance of public art installations in Alor Gajah town. In Q23, 82.65% of respondents either agree or highly agree that the town council is responsible for public art in the town area, indicating that the public recognizes the town council's role in managing public art in Alor Gajah town. Q24 shows only 71.96% of respondents either agree or highly agree that the town council should collaborate with the neighborhood and artists to create public art. This suggests that the town council's policy about including the community and artists in the generation of original ideas for public art in the town may not be entirely clear or ambiguous. In Q25, about 78.23% of respondents either agree or highly agree that the town council prioritizes the artistic aspect of public art in Malacca. This suggests that the public recognizes the importance of artistic value in public art and expects the town council to prioritize this aspect. For Q26, around 76.01% of respondents either agree or highly agree that the town council always maintains public art. This indicates that the public expects the town

council to ensure that public art installations are well-maintained and preserved. For Q27, more than three-quarters of respondents (79.71%) either agree or highly agree that the town council is concerned about the quality of life in the town area. This suggests that the public expects the town council to consider the impact of public art on the overall quality of life in the town. In Q28, 87.83% of respondents either agree or highly agree that the collaborative governance of public art in Alor Gajah should be practiced. This demonstrates that the public is in favor of the community's collaborative efforts to improve the town's aesthetic appeal and cultural identity.

Table 6. Perceived collaborative governance

Questions	% Highly Agree	% Disagree	% Not Sure	% Agree	% Highly Disagree
Q23.The town council is responsible for public Art in the town area	50.18	32.47	15.50	1.11	0.74
Q24. The town council should collaborate with the neighborhood and artists to create public art..	44.65	27.31	20.30	5.54	2.21
Q25. The town council prioritize the artistic aspect of public art in Alor Gajah	47.97	30.26	18.82	1.85	1.11
Q26. The town council always maintains the Public Art.	47.97	28.04	19.19	3.32	1.48
Q27. The town council is concerned about the quality of life in the town area.	46.13	33.58	16.97	2.21	1.11
Q28. The collaborative governance of public art in Alor Gajah should be practiced.	53.51	34.32	11.07	1.11	0.00

Overall, the data suggests that the public has a positive perception of the town council's role in managing public art in Alor Gajah town. This aligned with Emerson et al. (2011), and Dabène (2020). Regulations and a stable budget from taxes for maintenance are available within the capacity of the local council. Information about the name of the artist, theme, and purpose of the murals can only be displayed according to the council's standards and with payable tax. Therefore, it is only wise the town council bears such responsibility. However, there may be some areas for improvement, such as clarifying the town council's role in generating creative ideas for public art, ensuring that public art installations are well-maintained and engaging community and artists in the creation of public art.

While there is room for improving the public's awareness on public art, the respondents highlighted the need for provisional essence of public art as they constantly demand new and trendy arts. Thus, it is detrimental for the municipal councils to seek adequate funding, encourage volunteerism among local artists or open new artistic areas to satisfy such craving.

Because nearly 12% are not sure whether public arts must be abstract and modern, the responsible councils must develop a balanced ecosystem for both modern and traditional public art displays. This correlates with the gesture where the arts must be ethnic and cultural heritage conscious yet excluding public figure exploitation as arts. These may result in better appreciation of such effort which instill sense of proprietary, guardianship and honor. Above all, both neighborhood activists and municipal councils must establish ample partnership to warrant the sustainability and progressiveness of such initiative. Public arts are beyond individual expressions but envisioning on the society and may inject positive economic impact too.

From the findings and discussion synthesized steps on how such risk management application for public arts installation is possible. Figure 2 below suggests a flowchart of provincial pertinent matters to apply comparable public arts presentation to any small town for similar purposes. Any public art display needs to begin with the involvement of the affected society and the local council. This shall ensure that key aspects such as space and social impacts are considered. Next, public arts have to be diverse in presentation yet conscious of local sentiments. It is essential to ensure potential racial or managerial disputes are curbed beforehand. Dynamic, purposive, and relevant arts to the visitors and local people guarantee appreciation and enjoyment. Thus, these must be wisely thought out. Not only that, proposition and feasibility need to be initially drafted so that any potential risk can be calculated and avoided before fixtures are placed. Penultimately, maintenance, ownership and guardianship too must be bestowed so that quality of life can be accomplished from these displays. Then only public arts can profit all.

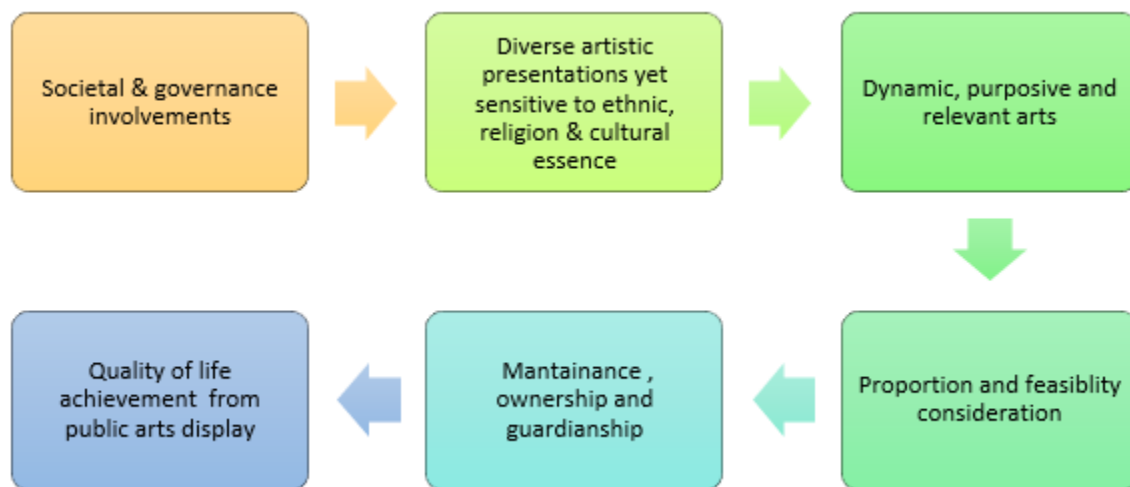


Figure 2. Provincial deliberation of public arts presentation

Conclusion

There are many benefits to public art. As earlier studies (Mustaffa 2009; Emerson et al., 2015; Dabène, 2020) have certified, public arts may exhibit shared distinctiveness and narrative for a community. They certainly boost space worth (Cercleux, 2021), enjoyed by many (Brennan, 2019) and thrive communal and council responsibility. Serving as sources of communicating power, religious beliefs, and civic pride (Januchta-Szostak, 2010; Milne & Pojani, 2014), Malaysian public arts have a long way to achieve such heights. The implementation of public art in Alor Gajah town, Malacca, can have a multitude of benefits for local communities. Among these advantages are the potential to promote tourism, facilitate community engagement, and establish a sense of place and belonging. Nonetheless, the creation of public art requires careful planning, management, and consideration to ensure that the artworks are not only visually pleasing but also culturally and historically relevant to the community. These may safeguard the art from vandalism (Kamarudin & Nik Aziz, 2022) and thus warrant appreciation longevity. Public art can be a powerful tool for small Malaysian towns to exhibit their unique history and culture, thus enhancing the area's image and attracting new businesses and residents. The results of the study suggest that the public's perception of public art is a crucial factor in its success. Careful steps are to be taken

into consideration before any installation. However, there are a lot of work that need to be undertaken to achieve community engagement, social interaction, social cohesion, and community pride via public arts in Malaysia. The significance of such study is; therefore, the implementation of a public art framework must include awareness, function, theme, and collaborative governance is recommended for local municipal councils to ensure the effectiveness of public art installations in the area. Adopting such a framework can potentially save time, money, and effort when planning for future public art initiatives.

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