

## An Investigation of International and Domestic Tourists' Satisfaction in Heritage Context: Implications for Destination Marketing

(Kajian Kepuasan Pelancong Antarabangsa dan Domestik dalam Konteks Pelancongan Warisan: Implikasi Pemasaran Destinasi)

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### ABSTRACT

*The marketing of heritage coincides with the emergence of marketing as an academic discipline in the 1950s. This research seeks to determine domestic and international tourists' expectations and perceptions of the heritage site of Melaka in Malaysia by measuring their satisfaction level using eight travel attributes. This study examines the overall satisfaction among international and domestic tourists who visited Melaka using a conceptual model that combines the concepts of the Expectancy Disconfirmation Paradigm and Service Quality framework. A sample of 322 respondents was surveyed with a structured questionnaire. A series of analyses were performed on both domestic and international tourists groups. It is important to understand that the R-square value obtained in the perception-only or perceived performance model is higher compared to Expectancy Disconfirmation Paradigm approach in determining tourists' satisfaction. By using the perceptions-only model for predicting overall satisfaction, the results showed that there are two factors namely 'Attractions' and 'Climate & Image' that appealed to international and domestic tourists. Theoretical, managerial and marketing implications of tourists' satisfaction in visiting heritage sites are discussed.*

### ABSTRAK

*Pemasaran pelancongan warisan telah berkembang secara serentak dengan kewujudan pemasaran sebagai salah satu disiplin akademik. Kajian ini ingin mengenal pasti jangkaan dan juga tanggapan pelancong domestik dan antarabangsa terhadap pelancongan warisan di Melaka, Malaysia. Pengukuran tahap kepuasan pelancong dengan menganalisis lapan atribut penting untuk tujuan melancong ke sesebuah destinasi warisan telah diguna pakai. Kajian ini mengenal pasti tahap kepuasan keseluruhan pelancong yang melawat Melaka dengan menggunakan konsep 'Expectancy Disconfirmation Paradigm' dan juga rangka kerja kualiti perkhidmatan. Jumlah sampel yang digunakan dalam kaji selidik ini adalah sebanyak 322 responden dengan menggunakan soal selidik berstruktur. Analisis kajian mendapati nilai R-kuasa dua yang diperolehi daripada model persepsi atau prestasi tanggapan adalah lebih tinggi daripada pendekatan 'Expectancy Disconfirmation Paradigm'. Dengan menggunakan model persepsi sahaja, kajian mendapati terdapat dua faktor utama iaitu 'Attractions' dan 'Climate & Image' yang penting bagi pelancong domestik dan juga antarabangsa yang dapat memberikan kepuasan. Implikasi teoretikal, pengurusan dan juga pemasaran terhadap kepuasan pelancong juga dibincangkan.*

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, tourism has become one of the major service industries and in a steady growth trend in worldwide. Many countries have engaged in developing tourism in their countries (Lea 1998) and in order to reduce the dependence on trade exports and diversify, the Malaysian government has expended much effort to increase tourism. As a result, tourism has become Malaysia's third largest source of income from foreign exchange (Munan & Heidi 2002). The ultimate goal is to increase the number of foreign tourists to Malaysia, extend the average length of their stay and so increase Malaysia's tourism revenue. The marketing of heritage tourism is an important tool for the tourist industry. The increasing

number of international and domestic tourists provided the catalyst for this market development. What heritage tourists expect from a heritage visit and their perception of the many features that compose a travel destination with travel attributes and their relationship with tourists' satisfaction are the key issues that are discussed.

The location of research is the heritage site of Melaka in the southern region of Peninsular Malaysia. It is sited on the Straits of Malacca next to Negeri Sembilan and Johor and the capital is Melaka City. Figure 1 shows the location of Melaka in Peninsular Malaysia and Figure 2 shows the location of Melaka City as the main heritage destination area. The selection of this specific site was made as it meets certain criteria including that it is a historical city with a rich and colourful past, has many

historical buildings, and a cultural heritage derived from its various ethnic groups and the variety of food and commodities. This historical city centre has been listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 7 July 2008. Over 600 years of Melaka history is reflected in its ancient buildings,

intriguing streets, delectable cuisine and unique cultural heritage. In the sixteenth-century, the maritime trading centre for the region was located in Melaka. Items traded included gold, silk, porcelain, and spices with merchants from Europe, Arabia, China and India.



FIGURE 1. Map of Peninsular Malaysia (West Malaysia)  
 Source: MITC – Map Malaysia



FIGURE 2. Map of Melaka City  
 Source: <http://www.melaka.org.my> – Map of Melaka

To assess which travel attributes affect the satisfaction level of international and domestic tourist groups, how they perceive the destination's offering during their holiday experience, and whether tourists' satisfaction will differ among both groups are essential in order for travel marketers to tailor the strategy according to each segment. Knowing what tourists expect is critical since by knowing exactly what tourists need, travel marketers can devise and plan accordingly, thereby avoiding the expenditure of money and time in a manner that is ineffective in attracting tourists. The focus on service and product delivery will continue to serve as an important tool for tourist attraction (Hui et al. 2007). In order to attract international tourists as well as domestic tourists, Melaka has to demonstrate itself as an attractive destination by identifying tourists' perception accurately. The tourists view point of the destination's strengths could help destination marketing focus on tailoring the offering accordingly to satisfy their needs (Augustyn & Ho 1998). Since tourism plays an important role in Malaysia's economy, an exploratory research is necessary to provide a more analytical insight into tourists' needs and identify which travel attributes, from the perspective of the tourists, lead to their satisfaction.

There is limited research identifying how travel attributes influence the satisfaction in heritage tourism context and thus, the study is to fill the gap in the tourism marketing literature. This paper has three objectives in order to understand the satisfaction of domestic and international travellers with Melaka's heritage tourism.

1. To evaluate which travel attributes affect the satisfaction level in a conceptual framework that combines the Expectancy Disconfirmation Paradigm (EDP) and Perception-only models.
2. To examine (domestic and international) tourists' expectations, perceptions and overall satisfaction towards heritage destination offering.
3. To identify and reduce gap differences between expectations and performance for improving customer satisfaction level in heritage destination.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### HERITAGE TOURISM

Many people travel to heritage destinations for the purpose of experiencing something that is new to them. Moreover, heritage destinations create a tourist image of many countries worldwide (e.g., Egypt's pyramids). Consistent with the global trends in cultural tourism, heritage tourism has emerged as one of the popular forms of tourism. The development of heritage tourism has created a need to have a better study of heritage tourists and their behaviour. Similar to leisure and tourism activities, heritage tourism is viewed as an experiential consumption. What heritage tourists expect about a heritage visit and their perception towards many features that compose a travel destination

with travel attributes and their relationship with tourists' satisfaction are the key issues that are assessed through this paper.

Heritage is a complex issue and borders on being indefinable. Although it is hard to define, it can be recognized within different categories of heritage. For example, natural heritage concerns ecological issues, the protection of flora and fauna, and the impact of human activities on the environment. The 'natural heritage areas' have been defined as places that have a rich diversity of uses and include places such as parts of mountains, sea-cliffs or islands (Herbert et al. 1989). Another category of heritage is vested in the built environment. This comprises historic buildings and sites (Herbert et al. 1989). Melaka may be considered as belonging to this category. The third category of heritage is 'cultural'. A nation's art treasures, musical traditions, minority languages and dialects, customs and ways of life, all of these belong to this category. According to Herbert et al. (1989), this cultural heritage can be found in buildings and places. For instance, historic buildings are often linked with people and come to life when that link is revealed. Some heritage sites have no fabric or no visible remains of the buildings, but have an association with people or activities (Herbert et al., 1989). The growth of heritage centres such as the Melaka Sultanate Place (Cultural Museum) and the Baba and Nyonya heritage museum have sought to broaden the range by recreating homes for workplaces and crafts. The International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) defined heritage in a broad concept that includes tangible and intangible assets (McKercher & Du Cros 2002):

1. Tangible assets: natural and cultural environments, landscapes, historical places, sites and building environment.
2. Intangible assets: collection, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences.

UNESCO (1972) divided heritage tourism into types; first, Natural heritage covers natural sites with outstanding universal value from aesthetic or science point of view that need to be protected and second, Cultural heritage – involves with monuments or buildings. It is also involves with works or combined works of nature and man with outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art, science or anthropological.

Different people's perspectives of their heritage add to the complexity of understanding what heritage is. An individual understands, perceives and is aware of their heritage and they claim it emotively as inspiration, comfort or possession (Prentice 1993). In other words, the same heritage asset can have different kinds of meaning for different cultures (i.e. individual). Furthermore, heritage assets have both intrinsic value to the community and extrinsic value as tourism attractions (McKercher & Du Cros 2002). Therefore, the assessment of heritage becomes complicated and involves knowledge from multiple sciences such as archaeological, heritage management, and history.

## TRAVEL ATTRIBUTES AND TOURIST'S SATISFACTION

Travel attributes are a set of attributes which, when taken as a whole, describe a place as a travel destination (Um 1987). Tourists have limited knowledge about a destination if they never been there before (Mok & Armstrong 1996). Thus, they choose a destination based on the information from media or WOM communication. According to different cultural groups' perspectives, the significance of travel attributes heritage may vary (Mayo & Jarvis 1981). Goodrich (1977) discovers four main factors that have impact on travel planning among American Express international travellers, which consists of entertainment, purchase opportunities, climate for comfort, and cost. The success of a tourist destination relies on the interrelationship of crucial factors in every destination and the factors are destination' attractions, amenities or facilities, and accessibility for tourists (Holloway 1986). Some important travel attributes are visitors' safety, reasonable prices, good accommodation, and relaxing vacations (Shih 1986). Heung and Qu (2000) claim that there are eight travel dimensions that concentrate on the attributes of a travel destination including people, overall convenience, price, accommodation and food, commodities, attraction, culture, and climate and image.

Zeithaml et al. (2009) and Oliver (1997) contend that there is a challenge to define satisfaction, which is the most basic of customer concepts. According to Oliver (1997: 13) *Satisfaction is the consumer's fulfilment response. It is a judgement that a product or service feature, or the product or service itself, provides a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfilment.* It is a psychological concept that involves the feeling of well-being and pleasure, which are the outcome from what people hope for and expect from an appealing offering (WTO 1985). Many approaches are used to explain customer satisfaction and the most widely used is the expectancy disconfirmation theory, which was proposed by Richard Oliver (1980). Satisfaction is about the perceived discrepancy between prior expectation and perceived performance after consumption, when performance falls below expectation, the dissatisfaction occurs (Oliver 1980). This theory has been tested and confirmed in several studies by Oliver, Tse and Wilton (1988). Generally, customers purchase goods and services with pre-purchase expectations about anticipated performance. When the customer purchases and consumes the products or services, the outcomes are compared with their initial expectations. If the outcome matches expectations, a confirmation will occur. If there are differences between expectations and outcomes, a disconfirmation will occur. When the product or service performance is better than their initial expectation, a positive disconfirmation will have occurred while a negative disconfirmation will occur if the performance of the products or services is less than their initial expectation.

Bitner & Hubbert (1994) claim that customer satisfaction is a customer's feeling towards a service after it has been consumed. Customer satisfaction can be

defined as an outcome that based on the results from the consumption experience and it relates to cognitive state of reward, an emotional response to the experience, or a comparison between rewards and cost to the anticipated consequences. It is also can be based on a psychological process, emphasizes the perceptual and evaluative (Vavra 1997). Both academics and practitioners in the field of marketing and psychology have expended considerable effort in understanding the phenomenology of customer satisfaction. The common theories underpinning the concept of customer satisfaction are shown as:

1. The expectation-disconfirmation model (Oliver 1980);
2. Expectation-perception gap model (Parasuraman et al. 1985);
3. Perception-only model (Cronin & Taylor 1992);
4. Performance-only model (Pizam & Milman 1993); and
5. Pivotal-core-peripheral (PCP) model (Philip & Hazlett 1996).

Satisfaction in tourism services is based on the differences between expectation of pre-planning activities and travel experiences gained after tourists visited the destination. If the comparison between experiences and expectations results in a feeling of pleasure, the tourist is satisfied; in contrast, the tourist experiences dissatisfaction if it results in feelings of displeasure (Reisinger & Turner 2003). Perceptions of service quality affect satisfaction satisfactions, loyalty and post-behaviours (Anderson & Sullivan 1993; Bignie et al. 2001; Chen 2008; Chen & Tsai 2007; Choi & Chu 2001; Cronin & Taylor 1992; De Rojas & Camarero 2008; Oliver 1980; Petrick & Beckman 2002; Tam 2000). For example, satisfied tourists may revisit a destination; engage in positive word-of-mouth communication including recommending it to their friends, relatives and others; and express favourable comments about the destination, such as commending the destination and the good quality experience of the destination to their family, friends, relatives and others. In contrast, dissatisfied tourists may not return to the same destination, may not recommend it to their family, friends, relatives and others, and express unfavourable negative comments about a destination thereby damaging the destination's reputation (Reisinger & Turner 2003)

Past studies found that customer satisfaction is an important theoretical as well as practical issue. For most marketers and consumer researchers, customer satisfaction is regarded as an effective marketing tool to attract the most variable segments of the market. Satisfaction is important to successful destination marketing (Kozak & Rimmington 2000). One of the strategic routes used by leisure firms in gaining a competitive edge is through an increase in customer satisfaction (Philip & Hazlett 1996). There appears to be a consensus that tourist satisfaction influences the destination choice, product or service consumptions and the revisiting intention. Therefore, satisfaction is increasingly becoming a Destination Marketing Organisation's (DMOS) goal, as more and more DMOS strive for quality in their offering.

## SERVICE QUALITY

Most of the products available on the market are made up of a combination of tangible goods and intangible services. Zeithaml et al. (2009) describes that services are deeds, processes and performances, which provided or co-produced by organisations or people for other organisation or people. Crosby (1984) and Eglie and Langeard (1987) defined quality as conformance to requirements in order to satisfy customers' needs and wants. The characteristics of service are very different from goods, as they are intangible, heterogeneous, and perishable. They are also subject to simultaneous production and consumption (Parasuraman et al. 1985). In addition, there is a distinct framework for quality explication and measurement of service (Jain & Gupta 2004). Consumers are able to evaluate product quality in the goods sector through the existence of tangible cues, however, quality in the service context is explicated in terms of parameters that largely come under the domain of 'experience' and 'credence' properties and are difficult to measure and evaluate (Parasuraman et al. 1985; Zeithaml & Bitner 2001). Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988) proposed a service quality measurement called 'SERVQUAL', which has been widely applied in different service settings (Jain & Gupta 2004). Subsequently, other scales have been proposed for the measurement of service including the 'SERVPERF' proposed by Cronin and Taylor (1992). Although many studies have been conducted to assess which scale is better, the consensus continues to be elusive.

The SERVQUAL scale is the gap model, which was developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1988) that based on Oliver's (1980) work on consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. According to Oliver (1980) the perceived service (PS) quality is the comparative results between expected services (ES) and perceived service (PS). When  $ES > PS$ , thus it indicates that customer is not satisfied or less satisfactory. If  $ES < PS$ , it shows that the perceived quality is satisfactory and if discrepancy between ES and PS increase, this indicates that it leads to better quality. Meanwhile, if  $ES = PS$ , it suggests that perceived quality is just satisfactory (Hui et al. 2007).

Based on the disconfirmation paradigm, this gap model explains that satisfaction is related to the size and direction of disconfirmation of consumer's initial expectations (Parasuraman et al. 1985; Smith & Houston 1982). Parasuraman et al. (1988) claim that when perceived service is less than the expected service ( $P < E$ ), it implies that the consumers are less than satisfied with the service quality and in contrast, when perceived service is more than expected service ( $P > E$ ), indicates that consumers are agreeing with the service quality is more than satisfactory level. Parasuraman et al. (1988) stress on the concept of dissatisfaction happens when there is a negative discrepancy between perceptions and expectations (performance gap); while a positive, discrepancy will lead to consumer delight. They further developed a set of 22 items for expectations and 22 items for perceptions as a

service quality measure. Customer responses to its expectation and perception are obtained using a Likert scale and compared to obtain (P-E) gap scores. Their operationalisation of service quality is expressed in an equation form, which is shown below:

$$SQ_i = \sum_{j=1}^k (P_{ij} - E_{ij})$$

where:  $SQ_i$  = perceived service quality of individual 'i'  
 $k$  = number of service attributes/items  
 $P$  = perception of individual 'i' with respect to performance of a service firm on attribute 'j'  
 $E$  = service quality expectation for attribute 'j' that is the relevant norm for individual 'i'

The important factors of provide high quality service and achieve customer satisfaction are widely recognized as the driving factors to the success of the tourism industry (Stevens et al. 1995). Therefore, the SERVQUAL model has been widely applied in the tourism literature (Parasuraman et al. 1985, 1988). As Cronin and Taylor (1992) argued the conceptual basis of the SERVQUAL scale, they proposed that the expectation (E) component of SERVQUAL should be eliminated and that only the performance (P) component should be used that referred to as the 'SERVPERF' scale. Based on the empirical evidence across four industries (banks, pest control, dry cleaning, and fast food), Cronin and Taylor urged that the 'SERVPERF' scale outperforms the SERVQUAL scale.

The SERVPERF scale contains 22 items as a service quality measure. In equation form, it is expressed as:

$$SQ_i = \sum_{j=1}^k P_{ij}$$

where:  $SQ_i$  = perceived service quality of individual 'i'  
 $k$  = number of attributes/items  
 $P$  = perception of individual 'i' with respect to performance of a service firm on attribute 'j'

The SERVPERF scale has outperformed the SERVQUAL scale in the aspect of the number of items to be measured, which have been reduced by 50%, it is also able to explain greater variance in the overall service quality measured through the use of a single-item scale (Jain & Gupta 2004). When applied in conjunction with the SERVQUAL scale, the SERVPERF measure outperformed the SERVQUAL scale (Babakus & Boller 1992; Cronin & Taylor 1992; Dabholkar et al. 2000).

There are some criticisms concerning the adoption of the SERVQUAL instrument as a service quality measurement since it needs to measure both expectation and perceptions. Its use of a difference score has also been questioned (e.g. Cronin & Taylor 1992; Brown et al. 1993). Although the SERVQUAL scale has extensive applications, some criticisms on various conceptual and operational grounds have been voiced including the scale relating to the (P-E) gap scores, the length of the questionnaire, predictive

power of the instrument, and validity of the five-dimension structure (e.g., Babakus & Boller 1992; Cronin & Taylor 1992; Dabholkar et al. 2000; Teas 1993, 1994). Various issues were identified using (P-E) gap scores, with most studies having found a poor fit between service quality as measured through the SERVQUAL scale and the overall service quality being measured directly through a single-item scale (e.g., Babakus & Boller 1992; Babakus & Mangold 1989; Carman 1990).

Peter et al. (1993) found that the difference scores were beset with psychometric problems and they questioned the appropriateness of the use of (P-E) scores. The psychometric problems are apparent when respondents are asked to rate their desired and actual level on a specific attribute, as they tend to rate the desired level higher than their actual perceived level (Brown et al. 1993). Although Cronin and Taylor (1992) questioned the effectiveness of the SERVQUAL scale for the measure of service quality, Parasuraman et al. (1994) claimed that diagnostic ability is the major practical benefit of using the SERVQUAL scale as it can diagnose the service shortfalls that need attention and action. Weber (1997) stresses the need to examine the perceptions and expectations in order to have better understanding of service quality. The importance of the SERVQUAL scale is evident by its application in a number of empirical studies across varied service settings (Brown & Swartz 1989; Carman 1990; Kassim & Bojei 2002; Lewis 1987, 1991; Pitt et al. 1992; Witkowski & Wolfinger 2002).

However, although the SERVQUAL questionnaire is widely used and the debated service quality-measuring instrument has evolved over the past two decades, there is still no consensus as to which one is the better scale.

#### THE EXPECTANCY DISCONFIRMATION MODEL

Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory developed by Oliver (1980), is one the important frameworks that explain customer satisfaction by suggesting that satisfaction is the outcome from the discrepancy between expectations and perceived performance. It has become the most popularly adopted method for assessing customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Weber 1997). Hui et al. (2007) discuss that the Expectancy Disconfirmation Paradigm (EDP) that disconfirmation happens when there is discrepancies between initial expectations and actual performance that lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction among consumers.

Since the perceived disconfirmation is about the comparison between perceived performance and the standard/ideal, expectation acts as a baseline for the perceived performance comparison. From here, customers can determine if the perceived performance is better, worse or matches equally to their expectation. Satisfaction is directly affected by the extent of how perceived performance over expectations commands the kind of disconfirmation in customer experience (Oliver 1980). The expectancy disconfirmation model can be conceptualized

in four stages. In the first stage, expectations on product are developed by consumers where the expectations vary across consumers (Tse & Wilton 1988). The reason why expectations vary across consumers is that they developed the expectation based on their knowledge of a product, and that each consumer has a different knowledge level about a product, which leads to a different estimation of the product performance (Boulding et al. 1993; Oliver 1980). In the second stage, individual consumers develop certain attributions on the product performance. In the third stage, the perceived product performance is compared with their initial expectations. For the final stage, measurement of the perceived product performance, individual consumers (Reisig & Chandek 2001) determine whether it is up to their expectation.

Hui et al. (2007) add that if the actual product performances or experiences are better than their initial expectations, positive disconfirmation (PD) will occur where the consumer is satisfied and willing to repurchase the product in the future. On the other hand, negative disconfirmation (ND) will occur if the actual product performance or experience is worse than their initial expectation and leads to the consumer being dissatisfied and unwilling to repurchase the product again. Inevitably, the consumer will most probably look for alternatives in the future. In other words, if the perceived performance is significantly worse than the comparison standard, the customer will experience negative disconfirmation. Chon (1989) discusses that tourist satisfaction is based on tourists' expectations of the destination and the perceived evaluation of the experience outcome. This explains that the comparison between tourist's previous images of the destination and what he/she actually see, feel, and achieve at the destination will result in tourist satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

According to Reisig and Chandek (2001), although expectancy disconfirmation is hypothesized as having the greatest effect on consumer satisfaction, other research found that it was not the only direct effect as expectations also have some direct influence on satisfaction. For instance, a consumer with lower expectation often reports a higher level of satisfaction. Furthermore, perceived performance also influences satisfaction. In other words, the level of consumer satisfaction will increase as performance increases (Oliver 1981). The expectation and perceived performance have both direct and indirect influences on consumer satisfaction. Thus, the expectancy disconfirmation model explains service satisfaction as well as satisfaction with product performance (Oliver 1980, 1981; Oliver & DeSarbo 1988; Oliver & Swan 1989; Tse & Wilton 1988).

Based on the literature review, there are five hypotheses for each grouping;

H1: There is a difference in the tourists' overall expectations and perceptions based on the travel attributes to visit Melaka as a heritage destination among local and international tourists.

- H2: (a) International and (b) local tourists' expectations are significantly positively disconfirmed (Perceptions > Expectation) based on travel attributes to visit Melaka as a heritage destination.
- H3: Several travel attributes in EDP model are significant in influencing the overall satisfaction levels among tourists.
- H4: Several travel attributes in Perception model are significant in influencing overall satisfaction levels among tourists.

H5: Perceived performance explains greater variance in the overall tourists' overall satisfaction.

### CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study's framework consolidates the Expectancy Disconfirmation Model and the Service Quality Model as shown in Figure 3.

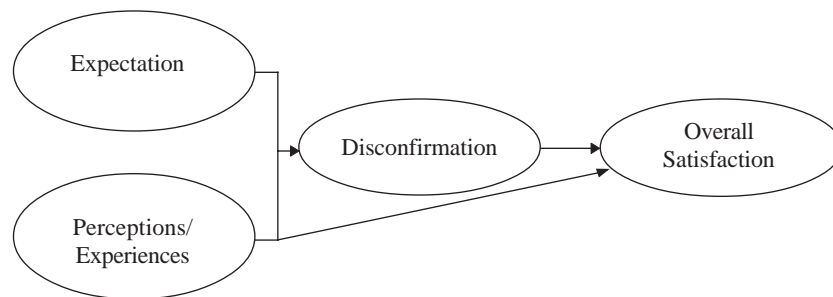


FIGURE 3. A conceptual framework for the study of tourist satisfaction

Factors such as how tourists' needs, past experience and information from external sources (e.g., social environment, general media, and commercial sources) affect a person's expectations are not incorporated in this framework. In addition, the impact of expectations on perceptions of performance is not examined.

PERCEPTIONS MINUS EXPECTATIONS →  
DISCONFIRMATION → OVERALL SATISFACTION

EDP model illustrate that satisfaction formation is a function of disconfirmation that reflects the consumers' expectations and perceptions or experiences. Thus, tourist satisfaction is the comparison between their experience gained after visited and expectation before they visited the destination (Hui et al. 2007; Pizam et al. 1978). They tested Oliver's Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory across various tourist market segments by hypothesizing that consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction with a destination can be explained by the difference between tourists' perceived outcome of a trip and their specific expectations before it took place (disconfirmation). Satisfaction with services is related to the size and direction of the confirmation or disconfirmation experience, which, in turn, are affected by the consumer's initial expectations (Churchill & Suprenant 1982). In terms of attracting travellers, customer satisfaction level can be improved significantly by identifying and reducing gap differences between expectations and perceived performance (Qu & Ping 1999). Their findings included if performance exceeds expectations and emotional satisfaction occurs. In contrast, emotional dissatisfaction occurs if expectation exceeds performance.

PERCEPTIONS/EXPERIENCES → OVERALL SATISFACTION

Cronin and Taylor (1992) stated that using perception solely to measure service quality is good at predicting overall satisfaction and it outperforms the EDP approach. By using perception indication, it already causes respondents to mentally compare between perception and expectation, in other words, the estimation of perceptions/experiences already include a perception minus expectation mental process (Llosa et al. 1998). Therefore, additional analysis of the direct effect of tourists' perceptions/experiences on their overall satisfaction levels is also included in the study.

### METHODOLOGY

#### MEASUREMENT

This study has drawn representative items from a large base of past literature and a questionnaire is divided into five parts. Part A comprises 23 statements questions, which were derived from constructs developed by Heung and Qu (2000). The items in each construct of the study have undergone extensive evaluation and validation. Therefore, the eight travel attributes ('People', 'Overall Convenience', 'Price', 'Accommodation and Food', 'Commodities', 'Attractions', 'Culture', and 'Climate and Image') not underwent exploratory factor analysis. These questions are designed to identify respondents' expectations on Melaka as a heritage travel destination BEFORE they visit the destination and Part B comprises an identical set of 23 questions that are intended to elicit respondents' perceptions on Melaka as a heritage travel

destination AFTER their holiday experience. Part C consists of 6 questions, which were adapted from Žabkar et al. (2010); and Seren (1986) to ascertain respondents' overall satisfaction with their trip. Finally, Part D includes the socio-demographic variables, namely, 'Age', 'Educational Level', 'Gender', 'Marital Status', 'Ethnicity', and 'Monthly Household Income'. The tourists' country of origin, first time or repeat visit, and what is the main source of information when respondents plan their visit to Melaka are also included in this section for segmentation purposes. Apart from Part D, all items of the first three parts are measured by a 6-point Likert-type scale from '6' for 'strongly agree' to '1' for 'strongly disagree'.

For the purpose of scale development, the visitor satisfaction construct, set of items underwent exploratory factor analysis to identify which items do not belong to the specified domain (Churchill 1979). In order to ascertain whether the measures retained construct validity (i.e. measure what they are supposed to) an exploratory factor analysis using principal components and Varian rotation technique was conducted to examine the underlying dimension of overall satisfaction. In determining the factors, common decision rules employed in empirical

research were applied: (1) minimum eigenvalue of 1, (2) KMO measure of sampling adequacy greater than 0.5, (3) minimum factor loading of 0.5 for each indicator variable, (4) simplicity of factor structure, and (5) exclusion of single item factor structure. As the number of variables analysed is important in deciding which factor loadings are significant, those items with factor loadings below 0.60 were discarded (Hair et al., 1998). Two items from the visitor satisfaction construct and two items from the behavioural intentions construct were discarded after factor analysis, therefore, 4 items and 7 items, respectively, for each of the constructs were kept.

All data was collected over a period of one month. Respondents were approached and informed about the purpose of the survey in advance before they were given the questionnaire. Since the data was collected from a convenience sample of individuals, there was no control on the sample size of each respondent group in terms of demographics and country of origin. A total of 322 usable samples were obtained.

TABLE 1. Socio-demographic profile of respondents

Variables	Overall (n = 322)		Domestic (n = 206)		International (n = 116)	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age						
16 – 24	163	50.6	143	69.4	20	17.2
25 – 34	116	36	51	24.8	65	56.0
35 – 44	32	9.9	9	4.4	23	19.8
45 – 54	10	3.1	3	1.5	7	6.0
55	+1	0.3	0	0.0	1	0.9
Education Level						
No College	19	5.9	14	6.8	5	4.3
High School Certificate	53	16.5	21	10.2	32	27.6
Diploma	31	9.6	11	5.3	20	17.2
Bachelors Degree	166	51.6	135	65.5	31	26.7
Master Degree	38	11.8	22	10.7	16	13.8
Professional	5	1.6	1	0.5	4	3.4
PhD (Doctorate)	10	3.1	2	1.0	8	6.9
Gender						
Male	153	47.5	68	33.0	85	73.3
Female	169	52.5	138	67.0	31	26.7
Marital Status						
Single	239	74.2	175	85.0	64	55.2
Married	82	25.5	31	15.0	51	44.0
Other	1	0.3	0	0.0	1	0.9
Ethnicity						
Malay	146	45.3	142	68.9	4	3.2
Chinese	52	16.1	51	24.8	50	42.8
Indian	5	1.6	5	2.4	62	51.6
Other	119	37	8	3.9	4	3.2

*Continued*



TABLE 1. Continued

Variables	Overall (n = 322)		Domestic (n = 206)		International (n = 116)	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age						
Monthly Household Income						
Below RM1,500	167	51.9	119	57.8	48	41.4
RM1,500 – 3,000	66	20.5	52	25.2	14	12.1
RM3,001 – 4,500	40	12.4	26	12.6	14	12.1
RM4,501 – 6,000	13	4	5	2.4	8	6.9
RM6,001 – 7,500	7	2.2	2	1.0	5	4.3
RM7,501 – 9,000	5	1.6	0	0.0	5	4.3
RM9,001 - 10,500	6	1.9	0	0.0	6	5.2
Above RM10,500	18	5.6	2	1.0	16	13.8

TABLE 2. Main source of information

Variables	Domestic (n = 206)		International (n = 116)	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Main source of information for travel plans				
Friends/relatives	143	69.4	71	61.2
Broadcasting media (i.e. TV, radio)	15	7.3	3	2.6
Magazines/newspaper	5	2.4	5	4.3
Travel brochures/other printed	10	4.9	4	3.4
Promotion material	4	1.9	2	1.7
Internet	28	13.6	21	18.1
Guide book	1	0.5	4	3.4
Travel Agent	0	0.0	6	5.2
Information Centre whilst on holiday/trip	0	0.0	0	0.0

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

THE PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS FACTOR ANALYSIS ON SATISFACTION SCALE

For the construct of visitor satisfaction, principal axis factoring analysis was conducted on the six items scale that produced two factors, which emerged following eight iterations. Since items 1 – ‘I am pleased to visit the heritage sites in Melaka’ and 3 – ‘Visiting to this destination exceeded my expectation’, had a factor loading below 0.6,

these two items were discarded and the re-run of the factor analysis result is shown in Table 3.

The first factor is labelled as Overall Satisfaction and the factor explained 69.94% of the total variance. The second factor has been discarded, as there was no strong loading. Therefore, the cumulative percentage of variance is 69.94%, which is considered high (Malhotra 2010). The result of this analysis supports the use of overall satisfaction as a single scale. The alpha value is greater than 0.7 as a minimum, although lower coefficients may be acceptable depending on the research objectives (Hair et al. 2007).

TABLE 3. Factor analysis on visitor satisfaction scale

Attribute	Measurement/scale items	F1
Overall	I am delighted about this destination	0.755
Satisfaction	It gives me sense of joy that I have decided to come to this tourist/heritage destination in Melaka	0.812
	I really enjoyed the visit to Melaka	0.884
	Overall, I feel satisfied in visiting Melaka	0.886
	Eigenvalue	3.075
	Percentage of variance	69.94
	Cronbach alpha	0.899

THE DIFFERENCES & DISCONFIRMATION OF  
TRAVEL ATTRIBUTES

Table 4 shows the means of tourists' satisfaction (Expectation-Perception) and output for a series of paired t-tests performed on each of the eight corresponding

expectations and perception factors for all groupings. The t-tests are used to identify specific attribute that will explain whether tourists are delighted (Positive Disconfirmation/PD) or disappointment (Negative Disconfirmation/ND) while visiting Melaka.

TABLE 4. Paired samples t-tests for all groupings

Attributes	Domestic t-value	P-E Mean	International t-value	P-E Mean
1 People	11.00*	-0.81	4.55*	-0.43
2 Overall Convenience	7.58*	-0.60	0.11	-0.01
3 Price	11.48*	-0.93	2.13*	-0.22
4 Accommodation and Food	11.01*	-0.65	2.55*	-0.24
5 Commodities	9.07*	-0.62	0.45	0.05
6 Attractions	5.36*	-0.35	1.56	-0.14
7 Culture	3.68*	-0.25	0.88	-0.07
8 Climate and Image	11.28*	-0.77	1.75	-0.18

Expectation and Perception scores are based on a six point scale \* =  $p < 0.05$

Table 4 shows the output of paired t-tests performed on each of the eight factors of expectation and perception for both groups. Generally, domestic tourists are disappointed with all attributes, as illustrated by the negative mean value (P-E) and all of them are significant at the 5% level. 'Price' is the main element in terms of ND (Negative Disconfirmation) among domestic tourists. This is followed by 'Climate and Image' and 'Accommodation and Food'. A possible explanation for the ND for all of the attributes could be because they are local people and, thus, many of them do know a lot about Melaka. As such, their initial expectations are generally very high compared to their subsequent perceptions/experiences. The variety of food and commodities available in Melaka can also be widely found in other states. Domestic tourists probably realize that other states can offer more in travel attributes (both natural and man-made).

As for the international group, Table 4 reveals that only three out of the eight attributes were found to be significant at 0.05, namely, 'People', 'Accommodation and Food' and 'Price'. International tourists are disappointed with the efficiency and helpfulness of the people, price, and accommodation and food. International tourists probably realize that their home countries can offer more in terms of accommodation and food. One plausible reason is they might use to the domestic food especially Singaporean tourists and when they travel to Melaka. Only one item that is 'commodities' has a negative value of mean however the t-test result is not significant to explain that international tourists are delighted with that attribute while visiting Melaka.

From the above results, H1 is not rejected and because there are significant differences in expectations and perceptions among both type of tourists. However, the finding suggests that H2a and H2b are rejected because there are no significant positive disconfirmed (Perceptions

> Expectations) among international and domestic tourists towards Melaka as heritage destination.

THE INFLUENCE OF TRAVEL ATTRIBUTES ON  
OVERALL TOURISTS' SATISFACTION

The stepwise multiple regression is employed to test hypotheses 3 and 4. The interpretation of the regression analysis is based on the standardized coefficient beta and R square is used to determine the fitness of the model. It is found that 'Attractions', 'Culture' and 'Climate & Image' have significant impact on the domestic group but not for the international group. 'Accommodation & Food' and 'Climate & Image' have a significant influence on overall satisfaction for the international group. With the largest absolute value of standardized beta coefficient, 'Accommodation & Food' emerged to be most influential predictor than 'Climate & Image' among the international tourists.

Table 6 shows that there are two attributes, 'Attractions' and 'Climate & Image' influence the satisfaction among international tourists. 'Attractions' are more influential in explaining overall satisfaction among international tourist with beta value higher than 'Climate & Image'. There are four travel attributes have direct influence on overall satisfaction among domestic tourists. The main attribute is 'Climate & Image' followed by 'Attractions' and 'Commodities'.

In terms of multicollinearity among the independent variables on overall satisfaction, Table 5 and 6 show that the VIF values do not exceed 10. This indicates that high multicollinearity does not exist to reduce the explanatory power of the predictor variables on overall satisfaction. As travel attributes are found to be significant in predicting overall satisfaction levels for both EDP and perception-only models, thus, H3 and H4 are accepted. Lastly, the

TABLE 5. Comparison of stepwise regression analyses on overall satisfaction levels (EDP)

	Domestic		International	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.230		0.241	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.219		0.228	
	Std. β	VIF	Std. β	VIF
1 People				
2 Overall Convenience				
3 Price				
4 Accommodation and Food			0.312	1.799
5 Commodities				
6 Attractions	0.163	1.519		
7 Culture	0.158	1.339		
8 Climate and Image	0.300	1.205	0.224	1.799

TABLE 6. Comparison of stepwise regression analyses on satisfaction levels (perceptions only)

	Domestic		International	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.593		0.448	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.585		0.438	
	Std. β	VIF	Std. β	VIF
1 People				
2 Overall Convenience				
3 Price				
4 Accommodation and Food				
5 Commodities	0.174	2.088		
6 Attractions	0.240	2.019	0.478	1.584
7 Culture	0.120	1.683		
8 Climate and Image	0.392	1.944	0.260	1.584

findings validate and strengthen Cronin and Taylor's (1992) claim that SERVPERF model is better than the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985) and EDP model developed by Oliver (1980) in determining overall satisfaction. It is a noteworthy point to emphasize in that the R square value obtained in Table 6 (Perceptions-only model) is higher than their corresponding value in Table 5 (EDP model). Hence, H5 is accepted since the perceived performance explains greater variance in the tourists' overall satisfaction.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

### THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

#### The Relationship Between Expectation and Perception (Disconfirmation)

In-depth analysis with the paired t-test analysis method was used to ascertain which specific travel attributes tourists' expectations and perceptions were significantly different. 'People', 'Accommodation and Food' and 'Price' were found to be significant for the international tourists

who are disappointed with the lack of efficiency and helpfulness of the people, price, and accommodation and food. This suggests that Melaka should improve the quality of service in the hotels, restaurants and tourism related staff, as well as the quality of food.

#### The Relationship Between Travel Attribute and Overall Satisfaction

In terms EDP model, 'Attractions', 'Culture' and 'Climate and Image' have significant impact for the domestic tourists. There is a single factor that appeals to both groups from different geographic regions, which is the 'Climate and Image' attribute.

With reference to the perception-only model, 'Commodities', 'Attractions', 'Culture' and 'Climate & Image' have significant impact on domestic tourists' satisfaction. 'Attractions' and 'Climate & Image' have significant impact towards international tourists. Thus, there two items/factors that appeals to both groups that are 'Attractions' and 'Climate & Image' influence the satisfaction of both group. The empirical findings support the hypothesis that perceived performance explains greater variance in the tourists' overall satisfaction, as the result

of stepwise regression analysis revealed that the 'Attraction' attribute has a significant impact on both domestic and international tourists. In addition, it has the strongest influence on overall satisfaction for the international groups where the standardized beta coefficient is  $\beta = 0.478$ . The 'Attraction' attribute also is the second strongest influence on overall satisfaction in the domestic group where the standardized beta coefficient is  $\beta = 0.24$ .

This attribute could be packaged and manipulated by way of strategy formulation to increase the level of satisfaction of tourists to Melaka. Primarily, destinations have to be positioned based on attributes that are meaningful to tourists, after that, by the destination's strength, and finally through ensuring that the positioning strategy can be fulfilled and delivered by tourism operators (Chandra & Menezes 2001). Travel marketers have to understand those attributes that are most likely to influence tourists' choice. The study revealed that in the eyes of both domestic and international tourists, the 'Attraction' attribute is meaningful to them as one of the reasons to travel to Melaka, in fact, this is Melaka's strength. Hence, travel marketers could devise the positioning strategy accordingly. It must have systems, processes, and tourism operators in place to ensure that what customer value actually matches the designs and standards in place.

In overall terms, the adjusted R<sup>2</sup>-values obtained in Table 6 (perceptions-only model) are higher than their corresponding values in Table 5 (EDP model). The SERVPERF scale can explain a greater variance (58.5% for domestic group and 43.8% for international group) in overall satisfaction compared to SERVQUAL, which can only explain a relatively lower variance (21.9% for domestic group and 22.8% for international group). This was supported by the above literature review where psychometric problems can occur when respondents are asked to rate their desired and actual level on a specific attribute, they have a tendency to rate the desired level higher than their actual perceived level (Brown et al. 1993). In other words, when respondents are asked to rate their desired and actual level at the same time, some psychological constraints occur (Cronbach & Furby 1970). Because of its psychometric soundness, travel marketers should employ the SERVPERF scale for assessing the overall travel attribute dimension on overall satisfaction.

#### Managerial Implications

The findings of the study suggest that travel marketers need to have a balanced approach to satisfy tourist different needs and preferences especially in prevailing the image of Melaka as one of the main heritage destination in Malaysia. The globalisation of travel and the improved accessibility of information increasing competitive pressures for travel marketers. In terms of managerial implications, the results are therefore primarily relevant for the management and marketing of heritage sites. The

study findings found that, for successful marketing to result in improved tourists' overall satisfaction and behavioural intention, travel marketers need to consider how tourists experience/perceive and their expectation towards a destination. Creating and managing effective experiences are essential management tasks for travel marketers and board of Melaka tourism. A visitor's satisfaction results from numerous encounter experiences involving a large number of individuals and organisations that jointly determine the visitor's perception of the destination's attributes. Understanding the driver of visitor satisfaction is an important input for destination strategy development and management improvements.

Since quality in tourism is the result of a consumer's view of a bundle of service dimensions (Gronroos 1984), the findings suggest that travel marketers have to pay attention to a wide range of travel attributes when managing destination offerings. The eight travel attributes measured indicators show that four travel attributes, namely, 'Attraction', 'Culture', 'Climate and Image', and 'Commodities', do influence the perceived quality of a destination's offerings toward overall satisfaction for either domestic or international groups (perceptions-only model). Kotler and Armstrong (2007) claimed that understanding, creating, communicating and delivering value, and satisfaction are at the core of modern marketing. Many cultural resources are transformed into experiences to be marketed, sold and bought (McManus 1997). Hence, the marketing activities of advertising, packaging and target marketing play an important role.

Concerning the enhancement of the perception for 'Attraction' attribute, traveller marketers must consider and expose how 'inspiring' the overall appearance of core objects – historical buildings. For instances, an arrangement of members of cavalry wearing of Baju Melayu as their full dress uniform standing at the entrance of Melaka Sultanate Palace; and the members of cavalry wearing of Portuguese costume in the Porta de Santiago (A'Famosa) and St Paul's Church area who can provide assistant to tourists enquiry. In order to make heritage sites understandable and meaningful to tourists, heritage interpretation which is a central component of modern heritage tourism is required (Prentice et al. 1998). Tourists can learn more by using interactive exhibitions rather than traditional static exhibitions. According to Harrison (2000) interpretation involves presenting information in a form that is accessible to visitors. Hence, the art of making appealing interpretation has a significant emotional impact on tourists. Moscardo (1996) stated that the interpretation can be served as a tourist management tool to relieve pressure on a heritage site where the inappropriate behaviour, such as touching fragile objects and littering can be reduced by effective interpretation that educates tourists.

With the reference to the 'Culture' attribute, travel marketers should focus on how tourists establish and perceive their connectedness with history and spiritual experiences. Heritage tourism is related with the sense of

belonging and link to the collective nature of the human being. Therefore, cultural branding approach is needed to addresses vast differences in society which it is relevant for tourist destinations (Holt 2004). This approach relies heavily on identity myths which tourists experience via ritual action. Successful heritage attractions should have a strong story and make the tourist involvement, while providing a sense of authenticity (McKercher & du Cros 2002). A concept of staged authenticity – hosts put culture on sale with an appealing package, was introduced by MacCannell (1979). Following this approach, traveller marketers should devise some innovative approaches, for instances, portray a true Melaka culture via a show and theatre dance with the objective to represent the historical culture. The other approach is through storytelling present in theatre manner that telling about a chronology of Melaka's history since 1404. For instances, it could telling how the early beginnings of the Sultanate of Melaka, followed by the colonization of Melaka by Portuguese, Dutch, Britain and Japan. It could also telling about a legend of Hang Tuah's life – the famous Malay warrior (Hang Tuah) who served as the admiral of Melaka's naval forces and defended successfully countless attacks against Melaka.

The improvement of 'Commodities' attribute, the travel marketers of Melaka as a shopping destination is also a driving factor that made domestic tourists come to buy region specific products. The shopping markets that have evolved in the form of mini shopping districts around the site (i.e. Jonker Street) made the shopping experience more relevant to the heritage promotion of Melaka where there are wide choice of antique items, quaint handicraft products, and art and deco pieces. Although the 'Commodities' attribute have insignificant impact for the international group, the plausible reasons are that they probably do not aware of the region specific products or they do not want to be bothered by local sellers. In term of creating awareness of the region specific products, promotional literature can be a useful tool. Travel marketers should look into the feasibility of promoting region specific product in collaboration with hotels where the hotels have exclusive galleries dedicated to the handicrafts made in this region such as batik. Here the international tourist gets a glance at the Melaka culture. This is a good place for shopping for the tourist who does not want to be bothered by local vendors and sellers.

In conjunction with the issues of preserving the heritage image and attractions, thus authority of Melaka city needs to take initiative education program to place their citizens under an obligation to preserve their culture and surroundings. This requires travel related marketers to develop awareness of the benefits of sustainable marketing. Therefore, to improve tourists' perceptions of 'Climate and Image' attribute, civil education program as well as serious penalties on law-breakers should be carried out by the authority's parties especially in preserving the heritage of Melaka's building, culture and its surroundings. As suggested by Fullerton et al. (2009), the main issues

for heritage attractions are satisfying visitors' expectations and managing their impacts without compromising the authenticity of the site.

For the purpose of performance measurement, a distinction between expected and perceived of the eight travel dimension can be useful. Tourists' expectations regarding the eight travel dimension could be influenced by previous experiences with heritage sites as well as the promotional activities. Promises made by a service company through its media advertising and other communications may potentially raise customer expectations (Zeithaml et al. 2009). Tax et al. (1998) indicated that positively raised expectations could affect brand equity. This kind of effect is applicable in tourism context. Hence, travel marketers should avoid the occurrence of broken promises due to over promising in advertising or personal selling. Moreover, tourists positively raised expectation could happen when inappropriate pricing happen such as high prices or prices that are not tied to customer perceptions of value. Therefore, travel marketers or Melaka tourism board should carefully devise an appropriate pricing strategy with the objective of providing tourists value and regulate the price of food and commodities in order to increase Melaka's competitive power. As there are multiple contacts or service encounters that tourists receive service quality when visit a destination, the probability of negative experiences may increase which each encounter could influence to tourists' overall satisfaction. Therefore, all stakeholders play a critical role to make a destination's success. According to Zeithaml et al. (2009), the drama metaphor offers a useful way to improve service performance where the selection of personnel can be viewed as auditioning the actors and an actor's personal appearance, manner, facial expression, gestures, personality, and demographic profile can be determined in large part in the interview or audition. Therefore, the travel related staffs need to perform their roles according to the expectations of the tourist in order to satisfy them. Hence, the board of Melaka tourism should carefully select and train the employees in order to improve the 'People' attribute by making tourists' feeling of confirmed expectation and satisfaction. Furthermore, the board of Melaka tourism should looks at the challenges of successful management of interactions between local people and tourists. Adequate training should be carried out in both the public and private sectors in order to improve the courtesy, helpfulness, and efficiency of the workforce.

#### LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The discussion of the results and implications needs to be accompanied by limitations of the study, which may indicate future improvements and directions. The first is about the timing of the expectation measurement where Carman (1990) proposed that expectations should be assessed before the service experience. This could minimize expectations being affected by perceptions of the actual

service provided (Getty & Thomson 1994). Expectations might be overstated or understated when tourists have a positive or negative experience. In order to resolve the problem, a more reliable method is to measure tourists' expectations on their arrival and complete the post-trip section after their holiday ends. However, more resources would be needed to ensure that the same person completes the same questionnaire, which could be very hard to control. Second, this research relied on a convenience sample of tourists during a short period. The analysis and discussion based on the expectation and perceptions of the sample respondents may vary if the sample is collected at a different time of year. Third, different sampling methods (e.g. personal interviews) may also add insight into the expectations and perceptions of tourists.

Fourth, It would be necessary for the researcher and to find out what are the other important heritage site's characteristics or factors that affect tourists' expectations and perceptions. For instance, Yu and Littrell (2003) and Wang (2000) found that there are various elements of heritage sites such as streets, steps, terraces, crafts that will influence tourists' perceptions. Fifth, the respondents were predominantly young people, aged between 16 and 24 years old, in the domestic sample while the respondents in the international sample were predominantly aged between 25 and 34 years old. These demographic characteristics could limit the generalization of the results. Future research could focus on the impact of culture and travel motivation characteristics on the expectations and perceptions of the heritage destination such as Melaka. As suggested by Gnoth (1997), motivation affects tourists' expectation. Thus, destination managers and researchers need to further study various factors that affect the tourists' satisfaction and develop measurement scales that can assess them in various context of heritage tourism. Lastly, future studies require a combination of various methodological approaches such as the use of structural modelling (SEM) or multi-step approaches and research tools that combine quantitative and qualitative methods.

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