

The visitors' satisfaction visiting Kuala Lumpur and Selangor recreational parks

Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts (JTHCA)
2021, Vol. 13 (2) pp 72-84
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UiTM Press
Submit date: 10th August 2021
Accept date: 06th December 2021
Publish date: 28th December 2021

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Proposed citation:

Azenan, M.F., Rahman, S.A.A. & Mahamod, L.H. (2021). The visitors' satisfaction visiting Kuala Lumpur and Selangor recreational parks. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts*, 13(2), 72-84

Abstract

A rapid urbanization throughout the years leads to environmental issues and give damage to natural settings. The city needs a recreational park to live the society for many physical and social activities. The study aims to identify the factors influencing visitors' satisfaction to recreational park in four selected parks in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, namely Taman Tasik Shah Alam, Taman Tasik Titiwangsa, Taman Metropolitan Kepong, and KLCC Park. A total of 100 respondents were involved with a convenience sampling method. Three key attributes were asked in the survey including degree of comfort, accessibility and linkages, and facilities and amenities provided. The variable between the length of time spent in a visit and the satisfaction level of visitors towards recreational park were analysed. The research showed most of the respondents would spend for a moderate time followed by a long time when they satisfied with the attributes at recreational parks. The existing features provided shows an optimum level of performance and should be prepared of upcoming development. The study is significant to improve the facilities and programs of recreational parks in Malaysia hence maximize the satisfaction of the visitors.

Keywords:

Visitors' Satisfaction, Recreational Park

1 Introduction

A rapid urbanization in Malaysia throughout the years had experienced a phenomenon which can cause psychological isolation and uneasiness in the future (Yeh and Huang, 2009). As a result, Malaysian government aggressively provided more recreational spots in urban areas for a good living and produce more green spaces for urban environment (Norazilawati Mohamed & Noriah Othman, 2009). Parks are mainly to serve as a place to do any kinds of recreational activities which promoting social interaction among community and enhance air quality in the urban environment (Syakir Amir et al., 2020). Besides providing a healthy contribution in the physical, parks also benefit the community interrelationship, as well as increase the value of the property (Filzani Illia Ibrahim et al., 2017). Despite of the importance of recreational park or open spaces in human life, several issues remain unresolved. The appearances and landscape amenities of many parks, open spaces are under maintained (Oku & Fukamachi, 2009). Park facilities are seldom upgraded hence allow limited functions and activities can be done. Poor control and monitoring of activities has damaged to the natural and landscape setting of the park (Noralizawati & Noriah, 2012; Arni & Khairul, 2013) hence affect the visitors experience. To date, few researches on visitors satisfaction of recreational park have been conducted in few cities, namely Tokyo (Oku & Fukamachi, 2005), Sri Lanka (Ranasinghe et al., 2019), and Sheffield (Ozguner & Kendle, 2006). While, little number of parks in Malaysia have been discovered, namely, FRIM recreational park (Noralizawati & Noriah, 2012), Temerloh Park (Oliver et al., 2021). Therefore, This paper aims is to examine the factors influencing visitors' behaviour at four different recreational parks in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. The parks are Taman Tasik Shah Alam, Taman Tasik Titiwangsa, Taman Metropolitan Kepong, and KLCC Park.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Recreational park

Referring to Malaysia Town and Country Planning Department (PLANMalaysia) Planning Guideline for Open Space and Recreation, category of public parks is national park, regional park, urban park, local park, neighbourhood park, children playground, and play lot area. The use of recreational park is engaging the people for outdoor recreation or physical activities especially in urban areas. Today, variety leisure activities could be done by the community in parks to contribute the improvement of health and this phenomenon shows a park is importance for society. In the past decades, a broad context of the needs for parks was explored and discussed extensively (Nurhayati Abdul Malek et al., 2011). Faezah Mohammadi Tahroodi & Norsidah Ujang (2020) believe that the importance of parks is classified in several aspects which are community's quality of life, health, economic benefits, and the general wellbeing. Even though a rapid urbanization in project development is increasing concurrently with providing parks as open spaces, the usability of recreational parks has a different number of visitations by visitors in term of satisfaction (Syakir Amir et al., 2020; Chiesura, 2004).

For instance, the park visitors have less satisfied with the sounds that coming from the urbanization activities because it will break their concentration while visiting recreational park (Norazilawati Mohamed & Noriah Othman, 2009). From several studies, some respondents give negatives feedback regarding their disinterest to recreational area such as untidy place, lack of facilities and plants maintenance, unsafe for women and crowd at certain time (Cohen et. al., 2007; Mazlina Mansor et al., 2019); Nurhayati Abdul Malek & Manohar Mariapan, 2009). This challenge has been agreed by Atefa Ayegi & Norsidah Ujang (2014), which found the reasons made urban residents feel reluctant to visits recreational park are unhealthy activities among park users, lack of maintenance, and poor ethics. Nonetheless, the availability of parks nearby users' home seems a main influence pulling them to recreational park for outdoor recreation.

2.2 Length of time spent

Human interaction towards recreational area can be measured on the length of time they spent for physical activities. According to Rosilawati Zainol & Au-Yong (2016), a higher number of active lives among adults could be reached by promoting active living among youth in their leisure time. In contrast, passive recreation activity also rises currently in line with modern technologies usage which show a low participation in recreational area. However, lack of time during weekday also is a main reason of their time spent in recreational park due to commitment such as works. For example, 52% residents in Southern California metropolitan area have exercised in parks only during their leisure time within 15 to 30 minutes per day in 2010 (Cohen et al., 2010). In this situation, increasing population especially in urban area not only by adding more parks but features and other elements need to be improved consequently.

2.3 Visitors' Satisfaction

Syagir Amir et al. (2017) focused on the to-date studies of tourist behaviour and divided them into four categories, namely: (1) studies that apply one or more concepts of consumer behaviour (i.e. marketing or management) to tourism, (2) studies that deal with the influence of satisfaction on loyalty, but unfortunately comparisons between them cannot be made due to differences in the context of research, (3) quantitative research, which is subject to the experimental concept of research and as such may result in several mistakes, and (4) a small group of long.

An attraction of recreational park must be evaluated by visitors' behaviour as the users have decision to use the parks. Asmah Yahaya & Abdullah Mohd (2013) stated push and pull theory of human behaviour and motivation are related by the decision to visit recreational park. According to Kamarul Bahrain Shuib et al. (2015), push and pull theory is influenced by the way people see and comprehend the world around them. The attributes influenced people to undergo decision making process to visit recreational park which have special attractions based on preferences. Attachment between people and places is developed where the users well recognized and felt significant and capable to provide conditions, satisfy functional needs, support their behaviour goals, and choose preferred activities much better than a known alternative

(Lukman Hakim Mahamod et al., 2021; Nik Mohd Aizat Nik Mohd Adib et al., 2020; Siti Rasidah Md Sakip et al., 2015)

2.3.1 Travel distance

Travel distance is one of factor influencing visitors' behaviour to visit recreational park. Most of studies included visitors travel distance from home to recreational park as an important factor to have a greater number of users especially youth (Cohen et al., 2009). On the other hand, people have less enjoyment because they are concern about personal safety while travelling and doing physical activities in their nearest park (Arni & Khairil, 2013; Atefeh Ayeghi & Norsidah Ujang, 2014; Mohd Salleh Daim et al., 2012).

2.3.2 Degree of comfort

Comfort is considered a state, a philosophy, a dynamic, a process and even a goal or outcome. Safety and comfort are both main factors of the utilization of public spaces. Undoubtedly, degree of comfort contributes as successful of parks because the visitors feel comfortable when they feel the place is safe (Asmah Yahaya & Abdullah Mohd, 2013; Ashkan Alidi & Nor Atiah Ismail, 2019; Filzani Illia Ibrahim et al., 2017).

2.3.3 Level of satisfaction on facilities

Park visitation will give a satisfaction to visitors from the experience either on-site or off-site (Dasimah Omar et al., 2016). The satisfaction level in recreational parks was studied to fulfil ones emotional and security needs (Norazilawati Mohamed & Noriah Othman, 2012). According to Mohd Ali Waliyuddin A. Razak (2015) the natural and man-made elements in the urban park gives positive impacts and effect visitors' satisfaction.

3 Methodology

To obtain quantitative information for this study, questionnaire survey is used as a medium in retrieving the data. A total of 100 online survey were collected using convenience sampling technique. The low response rate is due to the uncomplete survey answered and limited respondents access to the recreational park because of the Malaysia Movement Control Order (MCO). The questionnaire survey for this research is divided into three main sections which consist of respondents' socio demographic profile, respondents' trip profile and respondents' satisfaction level towards recreational parks attributes. This research is conducted in four different recreational parks in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor; i) Taman Tasik Shah Alam, ii) Taman Metropolitan Kepong, iii) Taman Tasik Titiwangsa, and iv) KLCC Park. The graded responses are paired with forced statements using four-point Likert scale; 1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-disagree, 4-strongly disagree.

Refer to the Table 1, Section A in questionnaire survey is associated with socio demographic profile of respondents or visitors, to understand the visitors background (Syakir Amir et al., 2017) and trip profiles (Syakir Amir et al., 2017). In Section B, the

respondents must answer the questions which related to their trip profile on visiting the recreational park. In Section C, based on the chosen recreational park, the questions tackle the responses on three key aspects consisting of degree of comfort, accessibility and linkages, and facilities and amenities provided. The first aspect of this section describes about degree of comfort confronted by the respondents that contain scope of appropriateness, cleanliness, and safety. Next, the second aspect explains on accessibility and linkages that includes vehicular circulation, pedestrian walkway, and public transportation. The final aspect indicates the facilities and amenities provided in recreational park that being used by visitors for social and physical activities.

Table 1: Structure of questionnaire survey

Section A	Section B	Section C
Respondents' socio demographic profile	Respondents' trip profile	Respondents' satisfaction level towards recreational parks attributes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Age • Ethnicity • Marital status • Education level • Occupation • Monthly income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most frequent visited recreational park • Distance from home to recreational park • Transport used to visit recreational park • Time of visit to recreational park • Length of time spent in a visit • Reasons for visiting recreational park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of comfort • Accessibility and linkages • Facilities and amenities provided

Source: Questionnaire survey, 2021

4 Result and Discussion

The analysis was analysed using several types of analysis method in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) software such as frequency distribution analysis and cross tabulation analysis.

4.1 Respondents' Background

4.1.1 Frequency Distribution of Respondent's Socio-Demographic Profile

Table 2: Respondent's socio-demographic profile

Variables	Components	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	36	36.0
	Female	64	64.0
Age	Below 19 years old	3	3.0
	20 to 29 years old	84	84.0
	30 to 39 years old	10	10.0

	40 to 49 years old	2	2.0
	Above 50 years old	1	1.0
Ethnicity	Malay	97	97.0
	Chinese	0	0
	Indian	2	2.0
	Others	1	1.0
Marital status	Single	85	85.0
	Married	15	15.0
	Widowed	0	0
	Divorced	0	0
Education level	Primary school	0	0
	SRP/PMR	2	2.0
	MCE/SPM/O level	3	3.0
	STPM/Matriculation/Centre for Foundation Studies/A level	2	2.0
	Diploma	13	13.0
	Bachelor's Degree	70	70.0
	Master's Degree	7	7.0
	PhD.	3	3.0
Occupation	Public sector	12	12.0
	Private sector	28	28.0
	Self-employed	7	7.0
	Student	52	52.0
	Retiree	0	0
	Others	1	1.0
Monthly income	RM0 - RM4850 (B40)	87	87.0
	RM4851 - RM10, 970 (M40)	12	12.0
	Above RM10, 971 (T20)	1	1.0

Source: Questionnaire survey, 2021

As mentioned in Table 2, the results shown that majority age of the respondents lie in the range of 20 to 29 years old, and half of the respondents were student. This age group indicates most of them are still learning and classified as youth. The result of this research match with earlies studies mentioned by Cohen et al. (2009) stated that people will have active lifestyle by physical during their teenage years. Rosilawati Zainol & Au-Yong (2016) also claimed that the higher number of park users among youth were influenced by greater green space coverage and closer the distance. The youth will be attracted to recreational parks if they are able to perform physical activities (Baran et al., 2013).

4.1.2 Frequency Distribution of Respondent's Trip Profile

Table 3: Respondent's trip profile

Variables	Components	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Most frequent visited recreational park	Taman Tasik Shah Alam	22	22.0
	Taman Metropolitan	15	15.0
	Kepong	39	39.0
	Taman Tasik Titiwangsa KLCC Park	24	24.0
Distance from home to recreational park	< 1 km	3	3.0
	1 km – 10km	41	41.0
	11 km – 20 km	31	31.0
	> 20 km	25	25.0
Transport used to visit recreational park	Walking	3	3.0
	Bicycle	1	1.0
	Motorcycle	16	16.0
	Private car	65	65.0
	Bus	1	1.0
	Train	14	14.0
Time of visit to recreational park	Morning (5am – 12pm)	38	38.0
	Afternoon (12pm – 5pm)	10	10.0
	Evening (5pm – 9pm)	46	46.0
	Night (9pm – 5am)	6	6.0
Length of time spent in a visit	Less than 1/2 hours	8	8.0
	1/2 – 1 hours	26	26.0
	1 – 2 hours	34	34.0
	2 – 3 hours	27	27.0
	Above 3 hours	5	5.0
Reasons for visiting recreational park	Recreation	7	7.0
	Exercise	34	34.0
	Research/study purpose	1	1.0
	Enjoying nature	24	24.0
	Picnic	1	1.0
	Sightseeing/hang out	33	33.0

Source: Questionnaire survey, 2021

As there are no fee charges to enter the recreational parks, it is suitable for different level of monthly income groups. In reference to this research, majority of respondents who visited the parks were classified in B40 monthly income group. The identified recreational parks can be categorised as public open space which it is provided to everyone without restrictions. Table 3 illustrates, most of the respondents have a distance for above 1 kilometre from home to the recreational park, it is significance the majority of them were using private car. Moreover, enjoying nature was one of the main reasons of respondents visiting the recreational park. Cohen (2007) has stated recreational areas in the cities act as a place for people to experience nature.

4.2 Length of Time Spent and Visitors' Satisfaction Level towards Recreational Park Attributes

Cross-tabulation analysis were used to analyse the relationship between the identified variables. For length of time spent, less than 1/2 hours indicate *less time*, 1/2 – 1 hours and 1 – 2 hours indicate *moderate time*, while 2 – 3 hours and above 3 hours indicate *long time*. Likert scale for strongly agree and agree considers as *agree* while disagree and strongly disagree considers as *disagree*. Each attribute including degree of comfort, accessibility and linkages, and facilities and amenities provided, was constructed with different dimension that have been analysed in this paper.

4.2.1 Cross-tabulation Analysis between Length of Time Spent and Respondents' Degree of Comfort

Table 4: Summary from cross-tabulation analysis between length of time spent and respondents' degree of comfort

Component at recreational parks	Dimension	Length of time spent (majority)	Satisfaction level
Provision of seating area in shaded area	Seating & maintenance	Moderate time	56% agree
Provision of seating area		Moderate time	50% agree
The cleanliness of the area is good		Moderate time	55% agree
Provision of natural environment	Environmental aspect	Moderate time	56% agree
Proximity to natural area		Moderate time	44% agree
Proximity to road	Safety	Moderate time	54% agree
Proximity to residential area		Moderate time	48% agree
Proximity to commercial area		Moderate time	56% agree
Presence of security officer		Moderate time	45% agree
The existence of safety signboard		Moderate time	54% agree
The existence of CCTV		Moderate time	39% agree
Allowance of vehicles into park		Moderate time	34% disagree

Source: Questionnaire survey, 2021

The result of analysis in Table 4 regarding the satisfaction level based on the degree of comfort attribute. As mentioned in respondents' background section, most of them have spent a moderate time especially within 1 to 2 hours of time during their visit to recreational parks. The analysis also resulted as the visitors were like to have few breaks after having physical activities at recreational park. It was proved by the seating area were easy to get and located in shaded area at recreational parks. The provision of the seating area also increasing the length of time spent by respondents. Moreover, it is obviously known that the safety of one place is important as the visitors feel comfortable when they feel the parks is safe.

Regarding the analysis, majority of the respondents have identified and agreed on the presence of security officer, existence of safety signboard, and the existence of CCTV. The safer the place will encourage more visitors to come in as mentioned by Dwi

Rizka Zulkia et al. (2014) that safety is one of aspect in degree of comfort which contributes to success park. Most of the parks are surrounded with natural environment which agreed by the respondents. The respondents would spend more time doing social and physical activities while they were connected to nature. Prior studies also noted the importance of natural environment that give effects to human being. In relying on the provision of open spaces, activities that may contact the nature will benefits the human being in term of stress reduction, relaxation, and restoration.

4.2.2 Cross-tabulation Analysis between Length of Time Spent and Accessibility and Linkages

Table 5: Summary from cross-tabulation analysis between length of time spent and accessibility and linkages

Component at recreational parks	Dimension	Length of time spent (majority)	Satisfaction level
Provision of park entrance	Parking system	Moderate time	48% agree
Visibility and availability of parking space		Moderate time	54% agree
Good size of parking space		Moderate time	48% agree
Provision of pedestrian entrance	Pedestrian system	Moderate time	58% agree
Good size of walkway		Moderate time	60% agree
The connected walkway to main road		Moderate time	55% agree
Good condition of walkway		Moderate time	59% agree
Provision of road crossing	Vehicular circulation	Moderate time	58% agree
Clearly explained of signage facilities		Moderate time	60% agree
Proximity to bus stop	Public transport system	Moderate time	49% agree

Source: Questionnaire survey, 2021

Three key dimensions has been analysed with the length of time spent by respondents per visit, consist of parking system, pedestrian system, vehicular circulation, and public transport system. Based on the analysis, a huge number of respondents who have spent their time below 2 hours were satisfied with the existence of parking spaces in term of visibility and availability. There was only small number of respondents have less satisfied due to the sizes of parking space provided.

The respondents agreed and satisfied with the provision of park entrance that was clear enough same as the pedestrian entrance. Other than that, the respondents that give positive response on walkway characteristics provided were spent their time for 1-2 hours and 2 – 3 hours at recreational park. It showed there have spent for a moderate and a long time at recreational parks if the accessibility and linkages are good. The characteristics that have been mentioned were walkway connectivity, walkway condition, and walkway size. Great circulation system that connects all the activities from one space to another give smooth movement for visitors. Path as important element in the image of site. The clear hierarchy of road is such of successful circulation system that benefit to the users.

4.2.3 Cross-tabulation Analysis between Length of Time Spent and Facilities and Amenities Provided

Table 6: Summary from cross-tabulation analysis between length of time spent and facilities and amenities provided

Component at recreational parks	Dimension	Length of time spent (majority)	Satisfaction level
Provision of walking, jogging, and cycling area	Physical activities	Moderate time	58% agree
Good condition of sport facilities		Moderate time	54% agree
Separate spaces for different age group	Social activities	Moderate time	32% disagree
Proximity to cafe or shops		Moderate time	50% agree
Attractive hardscape elements	Special attraction	Moderate time	56% agree
Attractive softscape elements		Moderate time	58% agree
Attractive design of park layout		Moderate time	59% agree
Provision of clear information signage		Moderate time	59% agree
Good maintenance of facilities		Moderate time	48% agree
Proximity to toilet		Moderate time	52% agree

Source: Questionnaire survey, 2021

In this Table 6, the facilities and amenities provided corresponding to length of time spent will be discussed based on the analysed data from the respondents. This earlier finding found out that the spaces for activities at recreational parks were combined with all age group. This was arising when the data analysed shows 32% of the respondents who spend a moderate time were disagreed about the parks provide separate spaces for different age group. Therefore, several spaces should be separated for different age group in term of ability and safety. For example, the sport facilities and the playground area must be separated in term of location and usage to avoid any destruction. However, public space is for public use, so the barrier to utilize the place should be broke by providing more suitable features for all generation of visitors.

Overall facilities located at the recreational parks were almost satisfied by the respondents. The walking, jogging, and cycling area provided at the parks were agreed by the respondents who have spent their time from 1/2 hours to 3 hours per visit.

Variety of facilities provided increasing the length of time spent and will contribute to attract more visitors. Farah Amira Ahmad Shafee & Siti Mazwin Kamaruddin (2019) described the improvement of the specific amenities should be applied in the urban parks to meet the visitor's satisfaction towards physical and social activities at the open spaces.

5 Conclusion

This study managed to assess the perception of visitors and identify their factors attracting while visiting their frequent recreational parks. The activities in the parks should be able to meet the needs of people from different age of group. The satisfaction level of visitors among four selected recreational parks shows a high-level performance regarding its features provided. The provision of recreational parks in urban areas also give a big impact to the society and the surrounding environment. Some issues and problems raised at every park should be resolved by the local authority, any related agencies, and community surroundings to meet the visitors' satisfaction in a positive way in the future. Based on the study, it is recommended to provide efficient public transportation close to recreational parks, improve recreational parks facilities and amenities, and improve the walkways with natural environment. The future research can be improved by extending the research to a higher and wider scale by covering upper-level open spaces which is higher than the community, urban and local park. More interesting information and features could be obtaining for future research regarding performance level of park.

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