



VI. INTERNATIONAL

GASTRONOMY



TOURISM STUDIES CONGRESS

PROCEEDINGS BOOK

AFYONKARAHISAR
6-9 October 2022

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EXPLORING TOURISM SENSORY EXPERIENCE OF GASTRONOMIC TOURISM OF MI BANDUNG MUAR, JOHOR, MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Understanding customer's satisfactions, experiences, and preferences contribute to the food and beverage industry's marketing strategies to promote Malaysia's food heritage and gastronomy tourism, especially in Muar, Johor, Malaysia. Nevertheless, there are only a few empirical studies have been done to determine customer satisfaction in experiencing gastronomy tourism, especially in Malaysia. Previous studies focused on customer's perceptions and perceived Malaysia food heritage in Penang and Kelantan in Malaysia by using quantitative methods. Therefore, this study focuses on customer satisfaction in the gastronomy tourism experience of *Mi Bandung* Muar, Johor, Malaysia. This study aims to explore the elements of sensory attributions toward *Mi Bandung* Muar, identify the safety and hygiene that influence the experience of *Mi Bandung* Muar, and determine the customers' satisfaction with *Mi Bandung* Muar. This study uses the qualitative research method by using semi-structured interview questions with a total of seven respondents. This study is using thematic analysis to analyse data. The findings of this study contain three elements of customer satisfaction; sensory attributions (smell and taste), safety and hygiene, and satisfaction and experience. Hence, this study contributed to helping the food and beverages industry to enhance customer satisfaction and experience, and Destination Marketing Organizer (DMO) promote the signature dish of Muar globally.

Keywords: Gastronomy tourism, Malaysian Food Heritage, Customer Satisfaction, Sensory Attribution, Food Safety and hygiene, Tourism Sensory Experience

INTRODUCTION

Gastronomy tourism has become a top trend in many countries worldwide and contributed to higher expenditure among travellers, especially in this modern era (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia, MoTaC, 2013). According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2019), tourism has contributed 94.5 billion to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and earned 86 billion in tourism receipts with 26.1 million tourist arrivals in 2019. Malaysia's tourism industry is one of the most significant contributors to the country's economy (The Star Business, 2017). The food and beverages industry (13.3%) are the third contributor to tourist

receipts after shopping (33.6%) and accommodation (24%) (Tourism Malaysia, 2020). Gastronomy tourism products developed from different cultures and ethnic particularly Malays, Chinese, Indians, and other ethnic groups.

Moreover, the concept of gastronomy tourism contributes to the food preservation of the local culture and heritage, and economy because it reflects the local food heritage and local lifestyle (Bjork et al., 2016).

Food tourism is niche tourism where tourists travel to a destination or country to experience authentic cultural food and has become a new trend for food lovers to seek novelty and experience the culture. According to UNWTO (2012), food tourism is a form of heritage tourism in which tourists engaged in food-related activities and experienced different cultures and histories. Therefore, as a multiracial country, Malaysia has lots of traditional foods and beverages such as *nasi lemak*, *roti canai*, *teh Tarik*, *dim sum*, satay, and more (Hashemi & Hosseinian, 2015). In addition, Malaysia was also promoting Malaysian food tourism through festivals such as Fabolous Food 1Malaysia (FF1M), Asian Food Heritage, Street Food Festival, and Restaurant Food Festival (Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia, MoTaC, 2013). As a result, Malaysia received many tourists every year.

Muar town in Johor, Malaysia is known as a honeypot for people who craved authentic local foods. Muar has a unique culture that can be offered to tourists, such as heavy meals and satay for breakfast (Tourism Johor, 2020). Besides, tourists can sip a cup of local coffee and consume Muar's signature dish, *Mi Bandung*. Hence, the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) could take this opportunity to promote Muar as a gastronomic tourism destination and increase the local's economy. However, the DMO must include the consideration of customer satisfaction based on their experience with local foods to ensure sustainable tourism growth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

De Jong and Palladino (2018) implemented gastronomy as any food and drink that related to the cultural values, food production and preparation, and the physiological effects of food towards an individual. In this context, gastronomy refers to human welfare and diet, and the United Nations World Organization (UNWTO, 2020, pp.8) defines gastronomy tourism as "the whole of the recreational and experimental activities related to foods and beverages performed in destinations for entertainment purposes." In addition, a gastronomy tourist is a person who is involved with tasting, preparing, experiencing, researching, discovering, and understanding food (Kivela & Crofts, 2006; Yilmaz 2016). In other words, gastronomy tourism relates to a visit to a destination by experiencing a particular food culture or experience the food producers' food processes.

According to Yuncu (2010), gastronomy tourism is a part of the local culture experienced by tourists, and it became part of local economic development. Thus, gastronomy tourism has played a crucial role in contributing to the economic and social development of the locals. Farridah (2010) emphasized that a tourism destination can be promoted by giving tourists experienced a different culture of food and beverages. Based on a survey done by Kivela and Crofts (2006), and Erkmen, (2019), there are four categories of gastronomy tourism; existential, experimental, recreational, and diversionary gastronomy tourists. Therefore, Gastronomy

tourism is encouraged to boost tourists' enjoyment of food and beverage-related activities and events (Wolf, 2002; Guzel & Apaydin, 2016). In fact, gastronomy tourism has the supremacy of influencing tourists eating and drinking habits and giving life experience of the destination being visited (Farridah, 2010).

On the other hand, gastronomy tourism gives personal experience and memories from the dining experience. For example, Europe, Melbourne, and Australia (2004) have established some tourist destinations for gastronomic tourism by promoting authentic food and beverages. Thus, Haukeland and Jacobsen (2019) suggest that every tourism destination needs to develop a gastronomy destination and make it outstanding for tourists who crave authentic experiences. In other words, food and beverages are crucial components in tourism because it helps to boost the tourist experience in tourist destinations (Kim & Iwashita, 2016).

Well-established gastronomy tourism in a country builds a strong impression and good gastronomy image toward gastronomic tourists. Eren and Celik (2016) believed that gastronomy image influences tourists' decision-making process because they acknowledge the quality of gastronomic experience. In addition, Cheung et al. (2008); Yilmaz, (2016) gastronomic image shapes the tourist's on-site behaviours, satisfaction level, re-visit intention, and willingness to recommend. Tourists would like to share their experiences by talking to others, commenting and review at product websites, and sharing on social media (Cheung & Litvin, 2008; Yilmaz, 2016). A study by Wang (2011) shows that the tourist's good experience helps future tourists make decisions to visit a destination and raise awareness of gastronomy tourism.

Malaysia is a multiracial country with different ethnicities, cultures, languages, and histories. Malaysia has offered different types of food and beverages, and each food represents different types of cultures and ethnicities. For instance, Penang has become one of Malaysia's gastronomic tourism destinations because it offered various choices and gourmet range from street food to fine dining (Farridah, 2010). As stated by Tourism Penang (2009), the famous local dishes are *Nasi Kandar*, *Laksa*, *Char Kuey Teow*, *Hokkien Mee*, *Rojak*, *Bukit Tambun Seafood*, *Pasembur*, and *Satay*. Therefore, Penang has known as the "Food Capital of Malaysia" and attracted tourists, especially from neighbouring countries such as Thailand, and Indonesia, and has attracted European tourists to visit and experience local foods in Penang (Atikhambar et al., 2018). Thus, the finding from this study can be employed in Muar to build a gastronomic image and develop this royal town as one of the gastronomy tourism destinations in Malaysia.

Malaysian Food Heritage

Food heritage in Malaysia is varied because Malaysia is a multiracial country with three dominant races which are Malays, Chinese and Indian. Hence, it makes Malaysia popular with cultures and heritage including foods that represent the races' cultures such as Baba Nyonya, Javanese, Malays, Chinese and Indian. In addition, according to Ng and Karim (2016), food is more than a symbol of culture, food can represent ethnicity. According to Omar, Karim, and Omar (2015), community lifestyle is embedded with local culture and it is having cultural values that need to be preserved for the future generation.

This statement is supported by Karim, Rashid, and Camillo (2011) people choose their food according to their tastes, environments, and economies. The food chosen has become the symbol of the individual culture, and eating habits have evolved to reflect people's own tastes and preferences. Thus, food heritage can be defined as typical food of people that represent themselves with pass-down recipes from ancestors for next future generations to preserve the food from being faded. Md Ramli et al., (2017) emphasized that the concern for the preservation of traditional cuisine is closely related to the ingredients, preparation method, dishes, and eating propriety.

Henderson (2009) suggested there are three ways of the relation between food and tourism. First, as a tourism commodity, food has an intangible cultural heritage value.; second, food is regarded as a strategic management instrument that may (re)create a destination image and maintain or revitalize visitor flows towards a destination" (Renko, 2010). Third, food and tourism are interrelated and can be stand-alone tourism for tourists and visitors interested in visiting a destination (Almir & Merima 2014 Food Heritage for tourists to have a great experience when traveling to Malaysia. Food heritage was determined based on The Declaration of National Heritage, Act 645, the declaration of tangible or intangible heritage characteristics such as uniqueness, historical attributions, the uniqueness of natural heritage, and tangible or intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, *Mi Bandung* can be a Malaysian Food Heritage because *Mi Bandung* fit the characteristic required in Act 645. *Mi Bandung* is a symbol of Muar local food because it is originally local food and represents a local lifestyle that is to be preserved for the future generation.

Factors of Tourist Satisfaction

The Sensory Attributions

Studies by Agapito (2012) and Isci (2016) stated that human sensory is crucial for tourist experience and satisfaction to reach the highest level of satisfaction. As Koster (2009) stated, cultural, social, psychological, and sensory acceptance are the factors that influence tourists in the decision-making of destination choices. According to Mak et al. (2012), food is the main contributor to sensory attributes: taste, aroma, texture, and appearance. Eves and Kim (2009), Mora, Sanchez, Guzman and Cuadra (2021) mentioned that sensory appeal influences their local food choice, and tourists are satisfied to experience local food through the smell, taste, and food image. Hence, the sensory attribute is important in the tourism experience because according to Pan and Ryan, (2009); Lv et al. (2020), the tourism experience required sensory stimulation through all human senses, and physical sensation gives added value to the tourist experience. As supported by Rahman, Khalifah, and Ismail (2017), human senses are need to fully utilized to upsurge satisfaction either pe-visit, during the visit or after the visit. For example, tourists use their senses like sight, smell, and taste to experience local food, which tourists attached to the destination and influence tourist re-visit intention in the future (Hyun, 2012; Lv et al., 2020).

Food Safety and Hygiene

Fatimah et al. (2011) mentioned food hygiene influenced tourists' food destination choices. Tourists choose a restaurant based on facility cleanliness like floors, tables, and bathrooms (Lee

et al., 2012). Apart from that, tourists also choose a restaurant based on restaurant-grade to determine food safety. Moreover, Aksoydan et al. (2007); Bai et al., (2017) proved that hygienic factors; cleanliness of the restaurants, toilets, kitchen, and porcelain and cutlery, affected tourists' dining choices in the restaurant. A study conducted by Chow et al. (2019) proved that maintaining restaurant hygiene affected the tourist dining experience and contribute to overall satisfaction.

Satisfaction and Experience

Past studies showed that customer satisfaction and experience have interrelations with brand loyalty, and influence decision-making, and behavioural on-site (Tsai & Chen, 2007). Karim et al. (2010) stated that satisfied tourists are likely to return to the same location and suggest it to others, particularly family and friends, as well as offer economic advantages to local food businesses. Moreover, tourists' choices in food consumption are influenced by five proportions; cultural and religious factors, socio-demographic factors, motivational factors, personality, and experience (Mak, 2012). Based on the five proportions, Kim and Scarles (2009), and Tsai et al, (2015) divided motivational factors into sub-factors which are exciting experience, escape from routine, health concern, learning knowledge, authentic experience, togetherness, prestige, sensory appeal, and physical. Tourists' satisfaction is related to cognitive perspective, in which tourist compare their expectations before they had the service and after they had experienced the service (Mora et al, 2021). Furthermore, the food quality, quality of service, physical environment, and price determine overall satisfaction and positive future behaviour. Services are intangible, and tourists need to be physically present to experience the service; thus, the restaurant's physical environment plays a vital role in giving a great impression to them and to create loyalty.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Abdullah's et al., (2018) study is regarding the food quality, service quality, price fairness, and, restaurant re-visit intention in the context of halal-certified restaurants. Based on the previous finding, customer satisfaction is affected by food quality, service quality, and price fairness. Next, the element of safety and hygiene is employed from a previous study by Chow et al., (2019) which this study aims to posit hygiene expectation and hygiene experience as the main diner satisfaction. Based on the findings, hygiene expectations and hygiene experience confirm directly related to diner satisfaction.

This study focused on 3 attributes which are sensory attributions (the aroma and the taste of *Mi Bandung* Muar), food safety and hygiene (the restaurant's cleanliness), and satisfaction and experience (the service quality, the food's price, the quality of physical environment). Hereby, the concept was modified according to the focus of this study which is to discover elements of sensory attribution, the influence of food safety and hygiene on customer satisfaction, and to explore customer satisfaction towards *Mi Bandung* Muar.

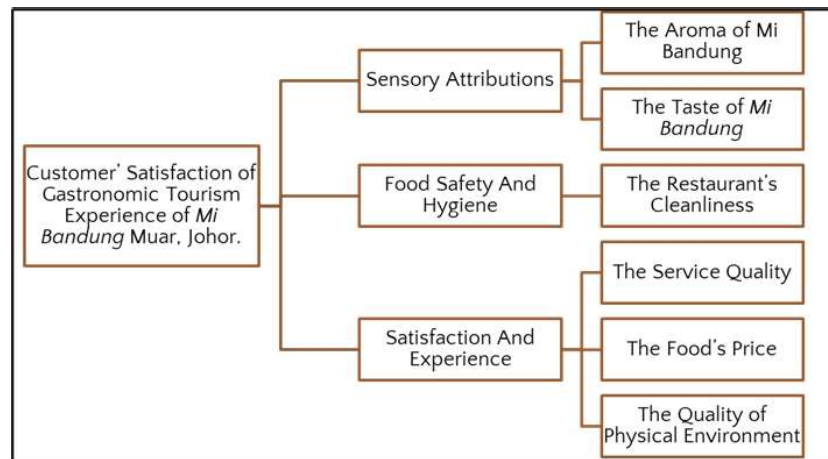


Figure 1: Customer's Satisfaction of Gastronomic Tourism Experience of *Mi Bandung Muar*, Johor, Malaysia.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed an inductive approach, which is a qualitative research method. A qualitative method has a different type of method for data collection such as interviews, open-ended questionnaires, observation, and analysis journals (Zohrabi, 2013; Mohajan, 2018). Tong, (2012) and Mohajan (2018) stated that the qualitative method provides a better understanding and exploration of human psychology (behaviour, emotions, attitude, and experience). Therefore, this study is using the qualitative method by using semi-structured interviews to explore customer satisfaction with the gastronomic tourism experience of *Mi Bandung Muar*, Johor, Malaysia. The interview method is employed to receive different opinions through personal interaction and obtain insight into the experience of the respondents in their own expressions. The respondents have been interviewed through phone calls and WhatsApp voice notes due to the Movement Control Order (MCO) by the government because of the world pandemic virus outbreak. The collected data were digitally recorded on July 2020 and March 2021 and will be analysed by scanning the data obtain to understand the data, then listing the data into categories, and lastly, coding the data according to each theme. This research implied the purposive sampling method to get the right respondents, and this sampling is non-probability sampling. The interview sessions with respondents were held until the data gathered was saturated and have significant subjectivity in the themes (Lowe & Babbage, 2018), hence, this study collected data from seven of respondents and the results showed three significant themes. The respondents were labelled as LT01 = Local Tourist 01, LT02 = Local Tourist 02, LT03 = Local Tourist 03, LT04 = Local Tourist 04. The data gathered from the interview will be arranged and summarized according to three themes: sensory attribution, safety and hygiene, and satisfaction and experiences. Then, the data was analysed and interpreted based on the information provided by the respondents following the objectives of the study using thematic analysis

Table 1: The Background of Participants

No of Respondent	Gender	Age	Origin state	Educational level	Employment status
LT 01	Female	24	Kajang, Selangor	Bachelor's degree	Student
LT 02	Female	24	Batu cave, Selangor	Bachelor's degree	Student
LT 03	Female	24	Rawang, Selangor	STPM	Housewife
LT 04	Female	24	Perak	Bachelor's degree	Student
LT 05	Male	52	Segamat, Johor	SPM	Auxiliary police
LT06	Female	27	Segamat, Johor	Bachelor's degree	Teacher
LT07	Female	24	Seremban, Negeri Sembilan	Bachelor's degree	Student

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

There are seven tourist respondents for the interview sessions consisting of one male and six females. Five respondents (LT01, LT02, LT03, LT04, and LT07) are 24 years old. One respondent (LT05) is 52 years old man, and one respondent (LT06) is 27 years old. There are three respondents (LT01, LT02, LT03) from Selangor, one respondent (LT04) is originally from Perak, and two respondents (LT05, LT06) are from Johor. Lastly, one respondent (LT07) is from Negeri Sembilan. Next, four respondents (LT01, LT02, LT04, and LT07) are bachelor's degree students at IIUM Gombak. There is one respondent (LT03) who is a housewife and studied until the STPM level. One respondent (LT05) is working as Auxiliary Police at Tambang Estate, Segamat, Johor. Next, there is one respondent (LT06) is working as a primary teacher at Sekolah Kebangsaan Spang Loi, Segamat, Johor. Next, the respondent (LT01) comes to Muar for sightseeing and food hunting. Respondent (LT02) came to Muar for holiday with her family for two days; meanwhile, the respondent (LT03) came to Muar because of one day trip. Respondent (LT04) came to Muar for food hunting, and respondent (LT05) came to Muar to visit his family and friends. Respondent (LT06) came to Muar for food hunting and visiting family and friends. Meanwhile, the respondent (LT07) came to Muar to attend her family's wedding.

The Sensory Attributions

The element of sensory attributions is important to determine the authentic *Mi Bandung* taste and aroma that influence customers' satisfaction in experiencing *Mi Bandung* Muar.

The Aroma of *Mi Bandung*

The findings show that respondents mentioned that *Mi Bandung* has a strong aroma from the ingredients used to cook *Mi Bandung*, such as dry shrimp, peanut, bean sprout, meat, and prawn as highlighted by LT 02 and LT 05,

"...Mi Bandung Muar has the smell of dry shrimp, peanut, bean sprout, and sweet potato (maybe) to the texture of Mi Bandung thick..."

"... the aroma is appealing from the dry shrimp, meat, or prawn. The ingredients in the Mi Bandung have made the food tasty..."

The Unique Taste of *Mi Bandung*

The findings described the unique taste of *Mi Bandung*, the taste of dry shrimp in the thick gravy, sweet and spicy from the shrimp broth with a nutty taste. As LT05, LT06, and LT07 mentioned.

"...Mi Bandung has a little bit spicy, sweet, has a taste of dry shrimp, then the other ingredients like prawn, meats..."

"... the Mi Bandung's gravy has a nutty taste, with dry shrimp flavour, however, I preferred Mi Bandung without dry shrimp. Then, there are prawns or meat or cockles, tofu, and some vegetables on top..."

"...for me, Mi Bandung is delicious from the spiciness and sweetness of shrimp broth making the gravy thickest and complete with the compliments..."

Safety and Hygiene

Restaurant cleanliness includes food quality, food preparation, restaurant surrounding, and restaurant layout. It displays customers' perception of restaurant cleanliness that influences their decision to choose a restaurant for dining.

The Restaurant's Cleanliness

The cleanliness of the restaurant plays an essential role in the gastronomic experience of *Mi Bandung* Muar. For instance, the score for cleanliness by Food Hygiene Regulation (2009) for consumer protection and ensuring food safety and the quality of the food. The score grade ranges from "A" to "D," and the grades will be on a few aspects: food handling methods, equipment and utensils, toilet facilities, and floors, walls, ceilings, and ventilation.

The respondents LT01, LT 03, and LT07 emphasizes restaurant's cleanliness based on cleanliness-rating, floor, and the food preparation space.

“...I choose the place based on their rating, sometimes their appearance, the shop appearance, and the foods they offered. I am rating the restaurant’s cleanliness based on their surroundings, their food presentation, toilets, and hand wash area...”

“...I will Google first and choose number one or number two based on the recommendations. First, I will look at the restaurant’s floor, then the food preparation space and the cleanliness sticker...”

“...I do not mind whether it is a new or old restaurant as long as it clean. If I went to a restaurant, I would go to the kitchen, and if it clean and the foods are tasty, I will come again. If it not, I will never come again...”

Satisfaction and Experience

The service quality

An excellent service provided by the restaurant influenced customers on the decision-making process and future behavioural intention such as intention to revisit and positive word of mouth. As highlighted by LT01 and LT05 regarding the services quality delivered by the restaurant.

“...I rate satisfaction based on the taste, the portion, and the presentation of the food. The restaurant surrounding is essential. I will enjoy eating there because comfort is vital to me when “...I enjoy my food. Some restaurant has good customer service because I never experienced inadequate customer services. I will be going back to this kind of restaurant.

“...The Mi Bandung is delicious and matches my taste. The food is good, the price is reasonable, and the service is excellent. Even the restaurant is crowd, but they served with mannered...”

The Food’s Price

Food’s price is one of the essential elements in customer satisfaction. A reasonable price may enhance customer satisfaction along with the food quality and services provided. As mentioned by respondents LT01, LT03, and LT04 regarding the affordable food’s price.

“...The price is affordable, and I definitely will come back for the foods...”

“...for me, Muar is food heaven on earth because it offered varieties of foods (other than Mi Bandung). The foods match the price and services...”

“...I satisfied with the service provider, and for me, the price is affordable. I will come back to the same restaurant but, I also will come to a different restaurant to try their foods and services...”

“...The price is affordable with the food portion, and if I got the chance to come back for more Mi Bandung, I absolutely will come back and enjoy the food...”

The Quality of Physical Environment

Restaurant physical environment is essential for the customer to perceived value. The restaurant’s physical environment, including interior decoration, table setting, restaurant’s

layout, and atmosphere conditions, influenced customer's mood and post-dining behavioural intentions. Therefore, this study found that the restaurant's cosy environment is helping them to enjoy their meals.

Respondents (LT01, LT02, LT04, LT05) stated that the restaurant's environment is crucial for enjoying every bite of the cuisine.

"...Overall, I do satisfy with their food, food presentation, surroundings, and the restaurants themselves. I can rate 8 out of 10..."

"...Restaurant surrounding help me to my meals such as Sabak Awor's restaurant has an open-air restaurant and nearby Muar River. For me, Muar is food heaven because there are variations of delicious food which are affordable and good services..."

"...surrounding of the restaurants is very important to me. I will go to the restaurant if it is clean, so I feel calm to have my meals. I feel delighted with the service from the moment I sat down, taking orders and until the arrival of the food. Fast and still fresh..."

"...I will come back here. I feel satisfied and happy with the food. The services provided were excellent. The facilities are complete because it nearby the river, and there is a mosque for Muslims to pray too."

Table 2: Analysis of Findings on Exploring Gastronomic Tourism Experience of *Mi Bandung* Muar, Johor, Malaysia.

Aspects	Item	Overall finding
The Sensory Attributions of <i>Mi Bandung</i>	Smell and taste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strong aroma of <i>Mi Bandung</i> Muar is based on the ingredients, such as, dry shrimp, meat, peanut and shrimp broth. <i>Mi Bandung</i> has the taste of dry shrimp in the thick gravy, sweet and spicy from the shrimp broth with nutty taste.
The Food Safety and Hygiene	Food cleanliness, restaurant's hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer evaluated the restaurant cleanliness based on the restaurants' surrounding, table cleanliness, the restaurant floor, table arrangement, and the kitchen.

The Customer's satisfaction and Experience	Service quality, food's price, Restaurant's physical environment,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An excellence services attract customer's loyalty towards the restaurants. • Affordable food's price enhances customer's experience and intention to repurchase the product. • Restaurant's environment helps customer to enjoy their meals and influenced customer's post-dining behavioural.
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Discussion on Findings

In summary, the findings emphasized that the aspect sensory attributions through human sensory which are taste and smell. From the findings, *Mi Bandung* was described as yellow-mee with thick gravy with intense aroma and taste from peanut, dry shrimp, and shrimp broth. Besides that, the sweet and spicy flavours complement each other to produce an authentic taste of *Mi Bandung* Muar. Moreover, *Mi Bandung* comes with different toppings such as meat, prawn, and half-cooked eggs, making the taste unique. The usage of dried shrimp influenced the taste and aroma of *Mi Bandung* Muar. However, there are different opinions on the ingredients of *Mi Bandung*, yet, Muar has the best *Mi Bandung* restaurant in Johor, Malaysia. *Mi Bandung* can be prepared in different ways with different topping and each taste is unique and smells good. This is aligned with Shahrim et al, (2011) 's study, *sambal belacan's* (Chilli Shrimp Paste) ingredients which are *belacan* (shrimp paste) as main ingredient, with shallots, garlic, palm sugar, chilies and some could be varies of other ingredients such as tomato, mango, fermented durian and etc. Different topping and ingredients deliver different taste and smell as long as the main ingredient were added to the dishes which is the main ingredient for *Mi Bandung* are shrimp broth and dry shrimp.

Next, the food safety and restaurant's hygiene are observed from a few aspects, such as restaurants' surroundings, food preparation space, table arrangement, floor, and kitchen. The restaurant's kitchen must be clean to serve safe food to be consumed by people—the surrounding needs to be clean for customers' comfort to enjoy their meals. A clean restaurant will give a guarantee to the customer for consuming their foods. This study is consistent with Ji, Zhao and Joung's study in 2018, which restaurants quality (ambiance, food and service) affected customer's preferences to choose restaurants and their intentions to revisit.

Then, the customer's satisfaction and experience are essential to ensure the customer's loyalty towards the brand of *Mi Bandung* Muar. Overall, seven of the respondents agreed that restaurants in Muar provided excellent services, friendly staff, reasonable food prices, and the most important is the *Mi Bandung* is appealing to the customer to be consumed. Seven of the respondents have the best experience with local restaurants and local foods. Hence, seven of the respondents would like to come back for more *Mi Bandung* and recommend it to their family and friends; they will also share it on their social media. As mentioned by Chun and Ochir (2020), satisfied customers are likely will revisit to the same premises to experience the quality food, enjoy the atmosphere and the services. However, it is crucial to the services

provider to improve the value experienced and build a loyal relationship with customers. Hence, customer's satisfaction is the main factor that influence customer's intention to revisit and repurchase.

CONCLUSION

All in all, this study has discovered customer's satisfaction with the gastronomic tourism experience of *Mi Bandung* Muar. The result showed that customers' satisfaction contributed to destination loyalty and triggered their intention to revisit, repurchase, and recommend the food and the destination. Hence, the restaurant's owner could enhance customer's satisfaction and experience by improving the food quality, services, and ambiance. Therefore, this study provides beneficial information for the government and Food and Beverages sectors in enhancing customer gastronomy experience to promote *Mi Bandung* as signature local food in Muar, Johor.

Service quality plays a crucial role in influencing satisfaction in developing a comfortable dining atmosphere. Restaurant surroundings must be comfortable to enjoy their meal and have a good time with family and friends. Good service and affordable prices are other factors to enhance tourist experienced and overall satisfaction. Restaurants can provide employee training programs to ensure employee deliver an excellent hospitality service to customers. Bad attitude and service may result to lose customers and spoil customer's experience and bad image to restaurants. This valuable information will help the local authorities promote Muar to become gastronomy destinations and attract tourists from locals and international by promoting *Mi Bandung* Muar globally. However, local authorities need to create a brand image for *Mi Bandung* and ensure that the services provided exceed the customer's expectations. Restaurateurs should keep on improving and maintaining the food quality, services and restaurants' image to encourage new customer to come and choose their restaurants.

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