

**POTENSI PUSAT KEBUDAYAAN SABAH UNTUK MEMUPUK
INTERAKSI SOSIAL DALAM KALANGAN KUMPULAN PELBAGAI
ETNIK**

***POTENTIAL OF INDIGENOUS CULTURAL CENTRES TO FOSTER
SOCIAL INTERACTION AMONG MULTI-ETHNIC GROUPS IN SABAH***

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ABSTRACT

Sabah is home to many indigenous ethnic groups each with their own language, culture, and spiritual beliefs and rich with its cultural heritage. In Sabah, several cultural centres is built to celebrate these but the indigenous community struggle in establishing meaningful connection with these buildings. Cultural centres can be defined as public buildings that have more than two functional spaces such as libraries, galleries, museums, and theatres. This research investigates the relationship between spaces and the social interaction within its indigenous community. Therefore, this research aims to determine the potential of cultural centres in anchoring the multi-ethnic. This research addresses the research questions: RQ1 - What are the current contextual condition and cultural elements that contribute to increasing social interaction in cultural centres?, RQ 2 - What are the features of a cultural centre in Sabah that can increase social interactions? The research was conducted in a survey among the community. The most iconic buildings based on its architectural design and style is CC3 – Sabah Museum, Kota Kinabalu. For programs and activities offered, CC7 – Koisaan Cultural Village or commonly known as KDCA hosts the state’s most prominent festival. For spaces provided by cultural centre, CC3 – Sabah Museum offers the most variety of spaces. The findings of this research can contribute to the missing gap in literature that touches on Sabah’s study on cultural centres especially the relationship between architecture and the immediate context of the community. In conclusion, this study shows how Sabahan indigenous cultural centres are important in bringing people from different ethnicities together.

Keywords: Cultural Centre, Indigenous, Social Interaction

Introduction

Sabah is home to an estimated 42 indigenous ethnic groups, and over 200 distinct sub-ethnic groups each with their language, culture, and spiritual beliefs. It is one of the richest states in Malaysia with a cultural heritage. Cultural centres can be defined as public buildings that have more than two functional spaces such as libraries, galleries, museums, educational rooms, and theatres. Typically, these functions are arranged in one building envelope or small, interconnected structures to create a single public complex with a distinct cultural theme (Yang et al, 2017). Cultural centres, which frequently serve as both community gathering places and tourist attractions, have the potential to promote these gatherings and satisfy the needs of today's cultural tourists by allowing visitors to simply become one of the residents as they go about their daily lives (Cooper, 2019).

The community center, located in the diverse state of Sabah, reflects the ambitions, dreams, and cultural legacies of indigenous peoples. It serves as a place where they come together to share their common goals. However in Sabah, many cultural centres are increasingly being used for tourism, which can shift their focus away from their original purpose. When aimed at attracting tourists, activities and exhibitions might cater more to outsiders rather than reflecting the true cultural expressions of the local community. This change can affect the authenticity of cultural practices and reduce meaningful community engagement. To address this issue, it is important to involve local communities in the management and programming of cultural centres, ensuring that their needs and perspectives are prioritized.

This calls for research to study tangible space or an architectural solution of the cultural centres in Sabah that is most suitable to celebrate its culture. Understanding how people from different demographic origins can respond to problems in their new community that cause their culture to integrate or disintegrate is advanced by studying bicultural or multicultural communities (Jami et al, 2022). As defined in the overview, cultural centres are buildings that have more than one function, it is meant to educate, to perform, to act as a gathering space for the community, and for tourism. A public cultural facility is a crucial component of the public service system, as well as an important physical space (Yan Lu, 2018).

Indigenous People in Sabah

In Sabah, the 39 different indigenous ethnic groups are known as natives or Anak Negeri and constitute about 2,233,100 people or 58.6% of the population of Sabah. The main groups are the Dusun, Murut, Paitan and Bajau groups. Today, even though the indigenous culture is starting to blur due to interracial marriages among ethnicities in Sabah, it is still obvious that the coastal land are mostly dominated by Bajau, Iranun, and Brunei while the inland towards the mountain are mostly Kadazandusun, Rungus and Murut. Sabah's intangible cultural heritage is extremely diverse. Thus, it is important to realise that Sabah's high level of ethnic tolerance is nothing new; it existed there long before colonial settlers arrived, and it has manifested itself through a variety of social interactions, including the closest of family ties (marriage). In Sabah, managing and organise the social divisions in society while upholding the same patriotic beliefs is one of nation-building's primary tasks. It will be simpler to foster and maintain peaceful connections in a complex society when patriotism is valued and can be shared without discriminating between ethnic and religious identities (Ramli, 2023).

Sabah has rich varieties of intangible cultural heritage. Apart from various types of ritual chanting by priestesses, there are many other genres of traditional vocal music including secular songs, epic chants and legends, classical poetic genres, story-telling and extemporaneous verse debates (Kitingan, 2015). The immense cultural diversity of Sabah as well as its distinctive historical evolution have promoted interethnic harmony and coexistence among its peoples.

Indigenous Participation in Tourism Development

Indigenous tourism describes tourist endeavours "in which indigenous peoples are directly involved through control or having their culture serve as the essence of the attraction" Indigenous cultures and traditions are popular with both domestic and foreign tourists, and they can significantly affect a destination's ability to compete. Indigenous voices and expertise must be included in the formulation of tourist policy and planning if sustainable tourism models are to benefit from these indigenous cultures and traditions.

The participation of indigenous communities, with their perspectives and knowledge, should be a key component of indigenous tourism policy and development, which could assist to lessen some of the sociocultural and environmental effects of tourism (Latip et. al). In Sabah, for the local indigenous people, farming and fishing are frequently their main sources of income; as a result, tourism has the potential to drastically raise their standard of living. Additionally, the expansion of tourism can give indigenous tribes financial incentives to continue producing their traditional arts and crafts because hotels and other visitor accommodations offer a valuable market for homegrown goods. For example, the Gaya Street Sunday Market which also acts as a car-free event at Gaya Street attracts a lot of visitors with locals coming from all over Sabah to showcase their goods. This event is supported by Dewan Bandaraya Kota Kinabalu (DBKK) and has been running since the early 20th century when the street was still named Bond Street under the British power.

Indigenous communities must actively take part in the design, execution, and regulation of tourism-related activities that have an impact on them. Benefit-sharing arrangements are essential for ensuring that their interests are protected, and that tourism works for them as well as for mitigating the negative effects of tourism development on local communities. Indigenous people are therefore faced with a serious conundrum when tourism development has a negative influence on their communities. In other words, whether they want to encourage the growth of tourism in their areas and reap its benefits, or whether they want to oppose it in the hopes of preventing adverse effects on their communities.

Cultural Centres: Definitions and Theory

Cultural centres can be defined as to public buildings with two or more distinct cultural uses (such theatres, libraries, art galleries, science and technology museums, etc.) (Yang et. al., 2017). According to another study, cultural centres, often being used simultaneously as community meeting spaces and as tourism spot attractions (Cooper, 2020). A cultural centre is a multipurpose institution or location that acts as the focal point for the promotion, preservation, and celebration of a community's artistic expressions, intellectual pursuits, and cultural heritage.

The cultural centre has become widely used in the modern typology to refer to institutions or locations created especially to accommodate a variety of cultural and artistic events and activities, especially for the local community. As a result of the rise in interest in the arts, multiculturalism, and the demand for locations that could unite communities through shared cultural experiences, the development of such centres grew more widely in the 20th century, especially in urban areas.

Cultural centres can be grouped using the four functional combinations. The first strategy concentrates on public display complexes, whose main elements are often museums, art galleries, or exhibition halls and which mainly demonstrate culture, art, and urban development through exhibition and presentation. The space is primarily used as an exhibition hall, with theatre productions, concerts, and screen-based events serving as its secondary purposes. The second is primarily concerned with performances, including opera and music. Their principal purposes were designed for performing music, the practise of face and physical expression, and cinematic study. The third method, which combines these several cultural functions, evenly distributes cultural presentation and dramatic performance. A mixed type, which combines the first two or more distinct cultural functions, is the final type. According to the study's findings, the primary uses of space are typically libraries, cultural exhibition halls, studios, conference rooms, and training centres for education. (Yang et. al., 2017).

Cultural centres as third place for the local community. The term 'third place' was first used by Oldenburg and Brissett (1982). In contrast to the first place, which is the home, and the second place, which is a formal environment like a business, school, or university, they define third places which eventually become an architectural theory. Another study by Bhabha (2022), supports the theory of third space and argues that cultures are negotiated in ambiguous, contradictory settings where cultural identities are challenged and developed. It represents both the sharing of a common language and the negotiating and transforming of cultures. By presuming an ambivalent process of constructing meaning, it undermines the fixity. The fluidity and openness of cultural signals and symbols instead create this space, which cannot be accurately depicted as a real space.

It can be challenging to maintain a level of recognition that corresponds to the expectations of the public or tourists while still delivering a representation that is meaningful and representative to the indigenous community (Bresener, 2014). Traditions, heritage, and economic prospects come together at the point when indigenous community spaces and cultural tourism combine. A study by Datzira-Masip 2006, emphasises that one of the most important factors in the growth of tourism is policy. This policy is founded on cultural associations and centres as the fundamental sources of culture, but it also incorporates, among other things, museums, art galleries, historic sites, and monuments into the itinerary. Cultural centres can be designed in a way that supports community engagement and development policies. The

grassroots indigenous movement is part of the development of indigenous centres. To increase local engagement in preserving one's cultural legacy and identity and to attract tourists to the area, the government should consider to establish indigenous museums (Wang, 2019).

Research Methodology

The questionnaire was distributed to 150 respondents that are residing in Sabah and are native Sabahans. This is to gather insights from a larger and more diverse population thus providing a broader perspective especially when the target group of this study is to find the relationship between the community and cultural centres. The consistency and dependability in collecting the indigenous community's input makes the result more reliable. The primary collection for this research is questionnaire. The chosen instrument to collect data is a questionnaire that will consist of 4 Sections. Section A will ask the respondents their basic demographics such as their name, age, their residency status and whether they are native to Sabahan or not. Section B will ask in depth on whether they have been to the listed cultural centres in Sabah, which centres have they been to and how frequent have they went there. Section C is the Likert scale questions on the feature of a cultural centre that can increase social interaction. Lastly, Section D is for the open-ended questions. This section asked the respondents their most memorable experience in the centre, their suggestions and expectations of a cultural centre in Sabah as well as their likeliness of going back to the cultural centre to meet new people.




The data collected is to answer RQ1 and RQ2 of this research. The expected insights and outcome of the questionnaire is to find the common aspiration from native Sabahans by analysing their current issues and expectation of existing cultural centres. The questionnaire also sought to seek activities and spaces that are mostly used by them. Lastly, their ideas and suggestions to improve cultural centres in Sabah so that it caters more to the locals instead of commercialized to tourists.






Results and discussion

This research paper covers cultural centres in Sabah that are all concentrated on the west coast of Sabah. Some are under the government and some are private-owned cultural centres. The list is as below:

1. CC1 - Sabah Cultural Centre
2. CC2 - Murut Cultural Centre
3. CC3 - Sabah Museum
4. CC4 - Sabah Art Gallery
5. CC5 - Gaya Street Sunday Market
6. CC6 - Mari-mari Cultural Village
7. CC7 - Koisaan Cultural Village (KDCA)
8. CC8 - Pusat Kebudayaan Rumpun Bajau Samah

Table 1: Overview of existing conditions at cultural centres

Cultural Centres	Picture	Description
1. CC1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vernacular design with circular pitch roof • Very strong symmetry axis • Strong circular form • Massive proportion • Walls are decorated with local patterns • Prominent colour of Sabahan indigenous identity (yellow) • Stacked roof • Surrounding landscape is quite empty with only a few trees • Building can be seen from adjacent road but not from main road
2. CC2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vernacular • Design is carefully planned according to Murut tribe • The spaces are almost symmetrical but there is an extension on the right side that makes it asymmetrical • Biggest Borneo ironwood building in the world • Columns are handcarved by local • Very grounded appearance with surrounding landscape • Natural finishing of construction material • Use of locally source material • Grand staircase as a statement at the entrance • Annex buildings scattered in the area to compliment the main building • Spaces inside are open and there is no use of air conditioning
3. CC3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong appearance of structure (beam and column) • Massive proportion • Design is a derivation of traditional Sabah houses and patterns • Minimal colours (red and white) • Surrounding landscape is filled with trees • Building is on a hill and gives an impression even from far away

<p>4. CC4</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong circular design that resembles the traditional basket of Sabah • Protruded columns • ‘Stacking’ effect on façade • Strong symmetrical axis • Modern colour appearance (Shades of grey) • Surrounding area is empty and building is not visible from main road
<p>5. CC5</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of temporary structures/tents on a multipurpose space • Gateway that resembles ‘Chinatown’ effect similarly to the whole world
<p>6. CC6</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A living museum that showcases traditional Sabahan houses across the tribes • A direct build from existing design • Built within nature • Uses locally sourced materials
<p>7. CC7</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Massive proportions and strong statement of roof with protruding structures • ‘Gongs’ are shown everywhere to show the identity of the Kadazandusun tribe • Overall appearance is influenced by Kadazandusun old houses and motifs • The walkway towards the entrance is also designed to complement the main building which houses the hall • Building can be seen from the main road
<p>8. CC8</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway is designed according to the traditional Bajau roof with the icon ‘Serimpak’ on it • Main building also is a direct translation of traditional Bajau house but in a bigger scale • Symmetrical longitudinal layout • Building is visible from main road • Minimal motif and pattern on the building

Source: Author

Table 2: Programs and activities offered and list of spaces provided at cultural centres.

Cultural Centres	Programs & Activities	Spaces
CC1	Cultural Event Community Event Administration (Sabah Cultural Board)	Multipurpose Hall Administration
CC2	Display & exhibitions Performance Festival (Kalimaran) Event Market	Museum Gallery Outdoor Hall Auditorium Wedding Hall Recreational open spaces Market space
CC3	Display & exhibitions Education Recreation Event Performance Market	Museum Open Recreational Park Seasonal exhibitions Multipurpose Hall Marketspace Souvenir shop Meeting rooms Administration Restaurant
CC4	Display & exhibitions Education Event (Small Scale) Market (Focus on local artist) Community weekly gathering (Picnic Kulung)	Art Gallery Event space Meeting rooms Souvenir shop Open outdoor park
CC5	Market Performance Event	Marketspace Performance Area
CC6	Display & exhibitions (Living Museum) Performances Market	Mini villages Souvenir shop
CC7	Festival (Kaamatan) Event Performance Market Display & exhibitions	Multipurpose Hall Mini villages Marketspace
CC8	Festival (Festival Kebudayaan Bajau) Event Market Performance Display & exhibitions Horse riding	Multipurpose Hall Gallery Meeting rooms Restaurants Horse Stable

Demographic of Respondents

There are total of 150 respondents who answered the survey questionnaire. The justification to choose questionnaire as the research methodology is because the topic is based heavily on the community of Sabah. Questionnaires allow more diverse reachability among a targeted group. Furthermore, it allows for standardization in data collection because all participants receive the same set of questions in the same format, further reducing potential bias in data collection.

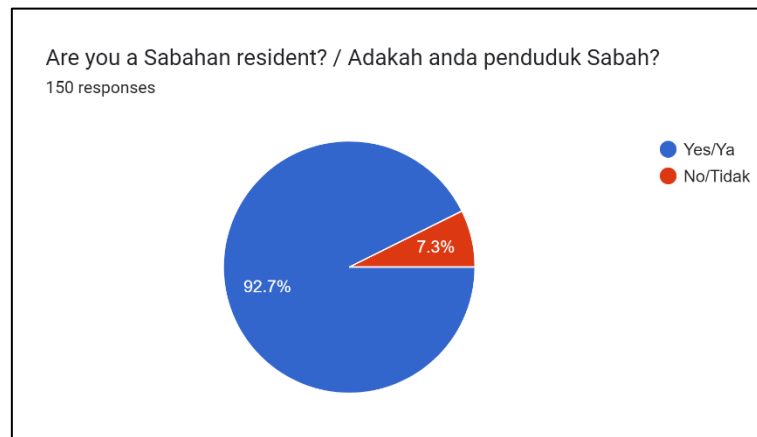


Figure 1 Respondents' residency.



Figure 2 Respondents' Sabahan native status.



Figure 3 Respondents' data on have they been to the cultural centres listed.

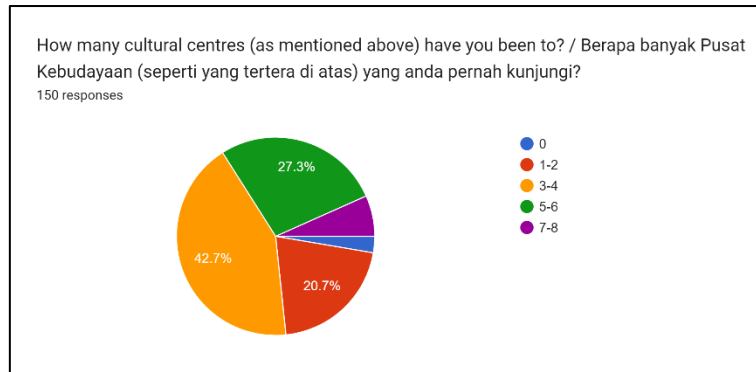


Figure 4 Respondents' data on how many of the cultural centres listed have they been to.

145 respondents (96.7%) answered that they have been to the Cultural Centres in Sabah as listed. In the next question, 64 respondents (42.7%) mentioned that they went to 3-4 cultural centres out of the 8 listed ones. 41 respondents (27.3%) have been to 5-6 cultural centres followed by 31 respondents (20.7%) who had been to 1-2 cultural centres and only 10 respondents (6.7%) had been to 7-8 cultural centres as listed.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 3: Descriptive statistic data based on respondents' data.

Descriptive Statistics	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
Q1: The role of public space in the cultural centre (such as lobbies and open space) help to increase social interaction between visitors.	4.01	5	5	0.7849
Q2: The age-inclusive programs offered by cultural centre helps with the social interaction in the centre.	4.03	5	5	0.8330
Q3: 3) The safety and security of cultural centre increases the social interaction between visitors.	4.02	4	5	0.9823
Q4: The role of buffer spaces (such as corridors and foyers) at the cultural centre help to increase social interaction between visitors.	3.92	4	4	0.9508
Q5: The promotion/display of Sabahan indigenous culture through these cultural centres increase social interaction between visitors.	4.10	4	5	0.8237
Q6: The size of space or room provided by cultural centre help in increasing the social interaction.	4.04	4	4	0.9690
Q7: Recreational spaces provided by cultural centre is important in increasing social interaction.	4.06	4	5	0.7733
Q8: Community spaces (such as learning spaces) provided by cultural centre is important to increase social interaction within community.	4.08	4	5	0.7377
Q9: The relationship of indoor and outdoor space is important for visitor's social interaction.	4.06	4	5	0.8700
Q10: Cafes or restaurants in the cultural centre promote social interaction between visitors.	4.01	4	5	1.0061
Q11: Likelihood of meeting and doing activity/program with new people in these cultural centres.	4.02	4	4	0.9865

Q12: Wayfinding of spaces and/or rooms is easy in the cultural centre and increase social interaction between visitors.	4.02	4	4	0.9728
Q13: The ventilation and natural lighting in the cultural centre help to increase social interaction between visitors.	4.04	4	5	0.9304
Q14: The architectural style/visual attractiveness of cultural centres reflected help to increase social interaction between visitors.	4.10	5	5	0.7327
Q15: The role of social interactions between visitors increases the sense of belonging and collective memories.	4.07	5	5	0.8083

Q14 and Q5 ranked the highest according to the mean data that makes it the most favourable average responses among respondents. Q14 asked about the architectural style/visual attractiveness of the centre reflected help to increase social interaction among visitors and whether they agree or disagree with the statement. Q5 asked about whether promotion or display of Sabahan indigenous culture increase social interaction between visitors. Ranking based on means emphasizes the central tendency of the data. Meanwhile, Q4 ranked the lowest in the mean data. Q4 asked about the role of buffer space such as corridors and foyers at the cultural centre help increase social interaction.

The standard deviation is a measure of the amount of variation or dispersion in a set of values. It quantifies how much individual data points deviate from the mean (average) of the data set. A higher standard deviation indicates greater variability, while a lower standard deviation suggests that the data points are closer to the mean. Q14 ranked first again in terms of the standard deviation data meaning that the architectural style/visual attractiveness of the centre reflected help to increase social interaction among visitors is the most agreeable sentence. Q10 ranked the lowest meaning that the data points are spread out over a wider range from the mean. This value indicates that there is a higher variability or dispersion in the data set. Q10 asked the respondents whether cafes or restaurants in the cultural centre promote social interaction between visitors. The response seems quite conflicted even though majority agreed with the statement.

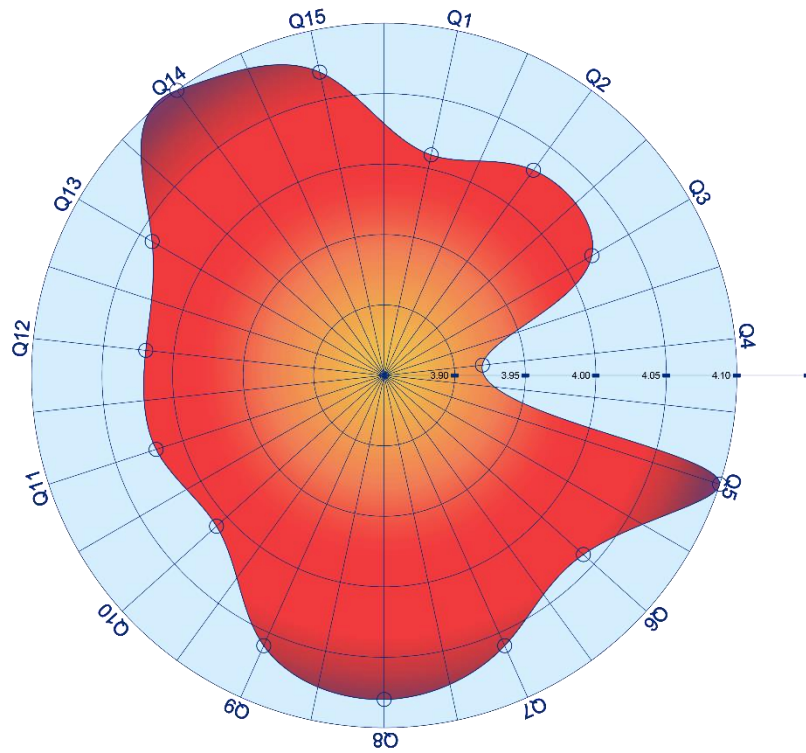


Figure 5: Descriptive analysis result's chart (mean)

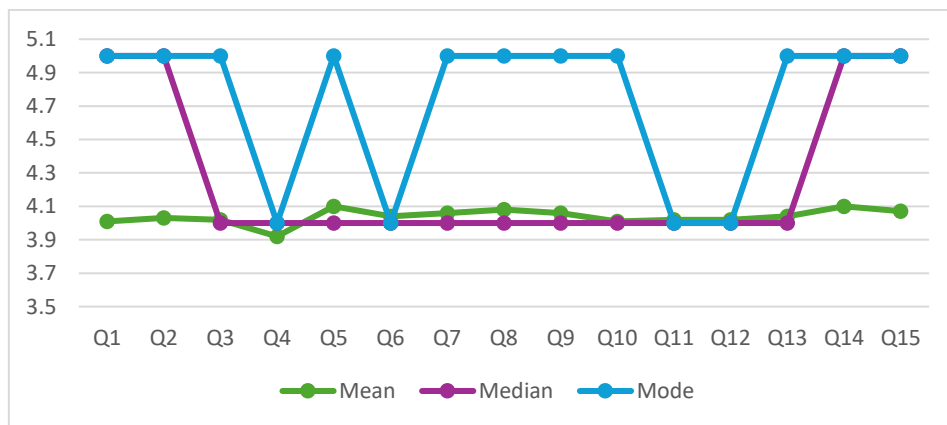


Figure 6 Descriptive analysis result's chart (mean, median, mode)

Open ended questions

At the end of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked four open-ended questions, "What is your most memorable experience while visiting these cultural centres?", "What suggestions do you have for the cultural centres to enhance user and visitor experience, especially in terms of social interaction?", "What is your expectation of Sabah's cultural centres in increasing social interaction?", and "What is the likeliness of you going back to these cultural centres to interact with other visitors?". The responses are sorted into five themes, 1) Culture and Program related, 2) Friend and family/Social Interaction, 3) Architecture/display/ layout, 4) Activity participation and entertainment, and 5) Personal experience.

1) Culture and Program related

"To learn about the unique cultural moments that shows the diverse ethnicity in Sabah" is one of the respondent's answer for their most memorable experience in the cultural centre they visited. There are more than 10 respondents who mentioned the same thing about learning new knowledge about the cultures, appreciating the uniqueness of the culture, and even trying new food from different cultures in Sabah.

One respondent mentioned that *"Watching and seeing the traditional performances during the cultural event and the antic things & history of each of Sabah culture just amazed me the most."* To support this statement, another respondent also said that *"There's always something new to learn each time. I like watching cultural demonstrations the most"*. 39 respondents have similar answers that are categorised in this theme.

2) Friend and family/Social interaction

When asked about their memorable experience, 26 respondents answered that their best memory is spending their time together with their family and friends. *"I get to spend some quality times with my loved ones & create good memories as well as appreciating all the good things that I get to see and explore in these places"* is one of their response. Another response is *"Interacting with other visitors and getting new friends"*. One respondents also mentioned *"I love how every places that we go, we can peek into other cultures and learn about their traditions. When there is less people, you can actually enjoy the place because you can soak in the environment compared to when it is packed with people. I love how I can talk to basically strangers and discussing about our each other's traditions."*

3) Architecture/display/layout

There are a variety of answers to this theme but the most repeating one is the atmosphere of the overall cultural centre. One respondent specified that they like the overall "kampung" or local village vibe of the place. Another response is *"The layout of the exhibition or arts gives a sense of sentimental value where it gives a story of the history"*. Other than the exhibitions and display, another two response are *"The entrance foyer"* and *"The corridors"* which gave the visitors their most memorable experience of the centre.

4) Activity participation and entertainment

Lansaran (Murut's traditional trampoline) has been highlighted eight times in this category by all the respondents as their most memorable experience during their visits. Lansaran is typically played by multiple visitors and is a high-adrenaline activity because there's no safety measure. This trampoline can be found at the Sabah Museum and the Murut Cultural Centre in Tenom. It is a fun ending towards the visit and is usually placed near the exit. Visitors can play it by themselves, and it features an interesting structure of stacks of bamboo with local timber.

5) Personal experience

For this category, one respondent mentioned that their core memory is the smell of the display at the museum. Another mentioned how they won a lucky draw and the rest highlighted the parking conditions in the cultural centre especially on how there is limited parking space and how hard it is to get one. These items can contribute to room for improvements for the future cultural centres.

Cultural centres, often regarded as dynamic hubs of inspiration and learning, stand to benefit from strategic enhancements that go beyond traditional exhibits. From incorporating cutting-edge technologies like augmented reality to fostering inviting architectural designs and versatile interior spaces, the following suggestions are tailored to captivate diverse audiences and create memorable, immersive cultural experiences. 5 respondents mentioned that the maintenance of the cultural centre is important to enhance user and visitor experience. They highlighted that the maintenance and cleanliness of existing facilities such as the prayers room, toilet, and generally the condition of the building. By maintaining the centre, presenting exhibits effectively, preserving infrastructure, assuring safety and accessibility, facilitating efficient operations, promoting long-term sustainability, and upholding cleanliness and aesthetics, maintenance plays a critical role in improving the user experience at cultural centres.

The most common answer to enhance user experience is by introducing more activities especially culturally related to Sabahans. A respondent said, "Cultural centre in Sabah need to be fun and explorative because it is a place that you attract people so need a fun program, fun form and space and eye catching". Another popular response is to extend the operational hours and introduce activities at night to attract more visitors. A lot of the respondents also suggested to keep up with current technologies and introduce more interactive exhibitions by implementing augmented reality and interactive platforms. Keeping up with current technology, particularly augmented reality (AR), is vital for cultural centers as it enhances engagement by providing interactive and immersive experiences, appeals to diverse audiences, and demonstrates innovation.

Furthermore, most of the respondents also commented on the architectural appeal of these cultural centres. The most popular input is to make the design of the cultural centre to be more aesthetic and unique. They also suggested to put more seating areas for the visitors as well as incorporating buffer or break spaces like open areas that spill out to the landscape. Other than that, they also suggested to improve the circulation to tell a story of the place. The interior design of the centre should also be more interesting to increase social interaction and highlight the speciality of the Sabahan's culture. Improving a cultural centre's architectural appeal which includes interior design as well as overall design is essential since it has a big

impact on the experience of visitors. Visitors are captivated by a visually appealing and well-designed setting, which enhances and prolongs their pleasure and memory of their cultural journey.

Moreover, some of the respondents suggested to have more parking space to increase user's experience. Another respondent said that they wished that the proximity of the centre is closer to their home and more accessible. Leisure and recreational activities were also suggested to increase usage of centre among the community. Furthermore, it is also suggested that the government can make more initiative to promote the activities in the cultural centres. Lastly, there is a suggestion to create a sense of place in the centre among the Sabahan indigenous community.

Lastly, the respondents also commented on their likeliness of going back to the cultural centres. The expectation for the cultural centre is quite similar to the suggestions to increase user's experience in the cultural centre. Most talked about expecting more activities and programs that is inclusive to cater all age groups and backgrounds especially for the future generations to learn about their culture. Many visitors want for interactive and participatory components that can enhance their experience rather than merely static exhibits. Cultural centres are thought of as centres of learning and creativity. They can support a sense of community involvement by offering a range of programmes and activities that appeal to a range of age groups and interests. In addition to drawing a larger crowd, providing workshops and artisan markets, performances, lectures, and interactive events guarantees that the cultural centre will always be a lively, relevant venue that meets the varied interests and expectations of its patrons. The respondents also talked about how they expect the cultural centre to be designed more uniquely to reflect the Sabahan culture in their design. A few respondents expect that the cultural centre can be uplifted to the international stage to further promote Sabah's tourism through policies set by the government. The cultural centre's growth and viability can be guaranteed by partnerships, sponsorships, and funds that come with being recognised internationally. Furthermore, it showcases a region's artistic and intellectual contributions to the globe, assisting with cultural diplomacy.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study shows how Sabahan indigenous cultural centres are really important in bringing people from different ethnicities together in the region. The feedback we got from the questionnaire is clear that people want more activities and programs in these cultural centres especially where they can interact with other visitors. They see these places not just as places to keep traditions but as active everyday spots that can keep bringing folks together of all ages and backgrounds. The idea that these centres should be the main attraction for continuous engagement, especially for indigenous people, shows they can help make communities stronger. As Sabah's culture keeps developing, these centres need to adapt to stay important, keeping the connection and understanding between different groups. This study adds to what we know about different cultures living together by highlighting how indigenous cultural centres can make Sabah's society more connected and friendly especially in building a cultural centre that is community centric.

Between the cultural centres, the most iconic buildings based on its architectural design and style is CC3 – Sabah Museum, Kota Kinabalu. This data is also supported by the responses in the questionnaire with the centre being voted as the most visited and some of the respondents

mentioned about the architectural appeal in the open-ended questions. For programs and activities offered, CC7 – Koisaan Cultural Village or commonly known as KDCA hosts the state's biggest and prominent festival annually which is the Kaamatan. The event can last for more than 24 hours with continuous celebrations, markets, and gatherings of all cultures in Sabah. It became an international event as it also attracts tourists from other countries across the world. KDCA has also hosts big-scale concerts for non-Sabahan performers and artists. For spaces provided by cultural centre, CC3 – Sabah Museum offers the most variety of spaces that ranges from exhibitions to markets to recreational spaces and even small villages for the living museum. Currently, the Sabah Museum Phase 2 is under construction, and it features more traditional villages and an open area to host festival and events.

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